

S.Africa's COVID state of disaster to end at midnight – Ramaphosa

Катастрофа в Південній Африці завершиться опівночі – М. С. Рамафоса
Національний стан стихійного лиха в Південно-Африканській Республіці, який діє
більше двох років через COVID-19, закінчиться з опівночі за місцевим часом 4
квітня, заявив президент Матамела Сиріл Рамафоса. Національний стан
стихійного лиха був основним механізмом уряду для боротьби з пандемією. Його
зняття дозволить покінчити з переважною більшістю обмежень COVID-19, що
залишилися, за винятком кількох, які залишаться в силі на перехідній основі, сказав
М. С. Рамафоса.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/safricas-covid-state-disaster-end-midnight-president-ramaphosa-2022-04-04/>

South Africa's national state of disaster, in place for more than two years in response to COVID-19, will end from midnight local time on Monday, President Cyril Ramaphosa said.

The national state of disaster has been the government's main mechanism for managing the pandemic. Removing it will do away with the vast majority of remaining COVID-19 restrictions, aside from a few that will remain in place on a transitional basis, Ramaphosa said.

"While the pandemic is not over, while the virus remains amongst us, these conditions no longer require we remain in a national state of disaster," he said in a televised address, referencing far lower rates of hospitalisation and deaths during the country's fourth wave of infections.

South Africa, the continent's most industrialised economy and the worst-hit in terms of reported infections and deaths, has been in an 'adjusted level 1' lockdown, or the lowest of a five tier system since October.

Amid criticism for not ending the state of disaster and maintaining some painful measures that weighed on the country's struggling economy, Ramaphosa eased restrictions further in March.

The five-tier lockdown system, rules around isolation and access to old age homes, and the criminalisation of non-adherence to such rules will be among the measures ended when the state of disaster expires.

The transitional measures that remain in place, such as a requirement to wear masks indoors, rules for travellers and a directive that enables the payment of a special relief grant, will lapse after 30 days, Ramaphosa said.

After that, more permanent regulations, currently up for public consultation, are expected to help the government manage COVID-19 going forward.

Reported COVID-19 cases and deaths stood at over 3.7 million and 100,052 respectively as of Monday, according to authorities.