

Beijing cancels large-scale Lunar New Year events over virus fears

January 23 2020

Large-scale Lunar New Year events in Beijing have been cancelled as part of national efforts to control the spread of a new SARS-like virus, city authorities announced Thursday.

Chinese authorities have been telling people to avoid crowded places over the busy Spring Festival holiday to try and halt the spread of a new coronavirus which has infected over 570 people.

The city government said it would call off events including [temple fairs](#)—which have attracted massive crowds of tourists in past years—urging citizens "to strengthen prevention and support".

In a post on China's Twitter-like platform Weibo, city authorities added that the move was to help epidemic prevention and control.

Beijing's city government said they would provide more information "as the epidemic situation evolves."

The central city of Wuhan, where the virus emerged, was put on lockdown Thursday, with outbound trains and planes indefinitely suspended. Tollways on roads out of the city were closed as well.

Neighbouring Huanggang announced that [public transport](#) and rail services would be suspended at midnight, while a train station was to be closed in a third city, Ezhou.

Beijing Tourism Net, which is regulated by the [city's](#) Bureau of Culture and Tourism, added in a separate Weibo post that the Beijing Ditan and Longtan Temple Fairs—originally scheduled for January 25 to 29—would be cancelled.

The fairs, which have been held for roughly three decades according to Chinese news outlet Xinhua, saw 1.4 million Chinese and foreign tourists over five days last year.

Beijing Tourism Net added the Tanzhe Temple Scenic Area, Jietai Temple Scenic Area, and Miaofeng Mountain Scenic Area in Mentougou District would also be closed.

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