

Russia to shut border with China over coronavirus

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Russia said Thursday it was closing the border with China to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus and would stop issuing electronic visas to Chinese nationals.

Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin told a government meeting that the order had been signed "to take measures to close the border (with China) in the Far East".

"We have to do everything to protect our people," he said.

According to the government order, cross-border travel would be suspended from Friday.

A number of checkpoints will be affected, including between Blagoveshchensk and Heihe, Khabarovsk and Fuyuan, it said.

The Russian foreign ministry said that as of Thursday it would stop issuing electronic visas, which can be used to cross into parts of the Far East and western Russia, to Chinese citizens.

The [foreign ministry](#) also advised Russians to refrain from travelling to China and for those already there to get in touch with the Russian embassy.

Russia does not have any confirmed cases of the new virus but Moscow has set up a [task force](#) to prevent its possible spread.

The coronavirus originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan and has killed 170 people in China so far.

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