

Sao Paulo governor announces two-week quarantine

March 21 2020

Sao Paulo state Governor Joao Doria on Saturday ordered a two-week quarantine from Tuesday to help curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

The state is the economic capital of Latin America and the worst-hit area of Brazil, which has recorded more than 900 virus cases and 11 deaths. Six of those deaths have been in Sao Paulo.

The measure requires a "total closure of non-essential businesses and services," Doria told journalists.

Sao Paulo state is home to 46 million people, and its capital city of the same name is the biggest in Latin America, with 13 million inhabitants.

While "bars, cafes and restaurants" must close, [health services](#), [security services](#), banks, supermarkets, bakers and [public transport](#) will all continue to function.

The move comes two days after Rio de Janeiro state announced similar containment measures, including the closure of world famous beaches such as Copacabana and Ipanema.

Doria said the measure would not affect industry.

"We know we're in a war and this war needs to be faced with appropriate, fast and efficient decisions," said Doria.

Brazil's two most populous states have taken a pro-active approach to containing the [coronavirus](#) outbreak, in stark contrast to far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

Bolsonaro hit out on Friday at Rio's governor Wilson Witzel for the measures he took, which included closing air, sea and land links with other infected states.

"It seems like Rio de Janeiro is another country. It's not, we're a federation," Bolsonaro said.

The majority of cases in Brazil—Latin America's largest country, with 210 million people—have come in its two biggest states.

Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta predicted on Wednesday that the outbreak would reach its peak in Brazil between April and June, adding that cases wouldn't start falling until September.

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Citation: Sao Paulo governor announces two-week quarantine (2020, March 21) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-sao-paulo-governor-two-week-quarantine.html>

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