

Sudan declares state of emergency, restricts travel over virus

March 16 2020

Sudan on Monday announced a state of emergency and a near-total closure of its borders to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

Sudan's top security body, the Security and Defence Council, "decided today to announce a state of medical emergency in the country to tackle the coronavirus," it said in a statement, without giving further details.

Separately, the country's ruling Sovereign Council on Monday "decided to close all airports, land and sea border crossings, except to [humanitarian aid](#)," spokesman Mohammad al-Fakki Suleiman told journalists.

To date Sudan has only reported one death from the COVID-19 illness, a 50-year-old man who had recently been in the United Arab Emirates where dozens of infections have been recorded.

Last Thursday Khartoum announced a series of measures, closing Sudan's land and air links with Egypt and suspending flights from China, Iran, Italy, Spain and Japan.

Sudanese were advised not to travel to those countries and mass gatherings were discouraged, the council of ministers said.

The government also asked the [health ministry](#) and military medical services to prepare quarantine centres.

The Sudanese armed forces announced Monday they would put students at military academies on leave "until the situation becomes clear," official news agency SUNA reported.

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