

Uganda tightens curbs as Covid cases surge

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Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni further toughened virus curbs on Sunday night, including ordering the closure of schools, to stem a worrying rise in local transmissions.

Schools will be closed from Monday for six weeks and most gatherings,

save for weddings and funerals in small groups, were banned.

Non-essential travel between districts was suspended and a 9:00 pm to 4:00 am curfew will remain in force until mid-July.

Most shops and markets remain open, provided they comply with government health regulations, but bars remain closed.

Uganda had kept its COVID-19 cases relatively low and was spared the worst of the pandemic after adopting one of Africa's tightest lockdowns, but it eased the measures as cases dropped.

However, infections have soared in recent weeks with a sharp increase in severe cases.

Hospitals have been overwhelmed as all [intensive care](#) and high dependency beds are occupied, threatening to collapse the fragile healthcare system.

"In this wave, the intensity of severe and critically ill COVID-19 patients, and deaths is higher than what we experienced in the first wave of the pandemic," Museveni said in a televised address.

Museveni explained that the East African country had recorded as many severe and critical cases of COVID-19 in a fortnight as it did in a three to four month period during the first wave.

"We are concerned that this will exhaust available bed space and [oxygen supply](#) in hospitals, unless we constitute urgent public health measures," said Museveni.

The country has counted 52,935 cases of coronavirus, of which 383 have been fatal, figures believed to be undercounted as a result of low testing.

As in many African nations, innoculation has been slow in part due to vaccine apathy and limited supplies.

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