Peru closes ports to cruise ships to ward off virus

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Peru is prohibiting cruise ships from docking at its ports for at least 30 days from Monday to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus, the government said Sunday.

The ban comes with local press reporting that the government is expected to announce a nationwide home-stay quarantine.

Major global cruise lines have already announced they were suspending voyages, and some countries including India have also blocked the vessels. Some cruise ships were quarantined, including in Japan, California and Chile, because of new coronavirus infections.

So far, 43 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Peru since the South American country's first case on March 6.

The government said its ban on cruise ship visits could be extended beyond 30 days as new information comes in on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Peru on Thursday had announced it was suspending the arrival of flights from Europe and Asia, which also goes into effect on Monday for an initial 30-day period.

On Wednesday, it declared a health emergency for 90 days, including orders that travelers from China, Italy, France and Spain undergo 14 days of self-isolation.

It also banned public gathering of more than 300 people, and suspended classes at schools and universities.

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