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### LatAm Enacts Stricter Measures to Face Covid-19

By: Telesur  
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Argentinian President Alberto Fernandez asked the people to unite and comply with the mandatory quarantine placed until March 31 to help combat the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths caused by the pandemic increased in Latin America on Friday, as some countries in the region began to take stricter measures to contain its spread.

Brazil reported four people aged over 70 died of COVID-19, bringing the nation's death toll to 11. The total confirmed cases rose to 904 on Friday, according to the country's health authorities.

The Brazilian Senate on Friday approved a request made by President Jair Bolsonaro to declare a state of emergency. A related presidential decree authorizes the executive branch to abandon meeting this year's fiscal goals in favor of fighting the health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The senators voted on the decree via the country's first-ever remote session.

A man wearing a face mask walks past a closed shop in Sao Paulo, Brazil, March 20, 2020. The Brazilian Senate on Friday approved a request made by President Jair Bolsonaro to declare a state of emergency. (Photo by Rahel Patrasso/Xinhua)

In Chile, Minister of Health Jaime Manalich announced Friday that the country had 434 confirmed cases, while Ecuador registered its fifth fatality from COVID-19 and raised the number of confirmed cases to 367, according to Director of the National Risk Management Service Alexandra Ocles.

In Peru, President Martin Vizcarra announced that the number of confirmed cases rose to 263 in the country, and four deaths had occurred so far. The fourth death was a 75-year-old woman who had recently traveled to Spain, the Peruvian Ministry of Health reported Friday.

In Argentina, the results of the mandatory quarantine ordered by the government will be seen in two weeks' time if the population respects the measure, Minister of Health Gines Gonzalez Garcia said on Friday.

Argentine President Alberto Fernandez asked the people to unite and comply with the mandatory quarantine placed until March 31 to help combat the novel coronavirus pandemic. The country has so far reported 158 cases, three of which were fatal.

Few people are seen in the streets in Buenos Aires, Argentina, March 20, 2020. (Xinhua/Martin Zabala)

In Colombia, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases increased to 145, the health ministry reported on Friday.

On the same day, the capital city of Bogota began the mandatory isolation drill decreed by Mayor Claudia Lopez in order to prepare for a quarantine aimed at containing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lopez told local media that it is essential for citizens to understand the importance of social isolation and to identify their needs during confinement.

The Dominican Republic reported 72 confirmed cases with two deaths so far.

People wearing face masks are seen in Santiago, Chile, March 20, 2020. Chilean Minister of Health Jaime Manalich announced Friday that the country had 434 confirmed COVID-19 cases. (Photo by Jorge Villegas/Xinhua)

Honduras on Friday reported a total of 24 confirmed cases, which doubled the number of cases on Thursday, according to authorities from the National Risk Management System. The Honduran government Friday suspended the curfew for one day so that citizens could stock up on food, fuel, and medicine.

Bolivian Minister of Health Anibal Cruz said that quarantine, curfew and labor restrictions will be applied and trade will be restricted in the context of the health emergency.

The Cuban government announced new preventive measures on Friday, including new border entry restrictions.

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said that entry to his country will only be authorized for residents of the island, while the departure of foreigners and commercial activity will be permitted to continue.

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