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La Paz, December 31 (RHC)-- Faced with the increase of coronavirus infections, Bolivian authorities declared a health emergency throughout the country and announced a series of extraordinary measures to deal with the increase of COVID-19 cases.

The Minister of Health and Sports, Jeyson Auza, detailed that the measures were set in application of Law 1359, of Sanitary Emergency. The health minister mentioned that the importation of diagnostic tests, vaccines, drugs, supplies, reagents and equipment, in the case of the public health sector, will be exempt from customs duties.

The authorities of the Bolivian cities of Santa Cruz, La Paz, El Alto and Cochabamba, the most populated cities in the country, decided to suspend permits for end-of-year festive events due to the increase in cases of coronavirus.

Among the measures announced, vehicle circulation hours were limited from 00:00 to 05:00 local time.

A "Ley Seca" was also established from December 30 to January 10, prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages of all kinds in public and private commercial establishments.

Likewise, the operation of itinerant fairs in public spaces was prohibited, while markets and fixed fairs will operate. The centers that do not comply with these measures will be immediately closed, while Christmas fairs will operate until Monday, January 3.

The prohibition also includes massive end-of-year gatherings such as concerts, national and international artistic festivals or any type of agglomeration of people in restaurants, hotels, condominiums, squares, parks, avenues and streets.

According to health authorities, 6,149 new cases of Covid-19 were detected in the last 24 hours, bringing the cumulative total of confirmed cases since the beginning of the pandemic to 591,773, while the number of deaths due to the disease has already reached 19,650.

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