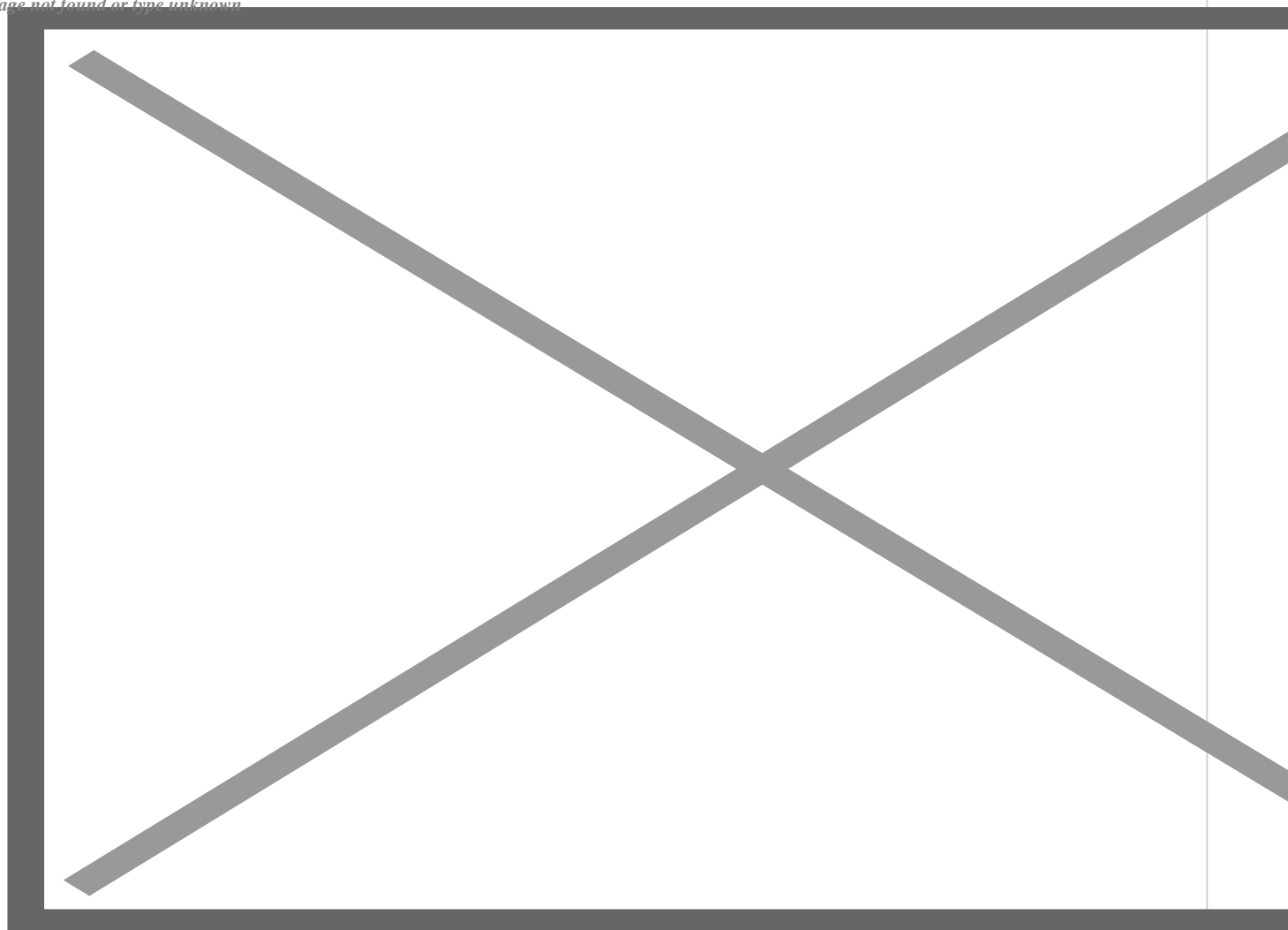


# *Bolivia announces seven-day border closure with Brazil*

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La Paz, March 31 (RHC)-- The Departmental Health Service (Sedes) of Santa Cruz announced Wednesday that the border with Brazil will be closed for seven days, in coordination with health authorities, due to the increase of cases with the Brazilian variant of COVID-19.

"All of the country's borders with Brazil are closed. It is a decision of the central level that we have been asking for 15 days," said the manager of Epidemiology of Sedes de Santa Cruz, Carlos Hurtado, in a press conference.

He also pointed out that, although authorities have already made the decision, the matter will be discussed in a meeting of the Ministerial Cabinet, where the conditions and dates for the closing of the border will be defined.

"The Ministerial Cabinet is going to meet to define (from when the borders will be closed)", said the health official.

The Municipal Emergency Operations Committee (COEM) of San Ignacio de Velazco and the Government of Santa Cruz requested a 15-day closure to avoid the collapse of hospitals because the Brazilian strain is more contagious and lethal than others already discovered.

Although the interim secretary of the Santa Cruz Government, Marcelo Ríos, recently stated that the circulation of the strain or infected cases in the department has not yet been officially confirmed, the danger is latent.

Hurtado also updated on the vaccination status in the last seven days which has reached 5,000 people and the goal is to stop the chain of transmission of the virus. "We committed, as health authorities, that no one would be left unvaccinated. That is what we are doing in Puerto Quijarro, Puerto Suarez, Carmen Rivero Torrez and San Matias," he stressed.

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