

Disneyland in California to close over virus

12 March 2020

Disneyland in California will close its doors beginning Saturday due to new coronavirus, the resort said, joining a slew of concerts, festivals and other entertainment events scrapped across the US.

The giant Disney attraction in Anaheim is the world's second-most visited theme park, drawing tens of thousands of visitors each day.

It will remain shut at least until the end of March.

"After carefully reviewing the guidelines of the Governor of California's executive order and in the best interest of our guests and employees, we are proceeding with the closure of Disneyland Park and Disney California Adventure," a statement said on Thursday.

California officials late Wednesday had called for large gatherings to be canceled across the state to slow the spread of the pandemic.

No cases of the virus had been reported at Disneyland.

Disney will monitor the situation, and on-site hotels will remain open until Monday to give guests time to leave.

California Governor Gavin Newsom said Disney had "made the right call in the interest of public health and agreed to shut down their California parks."

"Expect more announcements like this shortly," he added.

The move follows a string of high-profile postponements and cancellations in California including the Coachella desert music festival, the Beverly Hills Film Festival, and the WonderCon pop culture gathering.

Across the country, events including the CinemaCon movie theater summit in Las Vegas,

SXSW media festival in Texas and the Tribeca Film Festival in New York have been scrapped or postponed.

New York's Broadway theater district on Thursday suspended performances for a month under a similar a ban on large public gatherings.

American rock giants Pearl Jam postponed the first leg of their North American tour, while pop diva Mariah Carey delayed a planned gig in Hawaii over the virus.

Disney-themed parks in Asia have also closed due to the COVID-19 illness, although its Shanghai resort partially reopened this month after closing in late January.

The 100-acre (40-hectare) Disneyland in California drew nearly 19 million visitors in 2018. It was recently expanded with a major new "Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge" attraction.

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