

KLM cancels 270 long-haul flights following Netherlands' flight ban

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Dhaka: Dutch airline KLM canceled its long-haul flights after the government proposed new travel restrictions to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

On January 20, Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced a one-month ban on flights from the UK, South Africa, and many South American countries, which began on January 23.

In response to the flight ban, [KLM](#) halted all its long-haul flights and several flights from Europe starting January 22. According to reports, the airline had 270 weekly long haul flights that are now canceled.

The airline also announced on January 21 that it had laid off between 800 and 1,000 workers. The airline already laid off another 5,000 employees over the summer because of the pandemic and related travel restrictions.

KLM CEO Pieter Elbers said in a statement on January 21 that the layoffs are not fully reflective of how the Dutch government's latest travel restrictions will impact the company.

"The further downsizing of our organization does not yet encompass the latest measures

announced by the Dutch government in the past 48 hours," Elbers said. "These new measures are, however, in line with the restrictions and dynamics we have had to contend with since the start of the pandemic."

"Even if our crewmembers are exempt from the new regulations, the further loss of jobs will regrettably be inevitable," Elbers added. "The impact of the latest measures will become evident in due course."

Aside from its ban on certain flights, the Dutch government has advised residents to avoid travel until March 31, according to a press release.

For people who do decide to travel, they must be able to show a negative rapid test just before their departure to the Netherlands, in addition to a previously required negative PCR test taken 72 hours before arriving, the release added.