

MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan orders twice-a-week lockdown as Covid rages on

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BHOPAL: With Covid numbers rocketing in Madhya Pradesh, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the return of tough measures, and said total lockdown will be imposed for two days a week in districts “with high infection rates”.

Four districts immediately leap out on this count – Bhopal with 1,574 cases this month alone and Indore with 1,446, followed by Morena (1,068) and Gwalior (924). The last two recently went under a clampdown.

SHUT OUT THE VIRUS

DAYS: Sunday and either Saturday or Monday

Why? Covid count is rising, and lockdown has proved fruitful in Gwalior and Morena

NEW RULES

- Except for districts with zero cases, all central and state offices to work at **30-50% capacity**
- Curfew from **8pm to 5am** across state
- **Only essentials** allowed in districts chosen for lockdown

MP's TOP 5

Officials must keep in mind that the general public and people who earn their daily livelihood by doing small businesses should not face any problem because of the lockdown. Economic activities should also continue

—Shivraj Singh Chouhan | CM

Indore	6155
Bhopal	4363
Gwalior	1706
Morena	1332
Ujjain	986

Official confirmation on which districts will go into the two-day lockdowns is awaited. July has been the worst month for MP in the pandemic, like the rest of the country. Active cases have shot up by over 150% and recoveries have dropped to 67.2%. Nearly 42% of MP's Covid count has come in 20 days of July. The government realizes tough measures have to be taken to contain the virus.

Lockdown will be imposed on Sundays, with the second day being either Saturday or Monday, the CM said at a review meeting on Monday – even as restrictions he had announced on early closure of shops and 50% workforce at private offices came into effect.

Making Corporate India Comply

Apart from essential services, all other activities will be prohibited. Night curfew will be clamped in all districts from 8pm to 5am.

The CM ordered officials to keep in mind that the general public and people who earn their daily livelihood by doing small businesses should not face any problem because of the lockdown. "Economic activities should also continue," he said, asking the administration to prevent gathering of crowds and enforce Covid precautions.

"Excluding districts with zero Covid count, all central and state government offices establishments. In case a Corona patient is detected at any private office or commercial establishment, it will be closed for seven days.

The government is enthused by the outcome of lockdown in Gwalior and Morena, where cases were shooting up all of July. In Gwalior, the positivity rate that had rocketed to 15% is down to 7% after the latest lockdown, the CM noted, adding that Morena's positivity rate has dropped to 1.6%.

CM Chouhan said further lockdown in these two districts would be considered after a meeting of the District Crisis Management Group. Lockdown should be opened gradually, he ordered. The CM asked border districts to adopt the 'Burhanpur Model' of monitoring people coming from other states. Such people were quarantined at home for 14 days, which helped a lot in preventing infection, Chouhan said.

A review of Corona infections revealed that one of the main reasons for spread of infection, including Bhopal, is the gathering of people. "People have to be made aware that they should avoid gathering and maintain physical distancing," the CM cautioned.

Chouhan appealed to people to celebrate all upcoming festivals at home. No permission will be granted for public celebration of festivals, he said.