

Karnataka govt likely to decide on lockdown like Covid Curbs on all days on Monday

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- **Weekend curfew restrictions are in place till May 4 and as per the guidelines, it will be there next Saturday, Sunday also**
- **Karnataka added over 34,000 cases in last 24 hours for the first time since the outbreak of the pandemic**

As novel coronavirus cases in the state are reaching record daily highs for the past few days, Karnataka government on Sunday said that it might decide on "lockdown-like" curbs across the days on all of the week to contain the spread of the virus. The state cabinet is scheduled to meet at 11 am on Monday.

A decision on imposing lockdown like restrictions on all days of the week in Karnataka, which is facing a huge spike in COVID-19 cases, is likely to be taken by the state cabinet on Monday, reported news agency PTI.

Meanwhile, Karnataka crossed another grim milestone of reporting record daily rise in novel coronavirus cases as the state on Sunday added over 34,000 cases in last 24 hours for the first time since the outbreak of the pandemic.

With 34,804 more patients testing positive for Covid-19 in the state, Karnataka's total tally has now reached 13,39,210, according to the health bulletin. Of these, Bengaluru alone reported 20,733 cases in the last 24 hours.

While ministers on Sunday said a decision in this regard was likely during the cabinet meeting, official sources said another one on the matter of free of cost vaccinations might also be taken, reported PTI.

"Weekend curfew restrictions are in place till May 4 and as per the guidelines, it will be there next Saturday, Sunday also. Discussions are on whether to enforce curfew on weekdays, whether to go for complete lockdown or not," Industries Minister Jagadish Shettar said.

Speaking to reporters in Dharwad, he said it would be discussed at the cabinet meeting tomorrow, following which Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa would announce the decision. "We are not in favour of lockdown, but the situation is such that we have to impose restrictions to bring things under control...we have to break the chain, it is a matter of 10-12 days, let's see... once the numbers (cases) come down, restrictions will also reduce," he added.

According to COVID-19 guidelines that are in place from April 21 to May 4, night curfew has been imposed in the entire state from 9 pm to 6 am every day and there will be weekend curfew from Friday 9 pm to Monday 6 am.

During the weekend curfew that began on Friday night, Bengaluru and most other parts of the state wore a deserted look with businesses and restaurants remaining shut and vehicles staying

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off the roads. Barring the 6 am to 10 am period when the public were allowed to purchase essential items like milk, groceries and vegetables, among others, people largely stayed indoors and cooperated by following the restrictions.

Stating that no decision has yet been taken by the government on lockdown, Deputy Chief Minister C N Ashwath Narayan said it would discuss and take a decision, based on what the CM or the Health Minister places before the cabinet on this issue. He said suggestions have been put forward for "Janata curfew", wherein people voluntarily decide not come out unnecessarily. However, Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said "such proposals (lockdown) did not come during yesterday's meeting. So I don't want to comment on speculations. For now things will continue as it is."

The state government had last week imposed night and weekend curfew amid intense speculation that it may go for lockdown like restrictions in Bengaluru and few other places, with former Chief Minister and JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy too demanding for it. State Congress President D K Shivakumar had subsequently said it seemed that the government, which had planned to impose lockdown last week, changed it, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation, during which he requested states to use it as a last resort.