

# **Puducherry: Covid lockdown extended till 31 August; govt yet to decide on reopening schools**

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The Covid-induced lockdown in Puducherry has been extended till 31 August, the state government announced on Sunday. In addition to the existing restrictions, a night curfew will be in force in the UT from 10.30 pm to 5 am.

As per the government order, religious places would be open till 9 pm, with certain restrictions. Further, essential services would be permitted, which include the sale of milk and medicine.

Meanwhile, Lt Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan told reporters that the government would take a decision on reopening schools after obtaining a report from the education department.

"I have asked the department to go into the question of reopening institutions and once the report is available a decision would be taken after 20 August on reopening schools," she said.

Lt Governor's call on Covid

Soundararajan on Saturday had called for sustained and coordinated efforts to arrest the spread of coronavirus.

In her message on the eve of the 75th Independence Day, Soundararajan said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has established a record by promoting a 'self-reliant economy'.

Calling upon the people to put in joint efforts to create a disease-free hunger-free, hunger free and prosperous India, she said the nation had fought successfully to ensure that the foreign rule was driven away from the soil of the country.

"We should gear up and put up a similar fight to drive away pandemic so that people would live a prosperous life," the Lt Governor said extending her greetings to the people of Puducherry, Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

Chief Minister N Rangasamy highlighted the growth of the nation through the visionary approach of the Prime Minister. He said the territorial government had put in zealous efforts to protect people against the pandemic.

Covid situation in UT

Puducherry recorded 101 fresh cases of Covid-19 in the 24 hours ending 10 am on Saturday, raising the overall tally to 1,22,203. In addition, a 72-year-old man hailing from Mahe succumbed to the viral infection, raising the toll to 1,804.

The patient had comorbidities, including diabetes and Parkinson's ailment.

The new cases were spread over Puducherry (70), Karaikal (12), Yanam (4) and Mahe (15) and were identified at the end of the examination of 5,049 samples.

According to the director of the department of health G Sriramulu, Puducherry's test positivity rate is 2% while the fatality and recovery rates were 1.48% and 97.76%, respectively.

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He said there were 936 active patients of whom 199 were in hospitals and the remaining 737 were in home isolation. While 108 patients recovered and were discharged between Friday and Saturday, the overall recoveries stood at 1,19,463.

The director said 15.74 lakh samples have been examined so far.

Further, the department has vaccinated 38,027 healthcare workers and 22,993 frontline workers against the disease. As many as 5.42 lakh people in the category of senior citizens or those above 45 years having comorbidities have been inoculated. In all, the department has vaccinated 7.57 lakh people, including those who received the second vaccination.