

## 7-day quarantine mandatory for those coming to Karnataka from Kerala

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People entering Karnataka from neighbouring Kerala will have to remain in institutional quarantine for a week even if they are vaccinated and carry a negative RT-PCR test report, Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar said.

The measure is also applicable to air passengers from Kerala and they can choose a hotel of their choice, which had been designated for institutional quarantine.

Such travelers undergoing institutional quarantine will be tested on the sixth day and if the report comes out negative for COVID-19 on the seventh day, they will be allowed to go.

"It has been decided in a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday that travelers coming from Kerala, whether they have taken vaccines or have a negative RT-PCR test report, will have to compulsorily stay in institutional quarantine," Sudhakar told reporters here.

According to Sudhakar, the government is working out a strategy in consultation with experts on how to further strengthen COVID prevention drive in the districts bordering Kerala such as Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Chamarajanagar.

He also said the government may take "even more" stringent measures in the border districts to control the spread of COVID-19.

The government has imposed stringent restrictions in view of increasing number of COVID cases in Kerala.

Kerala on Monday reported 19,622 new positive cases and 132 COVID-19-related deaths, taking the caseload to 40,27,030 and the toll to 20,673.

As the Karnataka government decided to restart from September 6 offline classes for students from class six to eight, Sudhakar said schools cannot be kept shut permanently and have to be reopened because children were lagging behind in their studies.

"For the past one-and-half years, our children have made slow progress in education. Education is important for the growth of children. It is the duty of the government to ensure academic future of the children," the Minister pointed out.

He added that all preparations have been made and guidelines have been made public on reopening of schools. "In case the positivity rate in certain areas goes beyond two per cent, the schools will be shut and everyone will be tested", the Minister said.

Asked if there will be COVID-19-related restrictions during the upcoming Ganesha festival, Sudhakar said the health department has been insisting that no public function should take place, because wherever people gather in large numbers, the threat of the spread of the pandemic increases.

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