

## **Omicron scare- Karnataka makes RTPCR test mandatory for international travellers**

Updated: 30 Nov 2021, 07:48 PM IST

Karnataka Government has said that international travellers arriving in the state will have to mandatorily undergo RT-PCR test and be in seven days home quarantine amid the rise of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

State Health Minister K Sudhakar said that about 2,500 international passengers arrive in Karnataka daily and it is now mandatory for everyone to undergo RT-PCR testing.

"Mandatory RT-PCR test is being carried out for travelers from countries where the new virus is found. The Chief Minister has instructed us to test travelers from all countries," he said after meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee.

"About 2,500 passengers come to the state every day from various nations. Those who are negative will be home quarantined for seven days. Those who are symptomatic and negative will have to undergo testing at home on the fifth day. Those who are asymptomatic will be tested on the seventh day. If positive, they will be immediately hospitalized and treated separately," he said.

Sudhakar said all necessary precautionary measures are being taken to prevent the spread of Omicron variant in the state. The new strain has been reported in at least 12 countries across the world.

"Considering our population and health infrastructure, we need to be more careful than other countries. Preparations for the health care services, including availability of beds, oxygen beds, deployment of doctors and personnel, supply of medicine were also discussed at the meeting," he said.

Sudhakar said those who have not got vaccinated should voluntarily come forward, get the shots and stay safe. Suggestions on vaccine drive and measures to increase the numbers were discussed at the meeting, he said, adding that 41 lakh people are slated to get the second dose of Covid vaccine and efforts will be made to reach out to them.

"At the meeting, ways to effectively deal with the Omicron virus, how to control it and what preparations are to be taken in hospitals and medical colleges were also discussed," he said.

Using technology such as Quarantine App, Tele Medicine are also being considered and a panel of 10 experts has been set up to formulate separate guidelines for treatment, Sudhakar said.

According to a release from the Minister's office, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will write a letter to the Prime Minister, urging him to impose restrictions on travelers from specific countries where Omicron infections have been reported.