

Karnataka govt to enforce further containment measures after consulting experts, amid Covid-19

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Amid mounting concerns over Covid-19 after two cases of the new Omicron variant were detected in the state, and with fresh Covid clusters emerging, the Karnataka Chief Minister Basvaraj Bommai on Monday said the government is closely monitoring the situation in the state and will take decisions on enforcing further containment measures after consulting the experts.

This comes a day after the Karnataka government announced certain preventive measures that included compulsory two dose vaccination for entering malls, cinema halls or theatres, and for parents of school or college going students.

"All the advices will be placed before the expert committee, depending on the Omicron and Delta variants spread in the coming days and clusters that are emerging, we will get the opinion of the experts, and take an appropriate decision," Bommai said in response to a question on suggestions regarding imposing restrictions on entry to malls and cinema halls to 50% capacity.

He said that all the primary and secondary contacts of the Bengaluru doctor who has tested positive for Omicron have been identified, all of them are asymptomatic, genomic sequencing reports of couple of his contacts who have tested positive for Covid is awaited.

Earlier in the day, noting that clusters were emerging in Karnataka, especially in hostels and among students, the Chief Minister said, the government has given guidelines for cluster management.

"In Chikkamagaluru yesterday, a cluster has emerged (at a residential school), all students have been checked, their primary and secondary contacts have also been tested and it (school) has been sealed down. We are providing treatment to those infected," he said.

He highlighted that the government is prepared in every way, and is gathering timely information from experts regarding the spread and effects of the infection, and accordingly preparations are on to provide treatment.

At least 69 people, mostly students of Jawahar Navodaya School at Seegodu in Chikkamagaluru district have been infected by Covid-19, official sources said. Meanwhile, speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Health Minister K Sudhakar in response to a question, downplayed the threats of the possible third wave of Covid-19.

"If you see historically during any pandemics, usually the second wave will be of large scale, third wave are generally less, this is the historical evidence. Historically, the second wave is more intense than the first wave, and in case there is a third or fourth wave, its intensity will be less and it will die out," he said.

He also said that according to experts, the effects of the virus on children are very low, and it was seen even during the delta variant also.