

Section 144 imposed in Mumbai from Dec 16 to Dec 31 amid Omicron fear

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Amid the Omicron scare, the Mumbai police has said prohibitory orders under CrPC section 144 will be imposed in the city from December 16 to December 31, a period covering Christmas and New Year eve, banning large gatherings as part of measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

They also said only people up to 50 per cent of the capacity at a venue will be allowed to attend any event and organizers of programmes should be fully vaccinated against coronavirus. An order imposing section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) within the Mumbai commissionerate limits from Thursday was issued by the deputy commissioner of police (operations) on Monday. The section prohibits the gathering of five or more persons at one spot and holding of public meetings, among other things.

According to the order, people have to follow COVID-19 appropriate behaviour to stem the coronavirus spread. "All persons connected with organisation of any programme, event etc as well as service providers and participants, visitors, guests, customers shall be fully vaccinated," it said. Any shop, establishment, mall, event and gathering must be manned by fully vaccinated persons and all visitors and customers at such places shall be fully inoculated against coronavirus, the order stated.

All public transport shall be used only by fully vaccinated persons, it said, adding all persons travelling into Maharashtra shall be either fully vaccinated or carry a RT-PCR test valid for 72 hours. "People up to 50 per cent of the capacity will be allowed to attend in case of any programme or event or activity or gathering, which is in closed or open space," the order stated. If the number of people present at such events exceeds thousand, then the local disaster management authority will have to be informed about the same, it said. "The order shall come into force in the areas under the control of commissioner of police, Mumbai, with immediate effect from December 16, 2021, and will remain in force till 24.00 hrs of December 31," it stated. Mumbai on Wednesday added 238 new coronavirus cases, which took its infection count to 7,65,934, the city civic body said.

As no death due to the virus was reported during the day, the city's death toll remained unchanged at 16,360, it said. Maharashtra has so far reported 32 cases of the Omicron strain, including in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

Omicron, classified as a 'variant of concern' by the WHO, was detected last month in southern Africa and it has been causing alarm all over the world.

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