

# Delhi bans public gathering during Christmas, New Year amid Omicron scare

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The Delhi government on Wednesday stated that all social, political, entertainment, festival-related gatherings or congregations will continue to be banned across the national capital on the occasion of Christmas and New Year's to curb the spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant.

The latest order by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) read: "All social/political/sports/entertainment/cultural/religious festival-related gatherings and congregations are prohibited throughout NCT of Delhi."

"All restaurants and bars are allowed up to 50% of the seating capacity. Auditoriums/assembly halls are allowed up to 50% of the seating capacity. Marriage related gatherings are permitted with a ceiling of 200 persons. Sports activities in stadiums/sports complexes are permitted only without spectators," it added.

In view of this, it has directed all district magistrates and other officials to ensure that no cultural event/gatherings/congregations take place for celebrating Christmas or New Year in Delhi.

Apart from this, it has also told the officials to conduct an intensive survey of the entire area falling within their jurisdiction and identify the pockets that have the potential of becoming super-spreaders or hotspots.

"All district magistrates, in perfect coordination with district DCPs, shall take concerted action in those identified pockets/areas as per the prescribed protocol guidelines/SoPs viz. test, track & treat, prompt & effective containment measures, enforcement of Covid appropriate behaviour etc.," the DDMA said.

Further, it said that district magistrates should meet with RWAs and MTAs to counsel them to ensure strict compliance of Covid-19 appropriate behaviour, including social distancing, wearing of masks, frequently hand sanitizing etc., in their respective areas.

"Since, wearing of mask is the most important weapon in fight against Covid-19, RWAs and MTAs should be advised not to allow their residents, shopkeepers and customers without mask in their respective areas/public places," it said.

District administration officials and the Delhi police have been directed to follow orders and district officials have been asked to submit daily reports.

This comes as Delhi has recorded 57 Omicron cases so far, the highest among all states and union territories in India. A total of 213 cases of the new strain of Covid have been detected in India.

Amid increasing cases, the Centre had on Tuesday wrote to all state governments regarding preventive measures that are required to be taken, emphasising local-level containment to curb any possible outbreak.

It also laid down a framework that states and union territories may use to decide on restrictions to be imposed in any district.

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