

Kerala adopts new Covid strategy as infections top all-time high. Read here

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With third Covid wave hitting the southern state of Kerala hard, the state health minister Veena George today said the government has evolved a strategy wherein districts have been categorised according to the occupancy of Covid patients in ICU.

On a massive spike in Covid cases in Kerala, she said around there are around 1,99,000 active Covid patients in the state but only 3 per cent of them are hospitalised. "Only 0.7 per cent are on oxygen support and 0.6 per cent are in ICU," news agency ANI quoted George as saying.

As many as 46,387 more people tested positive for Covid-19 on Thursday across Kerala, the highest-ever in a single day. Before this, Kerala had recorded 43,529 Covid-19 cases on 12 May 2021, which was its highest ever cases of infection since the outbreak of the disease.

We have evolved a strategy where districts are categorised according to the occupancy of Covid patients in ICU. We have around 1,99,000 active patients now but only 3% of them are hospitalised, only 0.7% on oxygen support and 0.6% in ICU: Veena George, Kerala Health Minister pic.twitter.com/IGiOCT3NI4

— ANI (@ANI) January 21, 2022

During a virtual high-level COVID review meeting on Thursday, the Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan-led panel had decided to allow only essential services on the next two Sundays – January 23 and 30.

The government said district DCs will decide on the level of restrictions to be imposed based on the number of people admitted to hospitals. The panel has authorised the District Disaster Management Authority to divide districts into three groups -- A, B and C.

In A category districts, all kinds of social, cultural , political and public events, weddings and funerals will be restricted to not more than 50 people. In B and C category districts, no such gathering of people will be allowed.

In B and C category districts, religious activities will be done online, and in weddings and funerals, not more than 20 people will be allowed. In C-category districts, movies, swimming pools and gyms will not be allowed to operate. In this category, all kinds of classes and tuition centers -- except undergraduate and postgraduate level final year classes besides 10 and 12 classes -- will work via online mode. The state government also said residential education institutions can, however, operate under bio-bubble mode.

The committee decided that working women with kids below the age of two, cancer patients and seriously ill people can work from home. Institutions, businesses, malls, beaches and theme parks have been directed to ensure no large gatherings and strict adherence of Covid rules.