

Delhi- Weekend curfew, odd-even rule likely agenda for DDMA meet on 27 Jan

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NEW DELHI : Delhi shops has faced the brunt of the strictest Covid curbs in the national capital that was imposed to combat the rising Covid cases as a part of the Graded Action Response Plan (GARP) of Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA).

On 21 January, the DDMA with approval from chief minister Arvinf Kejriwal and Lt Governor Anil Baijal permitted private offices to open with 50% capacity and maintaining Covid Appropriate Behaviour.

Traders have been requesting Baijal to reconsider the weekend curfew and the odd-even rule for opening of shops in Delhi in order to earn.

Traders in the national capital have been struggling to to meet break-even with the weekend curfew and the odd-even rule.

Some of the traders have been contemplating mortgaging jewelry to meet the rising expenses or even cutting down on meals to save money.

Baijal is scheduled to chair a DDMA meeting on 27 January to revise the covid situation in Delhi. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is also likely to attend the meeting that will discuss relaxations that may be allowed in view of improvement in Covid-19 situation in the city, officials said.

Delhi recorded 5,760 new cases and 30 deaths in the last 24 hours, according to daily bulletin by the health department. The city recorded 14,836 recoveries in the same period, that brought down the active cases to 45,140. Positivity rate too has come down to 11.79%.

According to an official source, the government is also likely to take a call on reopening of schools from February depending on vaccination status of students by the end of this month.

The Delhi government on Friday had proposed lifting the weekend curfew and ending the odd-even scheme for opening shops in view of the pandemic situation but Lieutenant Governor Baijal suggested maintaining status quo on the restrictions till the situation improved further.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had said the decision to ease the restrictions was taken in view of declining number of Covid cases in the city and also to ensure that livelihood of the public is not affected.

"Now since the cases are going down and it also seems that the peak has gone, we want to ensure that the public's livelihood continues smoothly. We have proposed to do away with weekend curfew and also with the odd-even arrangement of opening of shops in markets," Sisodia had said.

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Traders in many parts of the city have also been protesting against the restrictions and demanded the curbs be lifted, including those imposed on shops selling non-essential items being permitted to open on alternate days based on odd-even system.

The weekend curfew is implemented at 10 pm on Friday and continues till Monday 5 am.

The decision to impose weekend curfew was taken by the DDMA on January 1 due to rise in COVID-19 cases in the city.

The DDMA had also imposed other restrictions including closure of all private offices dealing with non-essential services. A night curfew during weekdays is already in place from 10 pm to 5 am.

The number of fresh Covid cases went down to 5,760, according the Health bulletin issued on Monday, from the high of over 28,000 a fortnight ago. The positivity rate also came down to 11.79 per cent.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta also recently wrote a letter to Baijal requesting him for lifting of weekend curfew and odd-even shop opening scheme besides allowing restaurants and gyms to run with 50 per cent capacity.