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- NO. OF PERSONS ALLOWED AT WEDDINGS/CREMATIONS INCREASED TO 50, BARS/CLUBS/AHATAS CONTINUE TO REMAIN CLOSED
- NIGHT CURFEW TO REMAIN IN PLACE FROM 8 P.M. TO 5 A.M., WEEKEND CURFEW FROM 8 P.M. SATURDAY TO 5 A.M. MONDAY

Chandigarh, June 15: With the state's Covid positivity rate coming down to 2%, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Tuesday announced easing of the restrictions, allowing restaurants and other eating joints, as well as cinemas and gyms to open at 50% capacity beginning tomorrow. He also announced increase in gathering of people, including for weddings and cremations, to 50 persons.

Under the new guidelines, which will remain in effect till June 25 when they will be again reviewed, daily night curfew will be in place from 8 pm to 5 am, with weekend curfew from 8.00 pm on Saturday upto 5.00 am on Monday, across the state. However, all essential activities, including those covered under existing 'Exemptions', will remain unaffected, unhindered and exempted from curfew restrictions.

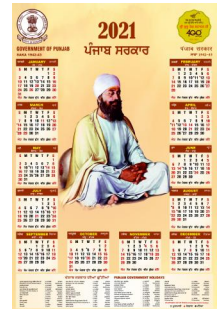
Chairing a high-level virtual Covid review meeting, the Chief Minister ordered opening of all Restaurants (including in hotels), Cafes, Coffee Shops, fast food outlets, Dhabas etc., Cinemas, Gyms at maximum 50% of capacity, subject to all their employees having received at least one dose of vaccination. AC buses can also ply with 50% occupation.

Bars, Pubs and 'Ahatas' shall, however, continue to remain closed. All educational institutions i.e. schools and colleges will also continue to be closed.

District Authorities have been asked to determine opening timings of non-essential shops, including on Sunday, on the basis of the local situation, while ensuring that crowds are avoided. District Authorities shall also continue to ensure strict implementation of all the extant directives of MHA/State Government on Covid appropriate behaviour, including social/physical distancing, wearing of face masks etc, directed the Chief Minister.

The announcements came as Chief Secretary Vini Mahajan, citing a University of Cambridge Judge Business School report of June 14, on Growth of Infection in Punjab, told the meeting that based on its findings, all districts are on downward trajectories for new cases. "The estimated trend value of the daily growth rate was -9.2% as of 14 June 2021. This implies that reported new cases will halve in 7 days, under the assumption that the growth rate remains constant. As of 14 June

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2021, the estimated Reproduction number R_t for Punjab stood at 0.69, significantly below one. Newly reported COVID-19 cases are likely to decline to about 210 per day by 28 June 2021," she added.

Further, said Vini, while numbers of cases are low, there are indications that the growth rates of cases, while negative, have recently reversed direction from their downward paths in Fazilka, Jalandhar, and Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar. The projected number of deaths by 28th June stand at 21.

The state had hit its second wave peak on May 8, with 9100 cases, which had come down to a low of 629 on June 14.

Giving details of curfew exemptions, an official spokesperson later said that the following activities/establishments shall, subject to observing Covid appropriate behaviour by all concerned, remain exempted from Covid restrictions.

(i) Hospitals, veterinary hospitals and all establishments, both in public and private sector, related to manufacture and supply of all medicines and medical equipment. Including the manufacturing & distribution units such as dispensaries, chemist & pharmacy(including Jan Aushadhi Kendras), laboratories, pharmaceutical research labs, clinics, nursing homes, ambulances etc. Transportation of all personnel of these establishments shall be allowed subject, however, to production of identity cards.

(ii) Shops dealing with supply of essential goods, milk, dairy and poultry products like bread, eggs, meat etc and vegetables, fruits etc.

(iii) Shops/establishments selling industrial materials including raw materials, intermediaries as well as shops/establishments engaged in export and import activities.

(iv) Activities /establishments related to fisheries such as fish, meat and its products including supply of fish seeds

(v) To and fro' movement of passengers travelling by air, trains and buses on production of travel documents. Inter and intra state movement of all vehicles/persons carrying essential and non-essential goods.

(vi) Delivery of all essential goods including food, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment etc. through E-Commerce.

(vii) Construction activities in both urban and rural areas.

(viii) Agricultural including procurement, horticultural, animal husbandry and veterinary services.

(ix) Vaccinations out-reach camps.

(x) Activities of Manufacturing industry, Commercial & Private establishments and services given below including movement of all their employees/workers and vehicles carrying them upon production of requisite permission from their employers :

a) Telecommunication, internet services, broadcasting and cable services. IT and IT enabled services.

b) Delivery of all essential goods including food, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment etc. through E-Commerce.

c) Petrol pumps and petroleum products, LPG, petroleum and gas retail and storage outlets, coal, firewood and other fuels.

d) Power generation, transmission and distribution units and services.

e) Cold storage and warehousing services.

f) Private security services

g) Farming operations by farmers and farm workers in the field.

h) All Banking/RBI services, ATMs, Cash Vans and cash handling/ distribution services.