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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

February 6, 2022

Press Release

We would like to inform that Thimphu will continue with the same arrangement of movement within mega-zone for another three days starting tomorrow. Any change in the strategy will commence from February 10.

This is in view of the weather condition in the last two days that deterred the health teams from carrying out community screening. The snowfall also kept people indoor and could not avail of testing services. All the samples would have otherwise served as a basis for either reopening or installing other COVID-19 measures.

The coming days will enable us to initiate more surveillance in the communities. People are also encouraged to come for tests for slightest symptoms. This will add value to the surveillance and give us more clarity to define the way forward.

Please use the movement within the mega-zones to step out for essential shopping, exercise, or take a recess. One can also make important visits to family members in the vicinity, and share a meal with parents or loved ones, an important fabric in our lives and especially during these difficult times. But inducing social gatherings, celebrations or festive occasions through such visits is prohibited and will be dealt accordingly.

In a way, reasonable level of interactions among people, as facilitated by the mega-zone movement, will also give us better indication of disease presence in our communities and give us more confidence for the onward planning.

Meanwhile, Lyonchhen Dr Lotay Tshering said issuing public notice on tightening the COVID-19 measures or imposing more restrictions comes with a lot of pain and discomfort.



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“It does not come easy because every hour causes huge inconvenience and loss to the people and the state. Besides disruption to our normal lives, just imagine how each of us could have engaged in more meaningful and productive activities if not for the lockdowns,” he said.

As restrictions bring economic functionalities in all public and private spheres to a halt, losses and pressure are mounting by the hour. And yet, as much as everyone is looking forward to coming out of lockdowns full swing, it is critical to reckon a cautious reopening across the country so that all districts attain the “green” disease free status and also sustain it forever.

“There are talks about living with the virus but we are not even going there right now,” Lyonchhen said. “Yes, Omicron claims fewer lives in comparison but death is still inevitable, especially among vulnerable groups that include our old parents and children.”

“If we let down the guard this time, and with every impending variant after citing similar reasons, aren’t we going to keep losing some lives?” he said. “So why even go there when we have the control in our hands right now? Let us take it till the end, together.”

Lyonchhen said just as prudent steps are being taken for unlocking, coming out of the pandemic must also be a cautious and gradual process, for which innovative designs are being looked into by relevant experts.

Moving on, Lyonchhen said His Majesty’s travel in the areas of outbreak at the moment, closely monitoring the communities and looking into grievances, offered an immeasurable respite.

“When the mere visualisation or thought of His Majesty among us brings so much tranquility within, just imagine how much radiance His Majesty’s physical presence and personal guidance would have brought in the lives of the people in affected places?” Lyonchhen said.