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Mumbai heads for partial lockdown, measures likely today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

FOLLOWING a spurt in Covid cases in Mumbai, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is set to shut down theatres, religious places and malls. On Thursday, Mumbai reported 8,646 Covid positive cases — its highest one-day rise since the pandemic began — and 18 deaths. Over 5,000 were cured and discharged.

Mayor Kishori Pednekar said

officials are evaluating the situation and have decided to shutter vulnerable places. "We want to impose these measures from April 2. It will help in controlling the crowd. In hotel and restaurants, 50% attendance should be allowed. It is observed that senior citizens and children are getting infected after going to religious places. We have to control the spread of

the virus by shutting down these places," said the Mayor.

Pednekar said Mumbai local trains carrying a large number of people could also be a major hub for the super-spread of the virus. "Except ferrying essential services, the other trains could also be shut down. Shops and business establishments will operate on alternate days, which would help in reducing

public gatherings," she added.

The BMC has issued SOPs for asymptomatic patients who prefer home isolation. Such patients will have to ensure separate washrooms and should cooperate with the BMC health officers who will visit their places for monitoring. Asymptomatic patients should keep oxygen meters, thermometers and other equipment for constant monitoring of their health status.

With the spectre of a lockdown looming large, the industry associations representing cinema, retail, and shopping industries said they won't be able to bear another lockdown. The associations urged Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to not impose a lockdown in Maharashtra where COVID-19 cases continue to rise.

Overall, the situation is grim as Maharashtra added 6,51,513 Covid cases in March.