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CMs can call lockdowns: Modi

PM says micro containment is the way to go, with minimum disruption to life

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NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday told Chief Ministers of seven States most affected by COVID-19 that imposing local lockdowns for a day or two and their efficacy was entirely their call, while urging them to intensively monitor, at block level, 60 districts with the highest infection rates.

The Chief Ministers of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, New Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh attended the video meet as did Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

"The lockdown that was imposed across the country has helped in gaining some measure of control over infection rates and boosting capacity. But from now on, micro containment is the way to go, with minimum disruption to everyday activity. State governments should take a call on their own whether local lockdowns for a day or two have been efficacious," said Prime Minister Modi.

He also informed the Chief Ministers that the go-

Viral tracker

With **84,200** COVID-19 cases recorded on Wednesday, India's tally stood at 57,27,660. As many as **1,113** new deaths were registered, taking the toll to 91,188.

The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. The States are classified based on where cases/deaths are rising (upward arrow), falling (downward arrow), or showing a mixed trend (zigzag line).

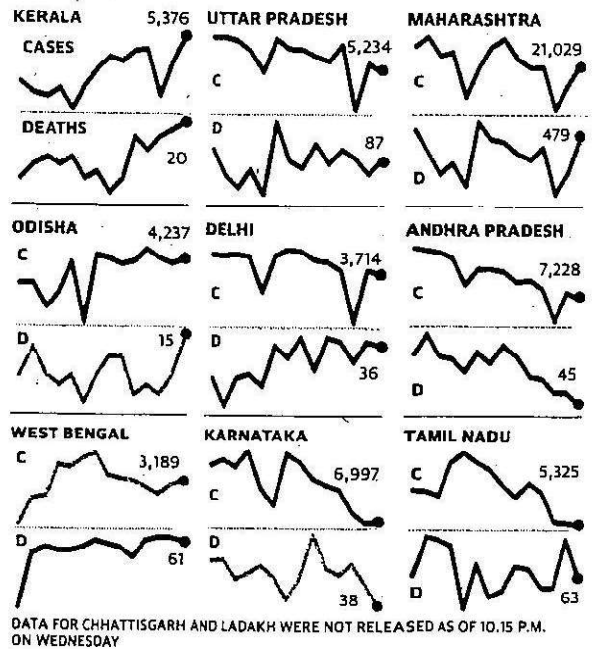
NEW CASES AND DEATHS

CASES
84,200
7 DAY-CHANGE
-9.7%

DEATHS
1,113
7 DAY-CHANGE
-3.2%

vernment had raised the amount that State governments can use out of the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) on combating COVID-19 from 35% to 50%.

He said there was no shortage of oxygen in the country, but States needed to pool resources to make up for shortfalls in certain areas through supply from others.



"Inter-State movement of goods and services needs to be streamlined further," he said.

"In all, there are 60 districts spread across these seven States that have a disproportionately high burden of the disease. I feel that if Chief Ministers, for a period of seven days, intensively track the strategy to deal with the

disease from the block level upwards, it will go a long way in gaining the upper hand," he said.

He emphasised that the use of masks was very important and needed to be pushed through aggressive messaging. "I know it is difficult to make it a part of everyday living, but we must push this," he said.