

INDONESIA MIGHT EASE RESTRICTIONS BUT THE WHO URGES FOR TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS

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Picture Courtesy: Yahoo News!

The World Health Organization (WHO) urged for a stricter and wider lockdown in Indonesia to combat the surge in the number of cases of COVID-19. This move comes after the Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, had earlier flagged easing the restrictions throughout the nation. President Joko Widodo cited official data showing a fall in infections in recent days and a drop in testing. Reuters notes the President saying, *“If the trend of cases continues to decline, then on July 26, 2021, the government will gradually lift restrictions.”*

WHO fears the increase in the number of infections and deaths and warned the nation not to ease the restrictions. In the latest situation report, WHO advised Indonesia for strict implementation of public health and social restrictions, calling for urgent action to address the COVID-19

Indonesia has become an epicentre for the global pandemic in the past month with a surge in the COVID-19 cases. The cases have multiplied fivefold in the past five weeks, and the nation recorded the highest death toll of 1400 casualties in a day.

“Indonesia is currently facing a very high transmission level, and it is indicative of the utmost importance of implementing stringent public health and social measures, especially movement restrictions, throughout the country,” it said.

Most of the large sectors of the economy deemed essential have been exempt from many of the lockdown measures. The current daily positivity rate averages 30%. According to WHO standards, a level above 20% is considered to be of very high transmissibility. All but one of Indonesia’s provinces cross the 20% positivity rate. In such circumstances, it would be better to tread with caution and not ease the restrictions.