

Czechs face curfew to stem virus spike

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The Czech government said Monday it would impose an overnight curfew as the country continues to record the worst coronavirus figures across the EU.

"We still can't see the decrease we expected these days," Health Minister Roman Prymula told reporters, adding recent restrictions have had "a negligible impact".

He added the [government](#) would introduce a curfew from 2000 GMT to 0359 GMT from Wednesday until November 3 to curb movement, though exceptions would allow people to travel to work or walk their dogs.

Prymula also said shops would have to close at 1900 GMT and all day on Sundays.

He urged companies to allow staff to work from home whenever possible.

The EU member of 10.7 million people has registered more than 260,000 cases and over 2,300 deaths since the March outbreak.

It now leads the EU in terms of new deaths and cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

"We are getting close to levels that threaten the capacity of the Czech health system," said Prymula, a trained epidemiologist.

The Czech Army has built a reserve field hospital with 500 beds and medical aid has been pouring in from abroad, including ventilators from the European Commission as well as from EU peers and others.

Prymula is set to leave the government after a tabloid photographer caught him last week leaving a restaurant that should have been closed under his own anti-virus restrictions.

He is to be replaced by the deputy head of a hospital in the second Czech city of Brno this week, according to local media.

Since last week the country has been under a partial lockdown that is also expected to last until November 3.

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