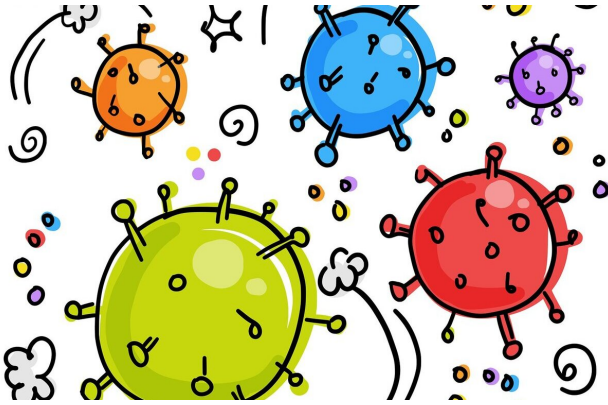


Portugal to declare coronavirus health emergency: PM

2 November 2020



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The Portuguese government will declare a health emergency enabling stricter curbs to fight a resurgent coronavirus, Prime Minister Antonio Costa said on Monday, two days before most of the country enters a second lockdown.

The government wants to be able to legally curb travel, check people's temperatures and requisition people from the public and private sectors to fight the pandemic, Costa told a press conference

"We propose that an emergency be declared for preventive purposes, to avoid legal uncertainties," the Socialist premier said after talks with President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, a conservative.

When asked about a possible curfew, Costa said that during a state of emergency "nothing will prevent, if necessary, limiting travel between 11 pm and 6 am, with exceptions for those people who have to work at night."

Costa announced Saturday that measures already in place in parts of northern Portugal will be expanded for at least two weeks to cover around 70 percent of the population.

As in other European countries such as England and France, the restrictions will be less severe than those imposed earlier in the year.

Measures already in place for nearly two weeks in three municipalities in northern Portugal will be expanded from Wednesday to 121 communes out of a total of 308, covering around 7.1 million people or 70 percent of the population.

People will still be permitted to go to their place of work if they cannot work from home and will be able to take children to school.

Shops will have to shut by 10pm and businesses will have to adopt staggered working hours.

Portugal, which last week for the first time passed 4,000 new infections in a day, paid tribute Monday to the 2,544 victims of COVID-19.

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