

Maharashtra-Third wave of Covid likely in December, says health minister Tope

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Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Wednesday said that the third wave of Covid-19 pandemic is expected in December but it will be mild in impact. Tope had said that medical oxygen and ICU beds will not be required during the third wave period.

"The third wave is expected to be mild and medical oxygen and ICU beds will not be required," he said, according to a PTI report.

Speaking about the current coronavirus situation, Tope said as 80% of citizens are vaccinated in Maharashtra, the infection level and the mortality rate is less at present.

The state had reported 766 coronavirus infections and 19 fatalities in a span of 24 hours preceding Tuesday even as the active cases in the state remained below 10,000 for the third consecutive day, the Maharashtra health department had said on Tuesday.

Maharashtra's tally of coronavirus cases stood at 66,31,297 as of Tuesday. Tope said the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic was experienced in September 2020 and the second one in April this year.

Tope said he had met Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya last week seeking the Centre's nod for administering a booster dose of vaccine for health workers, frontline workers, senior citizens and vulnerable sections and sought to inoculate children in the age group of 12 to 18 years against Covid-19.

"Mandaviya said he would discuss the issue with ICMR and get back," Tope added.

Meanwhile, Director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, Dr Randeep Guleria had said that a third Covid wave of a magnitude comparable to the first two is unlikely to hit India, as he underlined that absence of surge in cases at the moment suggests that vaccines are still protecting against the virus and there is no need for a booster dose for now.

Guleria hailed the ongoing Covid vaccination drive in the country and said that no booster dose is required in the country as of now.

He stated, "There is no surge of COVID-19 cases as of now. So, there is no need for a booster dose in India for now."

Medical experts too had said that a third Covid-19 wave as devastating as the second one is unlikely though cases may rise, perhaps across late December-February, the impact will be milder.