

Fears South Korea losing control over second coronavirus wave

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As per a research, South Korea could be possibly reporting as much as 800 new cases a day a month from now if it fails to stem current trends in transmissions.

The country has been reporting around 40 to 50 new cases per day since late May, mostly from the Seoul metropolitan area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live. (AP)

Seoul: The mayor of South Korea's capital fears the country is losing control over a virus resurgence and said Seoul will reimpose stronger social distancing measures if the daily jump in infections doesn't come below an average of 30 over the next three days.

“If Seoul gets penetrated (by the virus), the entire Republic of Korea gets penetrated,” Park Won-soon said Monday in a televised briefing, referring to South Korea by its formal name.

He also lamented what he described as complacency of citizens in social distancing, citing an increase in public transportation usage that he says has been approaching last year's levels in recent weeks.

Citing research by health experts, Park the country could be possibly reporting as much as 800 new cases a day a month from now if it fails to stem current trends in transmissions. He said the basic reproduction number of virus carriers, which measures the number of infections caused by an individual, has reached nearly 1.8 for the period between April 30 and June 11. Any number above 1 indicates a growing epidemic.

In a separate briefing, Jeong Eun-kyeong, director of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, acknowledged that the country was now going through a second wave of the virus, following a surge in late February and March centered around the southeastern city of Daegu.

The country has been reporting around 40 to 50 new cases per day since late May, mostly from the Seoul metropolitan area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live.

South Korea was reported around 500 new case per day in early March but managed to control the outbreak with an active testing and contact tracing campaign.

- AP