

What battle against Covid-19 entails

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize, accompanied by various experts and the chairperson of the ministerial advisory group, Professor Salim Abdool Karim, on Monday provided a breakdown of South Africa's efforts to tackle the spread of Covid-19 as well as plans for the road ahead. Here are some points:

SA's unique trajectory

The trend in Covid-19 infections in South Africa has taken a unique path, Karim said. Before the lockdown, there was a rapid rise in cases. But it has somewhat flattened.

Testing is increasing

As the rate of infection went up, the number of tests conducted increased, Karim said. This reduces the possibility that a lack of testing caused a "false" flattened curve.

Lockdown has been effective

A first wave of infections brought about by international travellers led to a second wave of community transmissions. However, this, surprisingly, did not lead to an exponential growth of infections.

Government concerns

Aggravating factors for community transmissions are high-density hubs where there is a high potential for the spread of the virus. These hubs include Johannesburg, Cape Town and eThekweni.

What's next?

Despite the success in stemming the spread of Covid-19 in communities, Karim said the "difficult truth" remained that a spread of the virus was unavoidable.

The good news

Government interventions have delayed a potential disaster.

Vital week ahead

Everyone needs to follow the lockdown rules while the government monitors community transmission, Karim said.

If the average number of day-to-day cases increase between 10-16 April, the lockdown will continue.

National surveillance day

Karim announced that once a month South Africa will have a national surveillance day during which a 5% sample will be collected from a small number of schools, mines and companies.

Concerns

Patients who have conditions, like HIV/Aids, are also a concern. South Africa's Covid-19 epidemic will occur at the same time as the flu epidemic, making it more confusing for people. – *News24 Wire*