Calls mount for lowering lockdown for mental health

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MORE formations in the country are piling pressure on President Cyril Rama-
phosa to relax the lockdown and move the country from level 3 to level 2.

"There has never been a time in the country’s two biggest labour federations which
said they would back the reported reconsideration of a forum of direc-
tion-general (DGs).

The forum reportedly said the open-

ing at 5 and 430 will be done under strict
enforcement of social distancing, hand
sanitization and the wearing of masks.

Cosatu said yesterday that the call
was justified as the country had to save
lives while also saving people’s jobs.

Spokesperson Zwakele Paola said the
country should now use lesson learnt
in the past five months to contain the
virus instead of pressing on with the
lockdown which is in force now.

“We agree with the recommendation for the
country to move to level 2. We will
need to save all the jobs we can, while
also saving lives,” Paola said.

The Department of Trade and Indus-
trialization secretary Zwelenzima Vavi said, in real-
ity, the country had moved from level 4
and 5 lockdowns to level 3, 2, to be
best described that remain locked up are tobacco, liquor and international tourism.

"There’s a lack of the sales of the
local industrial sectors," he said.

Workers are losing their jobs and
government stimuli amid the

Coronavirus

"We have economic growth almost non-ex-
istent," he said.

DA interim

leader John Steenhuisen said the time
said the time for the

country to completely end the lockdown has come.

"South Africa’s daily Covid-19 infec-
tion rate is declining, taking pressure off our public health system. At the same
time the vaccine rate has increased significantly. While this is no reason to drop our guard, it is reason enough to fulfil our economic duties. This must happen immediately. There is general agreement that a lockdown is unlikely but not impossible," he said.

However, the chairperson of the

min-

isterial advisory committee on Covid-19, Professor Salim Abdool Karim, said the
country still needs a few more days before
deciding whether or not it should ease its lockdown.

Karim said the latest trends in Covid-

19 infections and admission to hospitals were promising.

"When we look at the past seven to 10 days, the number of overall new cases has been coming down (Covid-19) that on its own is not enough because you need to collaborate with other information," Karim said.

Additionally, Karim said in the past few months, in every four tests conducted, now only one in five Covid-19 tests con-

firms a positive result.

"So if you look at the evidence… It’s a promising trend, but it’s too early to make a pronouncement and the next few days are a few more days. But it’s all going in the right direction," he said. "It is not evident that we are now on a downward trend.

"However, I am worried about a so-called" lockdown fatigue, to go by what people, must people still practice preventative measures like washing their hands, social distancing and wearing masks. If we don’t do that, we risk having a second wave.

By Tuesday, the country had recorded 566 109 cases. Of those, it had 10 751 124 recoveries.