

## SALIENT POINTS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

- Almost two years since declaring the first pandemic
- Covid changed the way we work, travel, play, sport
- Devastated economy, leading to the loss of 2 million jobs and closure of businesses
- The lockdowns were necessary for health reasons and good of the economy
- Health sector was strengthened through capacity building
- We at watershed moment and ready to enter a new way of managing the pandemic
- Fewer people being hospitalized, fewer deaths and 60-80% of population have immunity to the virus
- From experience of past two years, health service has learnt to manage the disease more effectively
- 48% of adults have received one dose and enter third year more hopeful than ever before
- The pandemic is not over, but life returning to normal and economy returning to full operation
- Due to the changing nature of pandemic and progress made, we intend to lift national state of disaster once public consultations have been completed
- The end of the national state of disaster does not mean the end of the pandemic; means we are changing the way we manage the pandemic and we will rely on health rather than disaster management regulations
- We are opening the economy further and resuming many cultural and social activities
- Since October last year we have been on adjusted Level 1, meaning many normal activities have been back to normal
- Guided by ministerial advisory committee, we are about to ease further restrictions
- We have decided to ease several restrictions as part of adjusted level 1
- Gatherings the emphasis was on placing upper limit on gatherings. Now both indoor and outdoor venues can accommodate up to 50% of capacity provided there is proof of vaccination and/or proof of vaccination no less than 72 hours
- This will benefit sports, cultural and musical events and activities
- Maximum at funerals doubled to 200 but night vigils and after tears are not allowed
- Wearing of masks, it is still mandatory to wear a mask when in public indoor places
- A mask not required when outdoors this means that wear mask in stores, malls, work, trains but no need for masks when walking in the street or parks or in an open space when exercising or jogging or attending an outdoor gathering
- Social distancing will now require a space of 1 metre between persons
- International travelers need to show vaccination proof or negative test not older 72 hours; unvaccinated who want to be vaccinated will be offered vaccination
- These measures are effective 23 March 2022
- With these changes, almost all restrictions on social and economic activities will have been lifted
- Further restrictions will depend on increase in vaccinations as statistics show that people not vaccinated stand a higher chance of hospitalization or dying from the virus
- Vaccination will reduce transmission at home, schools and tertiary institutions where there is close contact

- Concerned that only 35% of people aged between 18-35 years have been vaccinated and there is need to increase the number of vaccinated
- The more we vaccinate the sooner remaining restrictions will be eased

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