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Mumbaikars opt for low-key New Year festivities; keep spirits high

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Due to the rising cases of Omicron variant of coronavirus, the state government shared new guidelines on December 24. It included a nine-hour night restriction (9 pm to 6 am) to ensure no crowding in public places. Restaurants and theatres will continue to operate at 50% capacity even post 9 pm. As per the directive, there's a ban on New Year celebration, programme, function, gathering, party activity or happening in any closed or open space, in municipal limits of Greater Mumbai.

Speaking about the rules in place, BMC Additional Commissioner Suresh Kakani had told BT, "The restriction of less than five people in a group are for public places, like Marine Drive. Cinemas and restaurants have restricted entry. These entries can be monitored, so they can operate as usual, even after 9 pm, but at 50% capacity. These are not considered public places, but that does not mean they are exempted from rules. If COVID cases in the state go higher, we may think of implementing stringent rules on these sectors as well." Though the celebrations will be low-key, this hasn't dampened Mumbaikars' spirit to welcome the New Year.

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'WE WANT TO REITERATE THAT HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE GUIDELINES'

Pradeep Shetty Senior

Vice President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) & Joint Honourary Secretary, Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations Of India (FHRAI), says, "We want to reiterate that hotels and restaurants are fully aware of the guidelines. The staff is vaccinated and we are following all the guidelines and protocols. Restaurants will continue to operate as usual, and we are ready to welcome our guests."

OUR STAFF IS VACCINATED AND WE ARE FOLLOWING ALL THE PROTOCOLS. RESTAURANTS WILL OPERATE AS USUAL, AND WE ARE READY TO WELCOME OUR GUESTS

— Pradeep Shetty, Senior Vice President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI)