

## **Maharashtra govt extends restaurant timings till midnight, shops till 11pm**

Hotels and restaurant associations in Maharashtra welcomed the relaxation in timings of operation but said they wanted restoration of the operation hours before the coronavirus period.

In view of the decline in Covid-19 cases, the Maharashtra government has extended the timings of restaurants and eateries till midnight and shops till 11pm. The state government defended the extension granted to restaurants and shops citing the upcoming Diwali season. “In the wake of the upcoming festival season, it is now felt that restrictions imposed on times of functioning for various establishments such as shops, restaurants, hotels, among others, will lead to more crowds in the shorter duration they are currently allowed to function,” cited the notification. It, however, said that all other Covid-19 restrictions will remain in place.

Hotels and restaurant associations welcomed the move but said they wanted more. “The additional two hours will provide much-needed succour to the beleaguered hospitality industry. Our sector was the worst affected by Covid-19 restrictions. However, we wish extensions were granted till the pre-Covid deadline of 1.30am,” said Pradeep Shetty, senior vice-president, Hotel & Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI).