

05.01.2022

Shri Besavaraj Bommai
*Hon. Chief Minister,
Government of Karnataka.*

Sub: RAI appeal to urgently withdraw the weekend curfew in the State.

Hon'ble Chief Minister,

Greetings from the Retailers Association of India (RAI)!

Sir, RAI appreciates the State Government and the local authorities for the proactive measures taken towards containment, control and spread of the COVID-19 virus, while keeping the economic wheels of the State moving by ensuring that the retail activities function smoothly, and avoiding a state of panic, especially to provide essential commodities and services to the citizens of the country.

We are certain that the Government too appreciates the efforts taken by our member retailers in following the SOPs on preventive measures issued by the Government. Sir, while we understand and are with the state government in its relentless efforts to save lives, it is also extremely important that the economy keeps ticking and livelihood is saved.

Sir, this representation is concerning the State Order No. RD 158 TNR 2020, dated 04.01.2022, which is a nightmare for retail businesses like shops, restaurants and malls restricting operations on weekends because of the imposition of the curfew.

Sir, while the cases are on the rise, and the government has to take measures to control the spread to save lives, the government's criterion for determining further restrictions should be different than in previous times.

In this regard, we would like to submit that the Government should consider the following criteria to decide the level of restrictions on business activities:

1. The COVID strain has changed and the number of people vaccinated has dramatically increased.
2. From what we gather, the need for hospitalization is lower in the case of Omicron infection as compared to earlier variants. Hence the number of hospitalizations should be the criterion to consider because of the pressure it puts on the healthcare system.
3. Also, better enforcement of COVID-appropriate behaviour in public places like wearing masks, proper sanitization, and social distancing could be our saviour and we support the measure appropriate for the same
4. Any kind of reduction of opening hours of retail businesses creates more crowding and hence we appeal for longer opening hours.

In this regard, we appeal to you to continue permitting all shops, restaurants, etc. - high-streets or located in malls, to be opened daily to de-congest the market, so that customers may be distributed over the week, avoiding overcrowding due to restricted store operations.

Sir, we hope you will consider our representation positively, while we ensure our continued support to the State Government in the fight against COVID-19.

For and on behalf of Retailers Association of India,



Gautam Jain,
Director – Finance & Advocacy, RAI

CC:

1. **Shri P. Ravi Kumar**, Hon. Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka.