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## There may not be a second peak of Covid-19 in India: Experts

PH NEW DELHI, PTI

Healthcare experts have said that there may not be a second peak of Covid-19 in the country, and even if it occurs, it is unlikely to be as strong as the first one.

The comments come as the country's Covid-19 caseload surpassed the one crore mark, though the number of daily cases and daily fatalities have been continuously coming down.

Noted virologist Dr Shahid Jameel said India's curve for daily cases is on a downward slope since a peak in mid-September.

"At this time, we are getting about 25,500 cases daily compared to over 93,000 cases per day in mid-September. I believe the worst is over. But there will be small peaks in the future just as we witnessed in late November," he said. "I don't think there would be a second peak as we have gone through the festive season (Dussehra to Diwali) and a state election without a significant jump.

### 5K pilgrims to be allowed at Sabarimala

Kerala High Court has ordered that up to 5,000 pilgrims shall be allowed at Sabarimala Ayyappa temple from December 20, reports DHNS.

A Covid-19 negative certificate based on RTPCR test done within 48 hours ahead of reaching Nilakkal will be also mandatory from December 30, said the order issued on Friday over a batch of petitions on the restrictions at Sabarimala.

The daily number of pilgrims

allowed at Sabarimala was initially fixed at 1,000 for weekdays and 2,000 for weekends. It was later increased to 2,000 and 3,000 respectively considering the plea of the Travancore Devaswom Board, which said there was a steep fall in revenue from the temple. The state government also decided to insist on an RTPCR test for all pilgrims and employees after the Mandala Pooja on December 26.

What is the reason for this? If we go by the second national serosurvey, likely cases were 16 times confirmed cases. By that factor, India would have 160 million cases now," he told PTI.

It is possible that by now there are over 300-400 million infections in the country,

Jameel said. "By that token, we are seeing large parts of the population getting protected and breaking transmission of the virus," he said.

Dr KK Agarwal, an eminent cardiologist, said there is still 30-40% population in India which has not been infected by Covid-19.