

France to tighten virus lockdown rules on exercise, markets: PM

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France is to tighten its lockdown imposed to battle the coronavirus, strictly limiting physical exercise and closing most open-air markets, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said on Monday.

Philippe told TF1 TV in a live interview that he would later sign a decree banning from Tuesday [physical exercise](#) such as jogging more than one kilometre (0.6 miles) from a person's place of residence and also halting open-air markets, although [local authorities](#) could request exemptions in exceptional cases.

"Many of our fellow citizens would like things to be like they were before, in normal times. But it is not going to happen tomorrow," he said, warning that the lockdown could still last "several more weeks".

France has been in lockdown for almost a week, with only essential trips outside allowed, in a bid to halt the acceleration of the virus' spread.

But government officials have been concerned by images of busy markets especially in Paris packed with shoppers and joggers pounding down some streets in certain areas, as if life was carrying on as normal.

President Emmanuel Macron is said to favour toughening up the existing rules rather than creating new harsher ones, such as a curfew or even a ban on stepping outside.

"Going out to take the children for a walk or for physical [exercise](#) must

be within a distance of one kilometre maximum of your home, for one hour, and obviously alone, once a day," said Philippe.

He said while he was ordering open air markets to shut, exemptions would be allowed such as in places where the [market](#) was the main source of food.

The [coronavirus](#) has killed another 186 people in France, the health minister said on Monday, bringing the death toll in the country to 860.

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