

'Unnecessary events' big events should be scrapped: Merkel

March 12 2020

German Chancellor Angela Merkel called on organisers of non essential events gathering hundreds of people to cancel them to help slow the spread of coronavirus.

"That is a call to all," she said, noting that "where possible, [social contact](#) must be avoided".

Merkel said all events of under 1,000 people should be cancelled. The German government had previously recommended the cancellation of events gathering more than 1,000 people.

But with Germany reporting increasing COVID-19 cases reaching 2,369 including five deaths on Wednesday, Merkel's government has ramped up its response.

While acknowledging that developments in coming days could lead to more closure of kindergartens or schools in Germany, Merkel fell short of announcing a blanket closure.

The regional governments of Germany's 16 states will decide if they want to shutter school gates according to the local situation, Merkel said, adding that an option could be to bring forward April's Easter school holidays.

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