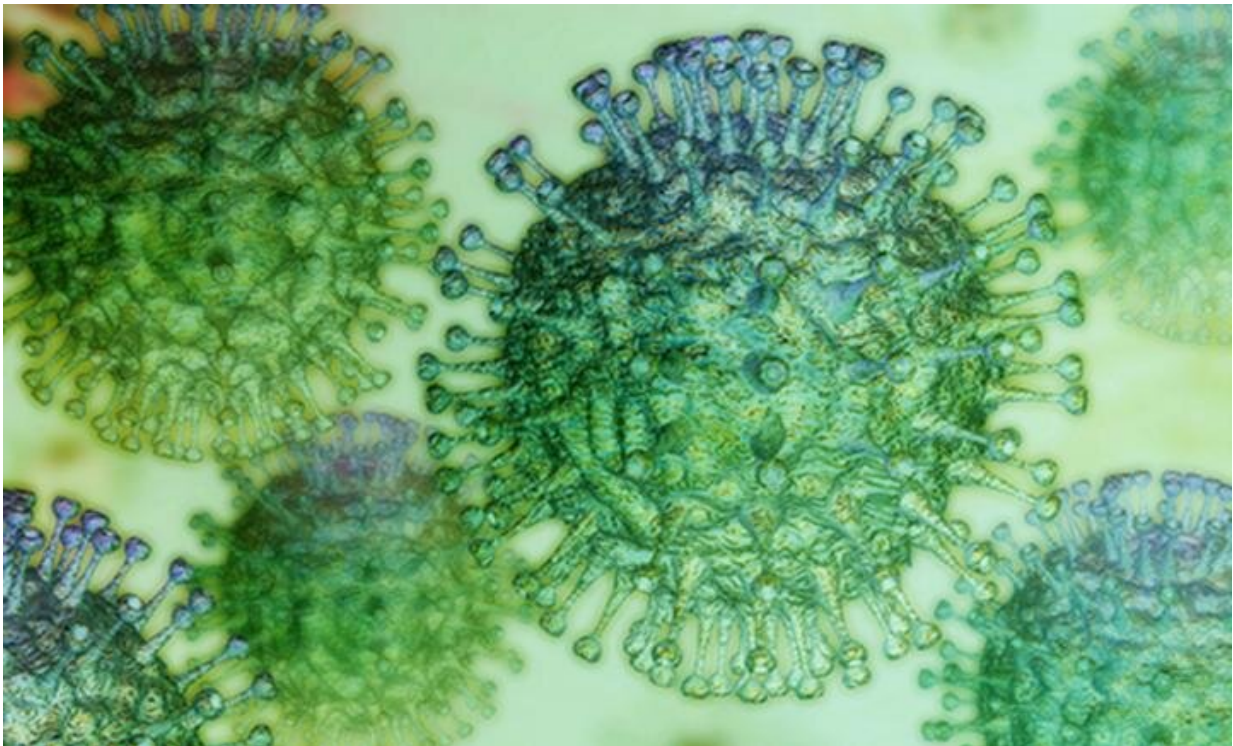


Germany to extend virus curbs to May 3: state govt sources

April 15 2020



Coronavirus. Credit: European Centers for Disease Control

Germany is poised to extend restrictions aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus to May 3, regional government sources said Wednesday, hours ahead of key talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel on the issue.

Representatives from Germany's 16 states and the chancellery have

agreed on a position paper which includes delaying a deadline on maintaining curbs, including keeping schools closed beyond the current April 19 cutoff, the sources told AFP.

Merkel is expected to announce the decision after her [video conference](#) with state premiers.

Ahead of the talks, her spokesman Steffen Seibert dampened hopes for a swift end to the crippling restrictions that have plunged Europe's biggest economy into a recession.

"The path we have to tread in the coming weeks is a narrow one between cautiously gradually easing measures and maintaining progress in the fight against the pandemic," said Seibert.

Germany's disease control chief said Tuesday that numbers of new infections have "stabilised at a relatively high level", with "no clear sign at present at they're falling".

While the trend was heading in a positive direction, Lothar Wieler of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) warned that it was not yet possible to say that the disease been contained.

By midnight, Germany recorded 127,584 cases of COVID-19, including 3,254 deaths, according to RKI data.

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