

Japan PM proposes state of emergency over virus

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Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Monday the government plans to declare a state of emergency and proposed a stimulus package worth \$1 trillion as new coronavirus infections spike in Tokyo and elsewhere.

"We hope to declare a state of emergency as early as tomorrow after listening to the opinions of the advisory panel," Abe told reporters.

"We're currently seeing rapid increases of new infections particularly in urban areas like Tokyo and Osaka," he said.

"Considering that medical institutions are facing a critical situation, I have received opinions that the government should prepare to declare a state of emergency," Abe said.

A state of emergency, which falls far short of the strict lockdown measures seen elsewhere in the world, would be declared for Tokyo, Osaka, and five other prefectures, according to Abe.

Pressure has increased on the government to take fresh action as Tokyo announced a record 148 new cases on Sunday, with another 83 infections on Monday.

Abe added that the government would roll out a stimulus package worth around 108 trillion yen to cushion the damage to the world's third-biggest economy.

"This is worth 20 percent of GDP, an unprecedented scale," he said.

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