

# Market associations blame vendors in meet with CM

**ANANYA TIWARI**

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 20

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal held a meeting with various members of market associations in the city Friday and assured them markets will not be shut. He stressed on the importance of enforcing and following health guidelines, while the associations unanimously complained that hawkers were not following protocols.

Starting with Navaratri mid-October, markets across the city have witnessed high footfall throughout the festival and wedding seasons leading up to Diwali on November 14.

This coincided with a sharp rise in daily case count, peaking on November 11 with 8,593 cases.

At the meeting attended by the Chief Secretary and district administrators, the CM emphasised on the importance of wearing masks, making hand sanitisers available and checking temperature of customers.

Kejriwal said the Delhi government does not want to shut any market and the associations should provide free masks to those without one. "Our MLAs, MPs, councilors and volunteers, all of you also go to public places



**At Lajpat Nagar.** Market bodies stressed on the need to regulate street vendors and remove illegal hawkers. *Praveen Khanna*

and distribute free masks. This is the greatest patriotic and human service," he tweeted.

Market associations said they had mostly been following such norms and would enforce them stringently, but they emphasised on the need to regulate street vendors and remove illegal hawkers.

Vikram Badhwar, general secretary of New Delhi Traders' Association, of Connaught Place market, said, "Shopkeepers cannot do anything about hawkers even if they are authorised. The issue is how to control social distancing at vendor stalls. The CM did not comment on the issue."

Jai Prakash, mayor-elect of the North MCD from BJP, said, "The issue is that there are no proper

guidelines for vendors. They too are part of the market. I had written to the Delhi government that they could be shifted to nearby parks, but nothing was done."

A spokesperson from the North MCD said they "regularly take action against illegal hawkers", while a spokesperson of the New Delhi Municipal Council said "the enforcement department with the help of the health department is enforcing protocols in markets".

"I do agree that on the ground enforcement has not been 100%. However, to single out vendors here is unfair," said Sunil Tripathi, Assistant Commissioner, (Shahdara South Zone), East Delhi Municipal Corporation.