

Germany's Angela Merkel under fire for failing to curb coronavirus infections rise

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Berlin, March 30 (RHC)-- Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel is under growing fire for her alleged failure to come up with a plan to reverse the increasing spread of coronavirus infections in the European country.

Merkel, whose Christian Democratic Union (CDU) is falling ahead of an election in September, is blaming uncooperative state premiers for the growingly chaotic management of the COVID-19 crisis in Germany.

The clock is ticking for the European country to reverse the increasing rate of infections which, according to its top public health official, could soar to 100,000 a day from 20,000 now, Reuters reported.

In an interview, the 66-year-old Merkel threatened to centralize the country's COVID-19 response as a number of the federal states refuse to implement an emergency brake mechanism on easing pandemic-related restrictions despite fast-rising infection rates. She said that the leader of her party had breached the March agreement by failing to reimpose lockdown measures in his own state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW).

On Monday, however, NRW premier, Armin Laschet, who is also a potential conservative candidate for the chancellor post, hit back at Merkel, saying his state had imposed a so-called "emergency break" by asking citizens to test negative before visiting some shops.

"I am open to every proposal from the federal government on what we could do better," he said, adding that the virtual crisis summits between the chancellor and state premiers should be in-person to yield better results.

Most state leaders, for their part, have already rejected Merkel's plans to close schools and daycare centers if infections rise, and many have decided to keep many shops, garden centers and hairdressers open even as the seven-day incidence rate per 100,000 rose to 134.

It seems that Merkel's conservative bloc will face their worst-ever election result in September considering frustrations over a slow vaccination campaign, a face mask corruption scandal involving two conservative legislators, and the absence of a clear timetable out of the crisis.

Germany's leading Der Spiegel magazine concluded that Merkel's Sunday televised interview showed that "she has no plan."

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