Publication	Date	Edition	Link	Headline
New Indian Express	3 April 2021	Online	https://www.newindianexpress.com/business/2021/apr/03/contact-intensive-sectors-may-stall-hiring-on-covid-surge-2285180.html	Contact-intensive sectors may stall hiring on covid surge

BENGALURU: With the second Covid-19 wave spreading rapidly and is expected to get worse, the

revival in hiring sentiment across sectors may hit a pause again even as demand in fields like cybersecurity and data science is at a record high.

Recruiters had briefly started hiring for the worst-hit sectors like retail, travel, auto towards the end of 2020 in the wake of vaccine rollout and eased restrictions. However, concerned recruiters are likely to take a cautious approach, which could lead to contact-intensive sectors freezing hiring plans, with several states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab announcing fresh curbs on public movement.

"Most affected are the hospitality and retail industries with restrictions and curfews being imposed. When it comes to hiring new employees, most companies are currently halting search processes, not posting new job openings and are also delaying interviews and turnaround periods." RP Yadav, chairman and managing Director of Genius Consultants Ltd told this publication.

He added that companies have mostly put their mid-senior and higher level recruitments on hold. "The second half of 2020 saw a gradual economic revival as things started opening up which led to new job creation and new hiring opportunities. Six months into the unlocking phase, however, a second wave of Covid-19 has put all hiring across major industries on a standstill at this moment," said Yadav.

On the contrary, the demand for digital skills including cybersecurity, data engineering, is very high, as per data shared by staffing firm TeamLease. Demand for cybersecurity jobs increased by 15-20 per cent during the second half of 2020 on the back of acceleration in digital transformation undertaken by enterprises.

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Currently, there is a demand for roughly about 1 lakh cybersecurity professionals in India and experts say that this figure is only likely to see a surge as organizations adopt remote working models.

Roles in hIgh demand

Digital skills including engineering and data scientists are some of the roles which are in demand, noted staffing firm TeamLease, with India Inc adopting technologies like cloud, artificial intelligence, blockchain and Internet of Things.