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Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

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Press Release

The #COVID19 National Ministerial Committee met with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed this afternoon to follow up on their March 16th meeting where key measures had been imposed nationally.

In addition to the measures issued on March 16th, the committee discussed on the following issues:

1. All passengers arriving to Ethiopia will be subject to a **14-day quarantine period in designated hotels** at their own personal cost.
2. Ethiopian Airlines will cease **flight operations to 30 countries** in the interim.
3. The Government encourages religious institutions and places of worship to stop gatherings and undertake worship through other means in order to limit contact and halt the spread of COVID-19.
4. **Correction facilities to expand and utilize other holding spaces in order to avoid overcrowding.** Additionally, new prisoners to be tested for COVID-19 before confinement to correctional facilities. While visits have been temporarily halted, prisoners with minor offenses and release dates that are near will be released from imprisonment.
5. **Harassment of foreign nationals is not acceptable and un-Ethiopian.** The public to understand clearly that the virus does not discriminate and therefore undertake prevention measure per the Ministry of Health Guidelines rather than assign blame and ostracize foreign nationals.
6. Volunteers that have been undertaking commendable coordination tasks over the past few days to also **adhere to self-protection and prevention protocols while continuing to undertake voluntary tasks.**
7. The Committee extends its gratitude to medical professionals that are doing critical lifesaving work without sufficient materials. Considering the increasing rates of positive cases, the Committee also **calls upon all medical professionals, including those in training, to be ready for the call of national duty.**
8. The **first shipment of testing kits, masks and guidelines contributed by Jack Ma through Alibaba will arrive on Sunday, March 22 2020.** In this regard the committee is working on the distribution within the country as well as the intended African countries.
9. **Night clubs and bars to cease their operations temporarily** as part of prevention and containment measures.

10. **Action to be taken against individuals and businesses that are exploiting the health situation** and profiting from the above market sell of consumer goods.
11. **Regions already undertaking preparations to elevate their preparedness** with the support of the Federal government in the provision of preventative materials.

The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of all individuals and institutions strictly adhering to prevention protocols established by the Ministerial committee in its March 16th meeting as well as the above additional protocols provided.

Understanding that water is a critical concern of various communities, the Prime Minister underscored the hastening of water projects in the pipeline to alleviate needs in the short term and highlighted the particular attention being paid in this regard.

Furthermore, through an economic sub-committee set up to evaluate the impact of the Corona Virus, particularly on vulnerable communities, further information will be given in the coming days with regards to measures to be undertaken.

The Prime Minister and the Ministerial committee call upon all to continue maintaining calm and equip themselves with accurate information from the Ministry of Health. **Citizens are asked to maintain strong hand hygiene and avoiding unnecessary physical contact in line with Ministry of Health Guidelines.**

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