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## The Prime Minister in Action

### 38th Meeting of the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters

June 18, 2020

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Photograph of the Prime Minister making a statement (1)



[Provisional Translation]

On June 18, 2020, the Prime Minister held the 38th meeting of the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters at the Prime Minister's Office.

At the meeting, the participants discussed the response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Following the discussion, the Prime Minister said,

“Over three weeks have passed since the state of emergency was lifted on May 25. Over the course of this period, new cases have been limited to only a few municipalities. While the number of patients that have newly tested positive has been increasing in Tokyo, this is the consequence of active PCR screening being conducted from the perspective of preventing secondary infections in night entertainment districts, where group infections have been confirmed. It shows that we are responding thoroughly to the situation. Therefore, in

accordance with the recently revised basic action policy, we will raise the level of socio-economic activities one step further.

Specifically, the restrictions on travel beyond prefectural borders will be removed, including those with some parts of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area as well as Hokkaido. Concerts and other events can be held if they are kept under a certain number of people or percentage of capacity. Furthermore, the requests for the temporary closure of businesses in certain industries, such as dining venues with staff who entertain guests, will also be lifted, provided that those business operators will adhere to the relevant guidelines.

Meanwhile, there is no change to our policy of promoting the establishment of the New Lifestyle and asking citizens to take thorough measures to prevent the spread of infections, including avoiding the three Cs (closed spaces, crowded places, and close-contact setting). I ask the people to continue their ongoing efforts.

In addition, tomorrow, we will introduce a contact-tracing app and further strengthen counter-cluster measures. If people who install the app spend more than a certain amount of time in close proximity to one another, that information will be recorded, and if one of them tests positive, a notification will be automatically sent out to the others. The app does not gather personal information and it can be used with peace of mind. We hope that as many people as possible will use the app.

Furthermore, we will ensure thorough border controls so as to exert every possible effort to prevent the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) from spreading from overseas. At the same time, in order to bring the economy to a recovery trajectory, it is also necessary to resume international movement of people partially and gradually.

To that end, first, we have decided to start consultations and coordination with Viet Nam, Thailand, Australia, and New Zealand, where the level of infections is stable among the areas and regions from which we currently deny entry, to allow some movement of people on an exceptional basis, while maintaining the existing border control measures. This will be subject to additional quarantine measures such as presenting a certification of PCR screening taken before entering Japan, saving locational data with the app, and submitting activity plans in advance. Based on that, we will consider the situations of infections both domestically and overseas in a comprehensive manner and expand the focus of countries and regions to allow the movement of people on an exceptional basis. We will introduce similar measures with those countries and regions with which we reach agreements.

In order to implement additional quarantine measures, it is essential that we enhance our screening capabilities and structures. I ask the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, working together with the relevant ministries and agencies, to introduce alternative screening methods, such as saliva-based PCR screening, and establish a new PCR center for overseas travelers, among other measures.

We are taking firm steps towards a new normal for everyday life in the age of the coronavirus. I ask that each of you exert every effort, in cooperation with local governments, to implement measures to restore socioeconomic activities, while preventing the spread of infections.”

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