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Regular Briefing of Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters on COVID-19

- ▲ The progress of and future plans for vaccine and drug developments, and
▲ support for overseas Koreans returning from Spain, and etc.

- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters held a meeting today **presided over by Head Chung Sekyun (Prime Minister)** along with the central government and 17 cities and provinces to discuss the **▲ progress of and future plans for vaccine and drug developments, and ▲ the preparations for on-line school opening on April 16, etc. at the Central Disaster and Safety Management Centre in Government Complex Seoul.**
- Head Chung** directed, at the meeting, relevant government agencies including the Ministry of Economy and Finance **to promote the support measures in an easy-to-understand manner to local governments and the public** so that the government's measures to support COVID-19 damage, including the supplementary budget, **can be effective.**

- He also stressed that although the situation has become stabilized, the decision **whether to extend social distancing drive** should be reviewed in a well-balanced manner in consideration of the other countries' cases such as that in Singapore.

1 Progress of and future plans for vaccine and drug developments

- The authorities announced that it **mapped out the pan-governmental support system** to assist successful development of medicine and vaccine in early stage after discussing **the current status of and future plan for the development of drugs and vaccines against COVID-19.**
- **The progress of and future plans** for COVID-19 drug and vaccine developments are as follows:
 - **In the case of medicine, ▲** the authorities are rapidly supporting clinical trials of **drug repositioning by expanding the therapeutic range of existing drugs** in order to develop a drug within the year, and **▲** developing **antibody drugs and plasma therapeutic drugs using blood of confirmed patients.**
 - **Antibody drugs** are being **jointly researched** by the state-run **National Institute of Health** and a local **bio-pharmaceutical company** (Celltrion) and are expected to be **released as early as next year** with the aim of **entering clinical trials within the year.**
 - Joint research on **plasma-based treatment** is also being conducted **jointly with a domestic company,** and **plasma-derived therapeutic**

drugs are expected to be developed in 2-3 months if a large amount of blood is secured.

- Although there is a six-month gap in vaccine development with the United States, Korea is carrying out vaccine research on various platforms* with the aim of developing domestic vaccines in the second half of 2021 or 2022 through public-private partnership and international cooperative research.

* Synthetic antigen vaccine, nucleic acid (DNA) vaccine, viral vector (mRNA) vaccine

- In the future, the authorities plan to support ▲ streamlining application of regulations such as simplifying blood acquisition of cured people, exempting institutions from IRB review, ▲ discovering promising tasks and expanding investment in research and development (R&D) for infectious diseases to study the possibility of virus mutations against reoccurrence, ▲ building an AI-based platform for developing candidate substances for drugs, ▲ expanding the research infrastructure such as the public vaccine development center (to be completed in October 2020) and the vaccine commercialization project team, and ▲ strengthening international cooperation on infectious disease research.
- The following are the operation plans for the pan-government support system to develop COVID-19 drug and vaccine:
 - The authorities will set up a “pan-governmental support group” for development of vaccines and medicine against COVID-19 which will be co-chaired by the Minister of Health and welfare and the Minister of Science and ICT ▲ in order to check the status of domestic drug and vaccine developments against COVID-19, and ▲ to establish supporting

measures by identifying **difficulties in the field.**

- They also announced that the government will **quickly form a working group and a secretariat** to support the operation of pan-government support group and **start to operate the pan-government support system within this week.**

2	Support for overseas Koreans in Spain returning to home country
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- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters** announced the **quarantine and support measures** for a total of **43 overseas Koreans and their families** who arrived at **Incheon International Airport** at **2 p.m. yesterday** on a special private flight from Spain following the first round of arrival on April 11.
- After entry into the nation, **a total of 15 people** were classified as **symptomatic cases** through the entry quarantine and got **COVID-19 diagnostic tests** at an open-type screening clinic at Incheon International Airport, while **28 people without symptoms** were **transferred to a temporary living facility** for diagnostic tests, which showed that all 43 entrants tested negative.
 - ※ One of 39 people who entered the country on a special flight departing from Spain on April 11 tested positive and was transferred to a medical institution while the other 38 people tested negative and have been quarantined at a designated facility for 14 days.
- **As all arrivals entering on the second flight tested negative**, another round of diagnostic tests will be conducted at a temporary living facility on April 17th, 4 days after entry to the facility. **If there is**

no confirmed case to be identified through the second round of tests, they will be released and discharged from the facility and go into self-isolation for the remaining 10 days after discharge.

- Currently, a government joint support team consisting of different ministries is providing facility management, living and medical support to ensure the safety of overseas Korean coming from Spain and prevent the community spread. Medical practitioners reside in temporary living facilities to actively monitor the health status and COVID-19 symptoms of quarantine subjects.
- The Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters asked for compliance with the “reporting guideline on COVID-19” to make sure human rights and privacy of overseas Koreans from Spain are not violated in regard to their transport and quarantine.