

## President addresses people in connection with coronavirus situation

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**On March 18, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at a videoconference devoted to issues of makhalla and family, raised the problem of coronavirus spread in the country.**

To date, this dangerous infection has spread to over 160 countries. The number of cases worldwide reached 190 thousand, 7.5 thousand deaths were recorded, more than 81 thousand people recovered. Taking into account the prevalence, the World Health Organization has given the disease pandemic status.

Unfortunately, this infectious disease did not bypass Uzbekistan and penetrated from outside. Currently, the number of infected in the country has reached 15.

At the initial stage of the spread of the epidemic, on behalf of the President, a special republican commission led by the Prime Minister was formed. As a result, mass penetration into the country and the wide spread of this disease were prevented.

Currently, about 6 thousand people are quarantined. Holding public events is limited. Starting March 16, students from all education institutions were sent on vacation. 80 thousand students were centrally sent to places of permanent residence.

In each region, special headquarters led by khokims are organized. The epidemiological situation is analyzed on the basis of hourly and daily reports, operational measures are being taken.

Medical facilities are transferred to a special mode of operation. Sanatoriums and children's health camps are adapted to work as quarantine institutions.

Compatriots who have gone abroad on business trips and on other affairs are returning home with charter flights. Traffic at the border is limited, but trucking has not stopped. Every day, many foreign and local freight carriers enter and leave the country.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, emphasizing that the situation is under full control, turned to Uzbekistan people.

"Our people, having gone through many trials, having seen both ups and downs, understands the current situation and approaches the issue consciously. Religious

leaders, led by the Muftiate, in their prayers ask for peace and tranquility in the country, wish to recover to the infected. All of us, regardless of nationality, language and beliefs, are united and confident that these difficulties will be overcome.

To do this, we must first of all follow the recommendations of doctors, strictly abide by the rules of personal hygiene and sanitation at home, in the family, as well as at work and everywhere, wherever we are. The most effective measure to prevent the disease is timely appeal to specialists, without hiding the disease.

Secondly, measures are being taken to prevent rising prices for food and other consumer goods. The State Tax Service, the department under the Prosecutor General's Office should intensify work in this direction.

There are sufficient reserves in our country, there is no reason for concern or panic. At the same time, we must confront the problem together.

I hope that all state and non-governmental organizations, our esteemed representatives of the older generation, makhalla representative, women and youth organizations will intensify the work on reliable, objective and widespread clarification through the media.

Thirdly, for our children to be able to continue their education during the forced vacations, broadcasting of lessons is organized jointly with the National Television and Radio Company of Uzbekistan.

Television and radio channels for meaningful leisure of youth should increase in the broadcasting network the number of programs dedicated to the history and culture of our country, films useful and interesting for the younger generation.

Dear parents can familiarize children with the best examples of world and national literature.

I want to draw your attention to another important issue. In the current situation, some irresponsible, ignorant of the real state of affairs and aspiring to PR person will try to spread various rumors and fictitious information.

In this regard, I ask our public: do not give in to panic or raise an alarm. We must prevent the dissemination of inaccurate, unfounded information in the press and social networks. Law enforcement agencies should take this issue under special control.

Dear compatriots!

The coronavirus pandemic, as in all countries of the world, will naturally adversely affect

our economy.

Due to a sharp drop in world oil prices over the past two weeks (from \$60 to almost \$30 per barrel), our gas export revenues may decrease.

Devaluation of the national currencies of our main foreign trading partners will reduce foreign exchange earnings in our country.

It is also possible to reduce the number of foreign tourists and revenues from their services. All this, of course, cannot but affect the gross domestic product and export volume.

On my instructions, the Special Working Group is taking measures to provide tax holidays in such spheres as tourism, transport, pharmaceuticals and light industry, extend loan repayment terms, and introduce a procedure for not applying fines for overdue external debt.

The government should develop and implement a program of measures to support spheres and industries, large enterprises that may be in a difficult situation.

In this process, first of all, it is necessary to prevent the occurrence of instability in the financial and commodity markets.

Second. It is necessary to maintain financial stability and prevent rising prices in markets.

Third. Uninterrupted operation of the basic and strategically important sectors of our economy should be ensured.

For this, it is necessary to take targeted and specific measures in the context of each industry, region and enterprise.

Fourth. One of our main tasks in the center will be the support of local budgets and the population.

All our people must be sure: we are fighting the coronavirus based on the principles of transparency.

We are informing the world community and our people in a timely manner. We will further strengthen the necessary measures.

Today I had a telephone conversation with the leaders of two neighboring countries –

Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. We agreed on all issues regarding cooperation and mutual support in countering the spread of the dangerous infection.

I am sure that our people, having seen a lot in their history, will overcome these difficult trials in a friendly and united manner.

I want to draw the attention of responsible persons to another important issue.

In recent years, we attach great importance to sanitation and epidemiology issues. Currently, there are 2 republican hospitals, 14 regional hospitals for infectious diseases, 216 territorial sanitary and epidemiological surveillance institutions in the country.

However, the material and technical base of most of these institutions, especially their laboratories and medical equipment, is in poor condition due to the lack of proper attention over the past 25 years.

Therefore, a draft document is currently being prepared on radical reform and improving the effectiveness of the country's sanitary and epidemiological service.

Activities of this service will be focused on ensuring medical and sanitary wellbeing, public health, organization of disease prevention and promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

To this end, khokims of the regions should personally study the local sanitary-epidemiological institutions, the problems associated with their equipping with laboratory diagnostic equipment, medical facilities and equipment, staff potential, and wages.

It is necessary to develop and ensure the implementation of programs to eliminate these problems and create reserves before the end of the year, using internal financial capabilities.

The Prime Minister will be personally responsible for studying each institution of the republican level and in the city of Tashkent, as well as taking and implementing necessary measures.

The main task is to strengthen the material and technical base, train personnel, develop science, and spare no money for population's health".