Etihad to resume flight operations today

RAWALPINDI: The Eti-had Airways that had suspended its services last month for outbound passengers from Pakistan will resume its flight operations on Thursday (today) with a flight to Abu Dhabi.

The passengers desirous of flying to the United Arab Emirates aboard the airline's aircraft would have to prove that they are not suffering from Covid-19, said the carrier.

The airline had suspended flights to and from Pakistan apparently after some passengers who had travelled to Hong Kong by another airliner were tested positive for the potentially deadly disease.

The Etihad Airways would now operate 12 flights a week from Pakistan, seven of them from Lahore, two from Islamabad and three from Karachi, said the airline.

Each passenger travelling from Pakistan must have a copy of a PCR test before travelling that (s)he should be able to produce before boarding, said the airline.

The result of the Covid-19 medical test should have been issued no more than 96 hours prior to arriving in Abu Dhabi. However, children of up to 12 years don't need to complete the PCR test if they travel with their parents.

The airline had initially suspended its flights to and from Pakistan on March 21 to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. It resumed its two weekly flights from Karachi and Lahore on June 13 but then came the suspension late last month.

Etihad Airways was the third airline of the UAE to have suspended its flight operations for outbound passengers. The General Civil Aviation Authority of the United Arab Emirates had initially authorised only one laboratory in Pakistan for the Covid-19 tests for passengers. However, due to the passengers' rush, the authority later approved four labs for the tests — the Chughtai Labs, Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust, Aga Khan University Hospital and Islamabad Diagnostic Centre.

The travelers will also be required to submit health declaration forms, available at www.piac.com.pk.

Meanwhile, Manager Airline Relations Salem A. Al Marzooqi has issued a new instruction for Covid-19 guidelines for all airlines, including Pakistan International Airlines. The restrictions apply to passengers who will terminate their flights in Abu Dhabi.

Airlines need to submit the list of passengers with the ICA+PCA test result by email to Duty Manager (OperationDutyManager@adac.ae) and Traffic Officer (trafficofficer@adac.ae) minimum four hours before STD.