



REPUBLIC OF NAURU
Government Information Office

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE
by
His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea

Tuesday, 7 July 2020

It has been six months since the global outbreak of coronavirus and three months since Nauru declared the state of disaster and partially closed its borders and commenced quarantine measures.

In this week's situational update, President Lionel Aingimea says "by the grace of God, we are blessed" to have remained coronavirus-free.

The president thanks health care workers, security, police, Nauru Airlines and everyone that has pitched in to help Nauru remain COVID-free, but warns the virus is far from over.

"This situation is not getting better, it's getting worse."

While Nauru does not feel the direct effects of COVID and still enjoy large gatherings, the president warns we must remain vigilant in protecting our home and borders using the example of the Australian state of Victoria that has been struck by a second wave of the virus prompting a closure of the NSW-Victoria border from tonight, 12.01am on Wednesday, 8 July. It is expected to be shut for weeks amid the coronavirus spike.

Australian media reports hundreds of police officers are on their way to the NSW-Victoria border where Victorians will be stopped from crossing at midnight tonight.

Regionally, Fiji has had a new confirmed case where a 66 year old man repatriated from India tested positive with coronavirus while in quarantine in Nadi. He is now in isolation at Nadi hospital with his son who travelled with him. The remaining passengers on the flight are being tested and under observation.

Locally, air and sea travel maintains their schedule with the recent arrivals of the CIE barge carrying water tanks and the cargo ship Capitaine Quiros bringing supplies. All crew members from both vessels have tested negative for coronavirus.

Freighter flights continue their schedules and our local staff needing to interact with flight crew are properly dressed in personal protective equipment.

Two Solomon Islander weightlifters who were repatriated from Noumea with Nauruan weightlifters have finally returned home, Friday 26 June, after being stranded on Nauru due to travel restrictions. They were hosted by Nauru following their time in quarantine at the Meneñ hotel.

“Those are the kind of things that make people in the region and international aware,” President Aingimea said underscoring that “Nauru may be small but our actions are big” and we are always ready to help in desperate situations.

The hospital upgrades and construction of the acute block is ongoing and expected to be complete by September. The contractors are now waiting for the remaining ICU materials and outfitting on the oxygen piping systems.

Upgrades to the oxygen plant means the hospital can create its own medical air that is used in operating theatres, hence eliminating the need to import oxygen cylinders.

The hospital is expecting two ambulances, a sterile machine and around 30 ventilators, thanks to donor partners.

In regards to overseas medical referrals (OMR), the president stressed that these are particularly challenging to manage at the moment amidst coronavirus, and emphasised that all patient approvals and entry into Queensland is made by the Queensland government.

The Queensland government also decide on how much time our patients spend in quarantine before they are transferred to hospital.

In these unprecedented times, it is important to understand that things are different and the usual processes to undertake in medical situations have changed.

“Those are the things [medical clearances and directions] we have to compete with,” President Aingimea said.

The Nauru Government endeavours to seek a waiver in these medical circumstances.

The Coronavirus Taskforce and the National Emergency Services are planning a second drill that is scheduled for Friday, 17 July and will require movements by the police, health and NES staff. The details will be announced in due time and the public advised accordingly.

Let's work together to keep Nauru free from COVID-19.

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