



REPUBLIC OF NAURU  
Government Information Office

**CORONAVIRUS UPDATE**  
**by**  
**His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea**

Tuesday, 14 July 2020

In this week's situational update President Lionel Aingimea says while Nauru remains coronavirus-free, sadly the number of people affected globally is not slowing down, highlighting the resurgence of confirmed cases in places closer to home in Victoria, Australia which has entered a second wave of virus infections and across to Fiji where eight new cases have been confirmed in the last week.

The president says the statistics are frightening and while it is obvious the number of global cases has exceeded Nauru's population, in a regional context it has also exceeded the population of the Pacific Islands.

President Aingimea reiterates the warning by WHO director general Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus that the virus is "public enemy number one".

Nauru is one of only 12 countries in the world that has not yet reported COVID-19 cases - ten of those are Pacific island countries and five are all the Micronesian countries – including Nauru.

The president says it is very important we understand and remember the magnitude of this virus and the tremendous efforts that the Nauru government as well as governments of other Micronesian countries have taken to respond to COVID-19 and protect our borders.

In talks with other Micronesian leaders, President Aingimea says the collective group is happy that Micronesians are at the forefront of countries that are COVID-free.

Nauru will be reviewing its travel advisories partly because of the resurgence of COVID-19 cases in Victoria, Australia as well as our quarantine measures that were put in place at the start of the pandemic.

The president says it is the first time in over 100 years that state borders with Victoria are locked as a measure to contain the spread of the virus. Nauru will look at these measures and how other countries are responding.

Travel restrictions would mean Nauruans cannot freely leave Nauru and travel to Australia or other countries. For Nauru, this will have direct impacts on overseas medical referrals and health issues; overseas education and scholarships yet to be awarded this year for studies abroad.

As the government tries to ensure things run as normal as possible, the new reality of COVID-19 is unavoidable. Many things have changed including face-to-face meetings which are now mostly done by tele- or video conferencing.

The last passenger flight on Friday 10 July brought eight passengers and two crew who are currently in quarantine. They will be tested for COVID-19 this week and released if tests come back negative.

The airline introduced passenger wellness packs containing sanitising wipes for hands and surface and face masks.

Nauru Airlines will now require passengers to wear face masks for the duration of the flight, aimed at protecting Nauru's frontline workers such as health staff, immigration, quarantine and customs officers.

President Aingimea says the global threat is increasing, so we need to "up our game in protecting ourselves" and prevent a window of opportunity for COVID-19 entry in to Nauru.

Construction at the RON Hospital acute block is making good progress and the ward expected to be ready by September. This will be used as ICU for people needing ventilator support.

President Aingimea thanks Digicel Nauru for donating a ventilator machine which arrived on Friday and is being set up at the hospital.

Digicel has provided ongoing support in other areas notably the free service offered for text blasting COVID-19 messages.

Nauru is also taking part in WHO mechanisms to ensure Nauru can get access to vaccines when they become available, with the president sending a reminder that Nauru joins the vaccine queue and it may be that given Nauru's COVID-free status, may not be at the top of the list, but priority may be given to more vulnerable and COVID-ravaged countries, therefore Nauru will go in accordance with its position in the queue.

The Nauru Coronavirus Taskforce will stage a second practice drill this Friday, 17 July. The drill expands from the first one in May and will feature a fire scenario at the Budapest Hotel and moving on to Location settlement and Buada district.

The public is reminded that this is a practice drill and anyone involved are acting the role and do not have coronavirus.

Drills assist emergency services and stakeholders in addressing and identifying gaps and response mechanisms.

The public is advised to stay updated via the official government Facebook page 'The Government of the Republic of Nauru' and Radio Nauru FM105.1 in regards to advisories for this drill.

Global confirmed cases reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 13 July, have exceeded 12 million with over 566,000 deaths.

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