



REPUBLIC OF NAURU
Government Information Office

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE
by
His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea

Monday, 4 May 2020

Nauru remains coronavirus-free says President Lionel Aingimea reiterating the government's capture and contain strategy is working enabling Nauruans to live relatively normal lives during this global pandemic.

From last week's Brisbane flight 16 people are in quarantine at the Meneñ Hotel, including a fisheries observer who arrived by a fishing vessel and 18 at Canstruct (Anibare village).

On Saturday 2 May, the World Health Organisation recorded 3,356,205 confirmed cases and 238,730 deaths.

In today's media briefing, President Aingimea said even though numbers are slowing down in neighbouring Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, there are still between 70,000 to 90,000 new cases every day globally.

The President says this means the numbers for COVID-19 continue to grow, and warns that every person that has not been infected is still susceptible to being infected.

"We cannot put down our guard, we must always be ready."

Epidemiologists are saying there are two ways the world population can be immune to coronavirus and to get to a point where it can no longer be easily spread around.

The first is that 60-70 per cent of the world's population gets infected with the virus and develops natural immunity; and the second is that a vaccine is developed, then most of the global population is vaccinated to provide immunity.

But the President says what is clear is that we will be dealing with coronavirus for a long time to come and the risk will be with us for the next one or two years.

"This pandemic will not end soon. It's still increasing in numbers and we have to remain alert."

Meantime, the Ministry of Health and the Coronavirus Taskforce is working vigorously to complete the refurbishment of the acute block and fit it out to World Health Organisation (WHO) standards with proper ventilation and engineering advice being sought from Australia.

Apart from these upgrades, lab technicians continue their training on the machine to test for coronavirus. The hospital is also scheduled to conduct clinical drills for nurses and doctors this week and next, to identify gaps at the hospital and then work on addressing them.

Nauru Police is also working on their own drills with a focus on helping the hospital including patient movements, and other things necessary to ensure staff know exactly how to respond to certain situations.

Two freighter planes are expected this week but no passenger flights.

On the weekend, port contractors, CHEC, brought in a shipment with cargo for the construction work. The crew spent their 14 days quarantine on the boat since their last port, Honiara, with the remaining days spent in Nauru waters.

President Aingimea said the usual health screening was performed on the crew including rapid testing for coronavirus. All crew tested negative. Their boat was also disinfected by Nauru Quarantine staff before cargo was unloaded and the crew remained in the cabin as the cargo was being unloaded.

The President said the message is our border control and health procedures are ensuring that the CHEC rafts are clear of the virus and we are protecting Nauru on all angles. Future arrivals of CHEC rafts will undergo the same procedure.

His Excellency offered his thanks again to partners for supporting Nauru's efforts to protect its borders and minimise the impact of coronavirus. In particular, the President thanked Australia (through WHO and SPC) for the recent donation of test kits for the GeneXpert system to test for coronavirus. The kits arrived over the weekend.

Thanks also to Taiwan for its donation of the Light Cyclor 480 II machine and associated test kits; and Israel for personal protective equipment, including face masks, body suits, infra-red thermometers, gloves and goggles, for frontline workers.

Special thanks and acknowledgement also to service provider Canstruct who has been instrumental in its support of the government's efforts by providing three meals a day for everyone in quarantine and also fumigates the whole airport and baggage after each flight - at no charge to the government, while airport staff conduct cleaning of the airport after each flight.

President Aingimea urges the Nauru community to stay vigilant and work together to keep Nauru coronavirus-free.

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