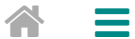


🕒 Saturday, November 14, 2020



MINISTRY OF HEALTH & MEDICAL SERVICES



PRESS RELEASE SPEECHES

Statement By The Prime Minister Hon. Voreqe Bainimarama On TC Harold And COVID-19

📅 April 14, 2020 👤 Riaz Hassan 💬 Comments Off

Last Updated on 7 months by



STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER HON. VOREQE BAINIMARAMA ON TC HAROLD AND COVID-19

14/04/2020

Bula Vinaka.

With the coronavirus keeping us away from our usual houses of worship, this Sunday, I joined my first online Easter service. It was an uplifting reminder that — even as we maintain physical distance from one another — God is always with us, He is only ever a prayer away.

Through this long weekend, in our hospitals and fever clinics, on our roads, at our checkpoints, perched above power lines and on the ground in cyclone-devastated communities, a great many spent the Easter holiday working in the service of their fellow Fijians. In doing so, these Fijians have honoured the hallowed message of the Easter tradition — the sacredness of sacrifice. If you know one of these heroes, whether they are a doctor, a nurse, a police officer or an EFL line worker — please, pass them a “thank you” on behalf of a grateful nation.

With coronavirus in our midst, Fijians were already living through extraordinary times. But last week, the devastating arrival of Cyclone Harold took the extraordinary to the extreme. Luckily, we were prepared. Our cyclone contingency plans kicked into gear, allowing us to keep our coronavirus containment efforts in effect while getting food, supplies and medical care to impacted communities.

Sadly, we’ve recorded our first death from Cyclone Harold — a 66-year-old man in Kadavu — and hundreds of homes have been reported as damaged or destroyed. But as we have done so many times before, we are proving our resilience and rising back to our feet.

Relief assistance is making its way to badly-hit regions, including by boat to Vatulele, Beqa, Yanuca, Kadavu and Southern Lau. Our disaster relief officials have been fever-screened prior to deployment to outer islands. Most roads are open. Water supply has almost entirely resumed. Electricity will steadily come back online through the week.

Our evacuation centres — which have been hygienically maintained — remain open to Fijians who need them. These families will continue to be fed and looked after until the weather dries up and it is safe to return to their communities.

On the coronavirus front, we have reported zero new cases through the weekend. Friday night, we tested nine samples. Saturday night, another 10. Sunday, another 21, and last night another six. All have come back negative, making four straight days of zero new cases. Of our 649 tests to date, our total confirmed cases continue to stand 16, and all of these patients in stable condition. However, none have yet been cleared of the virus.

Our present virus response is heavily targeted at three areas at high-risk of local transmission: The Nabua Settlement in Suva, the Soasoa settlement in the North, and Fijians under supervised quarantine in Nadi after returning from overseas.

In total, 252 Fijians who returned home from overseas are in government-funded facilities for 14 days of supervised quarantine. They are being closely monitored for flu-like symptoms and tested if necessary. Any Fijian who returns home goes straight to one of these facilities, no exceptions.

Nabua and Soasoa have been locked down. Six individuals in Nabua broke compulsory quarantine this weekend. We’ve tracked every one of them down, each will be held accountable for their irresponsibility.

In our COVID-19 Response Budget, my government recommended that I, my ministers and assistant ministers and all members of parliament take a 20 percent pay cut in solidarity with the Fijians suffering the virus’s economic ramifications. This was approved by parliament. We did so because we were prepared to lead by example and with compassion. We did so, because when Fijians look to me and other elected officials they deserve to see examples worth striving to follow.

That same level of responsibility applies to any member of any organisation funded by the taxpayers of Fiji. So I was extremely disappointed to hear the news that a civil servant was arrested this weekend for a curfew violation. Let's remember, no civil servant or any employee of statutory bodies and government-owned commercial companies has received a pay cut. Let's also remember, these Fijians are mandated by the Constitution to adhere to high standards of professionalism and integrity, and faithfully implement Fiji's laws. That is why I believe if any of these Fijians are convicted of violating our health protection directives, they should be dismissed

This week, we're massively stepping up fever screening in the Suva confined area. We've equipped our mobile teams with new thermal guns and scanners. By Thursday, we plan to screen over 150,000 people — but to do so, your cooperation is key. It only takes a few moments to have your temperature checked. So please, cooperate with our medical teams when they visit your home.

In addition to our mobile screening teams, our fever clinics across the country have seen over 5,000 men, women and children come in to get a check-up. Visiting a fever clinic is easy and painless. I've done it myself. The medical workers at these clinics will be able to tell you if you need further testing, whether that's for COVID, or other viruses like the common cold, flu or dengue. But it's critical for your health and the health of your family that we're able to distinguish between them — so if you're feeling unwell, visit one of these clinics.

I want to be clear: While the Suva lockdown is scheduled to be lifted on Friday morning, that will not happen unless we're satisfied that enough Fijians have been screened by our mobile teams and at our clinics. If not, the lockdown can — and will — easily be extended.

Globally, this virus is one of the most devastating killers in generations, with deaths rising past 100,000. To some people in Fiji, those tragedies may seem distant. But they are not a world away. Right here in the Pacific, COVID-19 has taken the lives of five people in Guam, nine in New Zealand, and 61 in Australia. If this virus spirals into an epidemic in Fiji, you or someone you love could all too easily be counted among the victims.

The coronavirus comes with many unknowns. But, around the world, it is clear that physical distancing is the only strategy proven to beat COVID-19. Some countries thought they had the virus under control and went so far as to relax restrictions. Sadly, they've seen case numbers flare back up. Fiji cannot risk those same mistakes.

We acted early to squash the spread of the virus. We shut our borders to high-risk countries. We closed nightclubs. We closed gyms. We closed swimming pools and banned contact sports. We've extended school holidays. A stay-at-home order is in place unless Fijians have life-sustaining reasons to travel. We have a nationwide curfew in effect from 8pm to 5am.

Day by day, these directives are helping win the war against this virus. But any success in this campaign won't mean a thing if our measures lift even one day too early. These rules certainly won't count for anything if Fijians carelessly dismiss them. So, these measures cannot relent — and neither can our willingness to do the right thing.

Don't go outside for no good reason. Don't needlessly socialise, don't meet up for grog sessions and get a shock when you find yourself behind bars. The pathway to brighter days will be paved with the sacrifices we make today. So, please, stay at home and help us save lives.

Use time at home with your families to think about what really matters — care for our country and love for each other. Let us draw strength from that compassion; strength that can sustain us through the days, weeks and months it will take to overcome this challenge.

Stay safe, Fiji. Vinaka vakalevu and God Bless!

Riaz Hassan

<http://www.health.gov.fj>

Related Articles

PRESS RELEASE

Media Release no 10. Measles update from Ministry of Health and medical services.

 November 29, 2019  Riaz Hassan

Last Updated on 12 months by . Since the last update on November 27th 2019 there are now 14 confirmed cases of measles. The latest confirmed case is a 36 year old from Makosoi, Deuba in Serua/Namosi. As highlighted in previous advisories, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services is strongly advising against non-essential travel [...]

PRESS RELEASE

Conjunctivitis/Cika

 April 13, 2016  Riaz Hassan

Last Updated on 5 years by For more information on conjunctivitis (also known as cika), please click on our brochure here: [Conjunctivitis](#)

PRESS RELEASE

Media release 2: 2020 Novel Coronavirus

 January 26, 2020  Riaz Hassan

Last Updated on 10 months by Riaz Hassan The Ministry of Health and Medical Services today called the first meeting of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Multi-agency Steering Committee. Members of the steering committee include representatives from

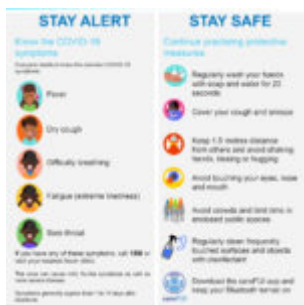
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Fever Clinics now f... ▶

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COVID-19 Posters



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