



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

Approved for Release: Monday, 23 March 2020

1. 14 Day State of Emergency

This is to ensure we have an isolation strategy so that we can pinpoint if the virus is present in our country after the first breach of security.

2. The first case

Has been transferred to Australia fit and well this morning and will undergo further medical test. The results will be made known to the country.

3. First case's impact assessment

We doing steps retracing for the first case to ensure we have a map of the impact (if any) so we can know correct statistics and put in strategies to deal with the COVID- 19.

4. State of Emergency conduct

- Provincial Government through Provincial Administrators, will coordinate with Provincial Health Authority, Provincial Police Commanders as lead agencies to handle awareness, and coordination of prevention and treatment at the provincial level.
- No public travelling from district to district or province to province in country.
- All schools remain shut for 14 days, all day students to stay at home and all boarding schools including universities and colleges are to maintain boarding of students but no classes are to be taught.
- Essential services will be maintained that includes health services, public utilities, banks, shops, fuel stations, police and defence.
- All employers including public services should scale down workers in this period to ensure safe work place from the spread of Coronavirus.



- PNGDF is on standby for call out to assist Police in this SOE period and beyond.
- All spreading false rumours and organising public gatherings will be charged appropriately.

5. Economic Interventions

I have the pleasure of meeting with Central Bank as well as all Banks CEOs plus the two super funds with the view that specific economic interventions be made for employees, individuals and business in our country struggling as a result of this crisis we are in.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 has not killed one person yet in PNG; the only person test positive after three tests has left our country in healthy state.

I ask our citizens not to panic; Government will do everything possible to STOP from coming into PNG, STOP from spreading or lastly STOP from killing patients.

But in the first instance now we want to map out our country within the 14 days to see which part of our country is attacked by the virus as a matter of precaution.

Our people are asked to live healthy and clean, and follow.