



MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary Committee on Emergency begins interviews on COVID-19 State of Emergency operation and activities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Authorised by Hon. Robert Naguri, MP, Chairman - Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Emergency

WED 21.04.2020 | The Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Emergency has commenced interviews with relevant stakeholders to collate information on the operation of the COVID-19 State of Emergency (SOE) and related activities to report back to Parliament on June 2nd, 2020.

Committee Chairman and Member for Bogia, Hon. Robert Naguri said the current SOE is a result of a global pandemic and was a “first of its kind” for Papua New Guinea, hence the Committee would not only oversee its activities and spending, as is the traditional function of the Committee, but also provide an advisory role to the SOE Controller.

Mr Naguri said the Committee would provide regular interim reports to the Controller as well as the Government on the use of data-driven measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and recommend effective strategies to combat the pandemic.

The Committee has been interviewing officials from the National Department of Health (NDoH), Provincial Health Authority (PHA) and Doctors and Nurses associations on their preparedness and response statuses and plans, any challenges which they may be facing and for their expertise advice and recommendations. Other stakeholders have been officials from PNG’s first Isolation Centre at Rita Flynn Complex, private healthcare providers and St John’s Ambulance.

The Committee is also looking at visiting sites such as international entry points, the borders and facilities including the Medical Research Institute (MRI) and health centres in high risk areas in the country, to see first-hand, what is happening on the ground and their capacities.

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“We are on a mission to gather facts and data so we can substantiate in our report, our recommendations to Parliament after two months whether the SOE should continue or not,” he said.

The Committee sanctioned by Sections 118 and 242 of the Constitution to represent Parliament is set up whenever a SOE is declared by the Government and is supported by the Parliamentary Committee Secretariat and National Parliamentary Service (NPS).

Apart from Mr Naguri, the Committee members include Hon. William Powi, MP, Southern Highlands Governor (Deputy Chairman), Hon. William Onglo, Gembogl MP, Hon. Walter Schnaubelt, Namatanai, MP, Hon. William Nakin, North Bougainville MP, Hon. Charlie Benjamin, MP, Manus Governor and Hon. Nakikus Konga MP, East New Britain Governor.

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