



MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary Committee on Emergency presents first interim report to SoE Controller and Prime Minister

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

THU 7.05.2020 | THE Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Emergency (PPCoE) presented its first interim report on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic State of Emergency (SoE) to the Controller and Prime Minister recently, with 35 preliminary recommendations highlighting pressing issues identified by the committee that needed to be addressed immediately.

Committee Chairman Hon. Robert Naguri, MP said these recommendations were based on interviews, site visits and observations with relevant stakeholders from the Health, Education, Foreign Affairs and International Trade departments, Immigration and Citizenship Authority, PNG Customs Services as well as National Airports Corporation, Air Niugini, Bank of PNG and the PNG Business Council to assist with the preparedness and response to a potential full-scale impact of the pandemic.

“Given the evolving nature of COVID-19, the Committee has resolved to report urgent and important issues surrounding the virus which need immediate attention during the SoE,” he said. “It would be of no benefit to provide outdated information after two months.”

Amongst the recommendations were; the need for more COVID-19 awareness to be carried out, using formats and language that was relevant for ordinary Papua New Guineans to understand; the identification of disposal facilities for COVID-19 infected material, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and gazettal of proper areas for incineration or burial of these material; and an investigation into faster testing procedures and production of test results within the country.

Other equally important recommendations included; proper training by specialists at provincial level of frontline personnel in COVID-19 affected provinces and others considered as hotspots; identification of a proper process for the repatriation of PNG

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citizens abroad with the acquisition of a facility to cater for the 14-day compulsory quarantine requirement; and the need for proper and accountable distribution of Government funding to the frontline agencies.

He said by having a more informed and wider perspective to consider, the Committee planned to present not only a greater but a more prudent and beneficial report to Parliament to decide on whether to extend or lift the SoE, come June 2nd, 2020.

Such interim reports containing the Committee's recommendations on the status and situation regarding COVID-19, as and when it can, will be presented regularly in the weeks leading up to sitting date.

Meanwhile, interviews with other stakeholders including law enforcement agencies are continuing with plans currently underway to visit the border provinces and health facilities in areas considered hotspots in the country.

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