



**H.E Te Beretitenti Press Statement
For immediate Release**

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Bairiki, Tarawa 28th July 2021

Kamauri:

To all I-Kiribati around Kiribati from Makin to Arorae, Banaba, the Line and Phoenix Islands. In God's abundant love and blessings to us, I greet you all.

I begin this press statement with an update on the two passengers who arrived by air on Monday 26 July 2021 from New Zealand. The two passengers are essential workers. The standing SOP for incoming passengers was observed and adhered to, with respect to the testing, transfer and quarantine requirements by both passengers, starting in New Zealand and through to their arrival in Tarawa and onwards to their entry into managed quarantine here.

Before they departed New Zealand, they were tested and went into home quarantine for three days ahead of their flight time in accordance with the said SOP for incoming passengers from COVID contained countries like New Zealand. The test results for both passengers were negative.

Our own SOP mandates a testing of people in quarantine to be conducted on days 2, 6 and 14 following their arrival, before they can be released from quarantine. This was applied by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) team as they conducted their first tests on both passengers on their second day of quarantine which was yesterday, 27 July 2021.

The test results showed that one required a confirmation test as the first test result revealed a positive, but the second run's outcome was negative. Further verification should be undertaken. It is important to note however that this passenger is asymptomatic or does not show any symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, coughing, body aches, among others and is

in very good health. MHMS, however will conduct an antigen test for both passengers for its further analysis.

As a precautionary measure, the Government has decided that the two passengers will remain isolated until such time that their test results are confirmed negative and they have served 14 days in quarantine as per the standing SOP. This is the same measure that was applied to the seafarers who tested positive on the fishing vessel in the recent past.

Arrival of additional COVID-19 vaccines:

I also take this opportunity to inform the public that on the same day, Monday 26 July 2021, Kiribati received an additional 24,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine that can vaccinate 12,000 of our eligible population. This is the second batch of vaccines from the COVAX Facility to make up our share that should vaccinate 20% of our eligible population. The vaccines will be administered on South Tarawa and Betio and the roll out is scheduled to commence on 02 August 2021. Those who have received their first dose will get their second doses from the 5th of August onwards. Further details of this vaccination rollout will be provided to the public by MHMS.

Curfew Order:

Finally, as I alluded to in my last press statement on Monday 26 July 2021, a curfew will be applied as part of our collective effort to familiarise ourselves with the new normal particularly with the ongoing spread of COVID-19 in neighbouring Fiji.

Government therefore has decided that this curfew and other new normal measures could not be more timely with respect to Fiji's COVID-19 situation and the need to further verify the status of the passenger who arrived on the last flight. These measures shall be effective from Friday 30 July 2021 for South Tarawa and Betio only.

The following will be applied effective from this Friday:

1. Government agencies and private businesses will continue to provide services and supply goods to the people as usual.
2. Government agencies and non-government entities are reminded to follow the COVID-safe practices as per the MHMS SOP such as physical distancing, no handshakes, wearing of face masks, proper handwashing with soap, to name a few.
3. A public curfew from 11pm to 4am will apply for everyone. This will allow the public to go about their normal business during the day and to return home before the 11pm

curfew time. Essential service providers can operate during the curfew provided they have secured prior approval of the Office of the President (OB). The Kiribati Police Services will enforce this curfew order.

4. All leisure activities such as playing bingo, drinking kava and alcohol will be banned where people gather. The public is encouraged to take home their drinks for domestic consumption.
5. Public gatherings are not encouraged. I make a kind plea to our Church Leaders, Island councils and family heads to assist the enforcement of this measure by discouraging gatherings of any sort as part of this new normal.
6. Inter-island travel will continue as normal. Cargoes and medical supplies will be transported to the outer islands and medical referrals to Tarawa will remain as is. These travels however shall not be conducted during hours of the curfew.
7. Schools on South Tarawa and Betio will continue as normal.

Closing:

In closing this public address, I wish to appeal on the Government's behalf to the public to have their health and wellbeing as their top priority during this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that as we navigate our way through this pandemic, we remain united as a nation and continue to adhere to measures put in place to protect us all from COVID-19.

I also wish to reassure you all that the passenger who requires further testing remains isolated and poses no risk to the public.

For any enquiries, please dial 197 for assistance. I wish to also confirm again that official information will be issued by the Office of the President (OB) only and should be treated as such.

I thank you all.

Beretitenti Taneti Maamau