



# Nauru Bulletin

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11 September 2020

## Micronesian leaders reaffirm SG candidate Zackios

*Leaders united in the sub-region's turn to head the Forum*

The presidents of the Micronesia subregion met virtually this week, 9 September, to discuss and reaffirm their commitment of their nomination for the position of secretary-general of the Pacific Islands Forum, and smooth over plans to host a special leaders meeting of the Micronesian Presidents' Summit (MPS).

His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea and his Micronesian counterparts, Kiribati President Taneti Maamau, the Republic of Marshall Islands President David Kabua, the Federated States of Micronesia President David W. Panuelo, and Palau President Thomas Remengesau Jr., remain resolute in their choice of candidate as it is the sub-region's turn to put up its candidate.

The leaders re-affirmed their support to the Gentlemen's Agreement which provides for the rotation of the head of the prestigious regional institution. The sub-region has held the secretary-general post only once since the



*President Aingimea in virtual meeting with Micronesian counterparts to re-affirm commitment on SG candidate and plans for special Micronesian leaders meeting*

inception of the PIF.

"We have a candidate just as powerful and just as high calibre as anybody else," President Aingimea said reaffirming that the Micronesian candidate Gerald Zackios was a former minister of state of the Marshall Islands as well as being the incumbent RMI

ambassador to the US.

Following Palau's plan to invite leaders to its Independence Day celebrations on 1 October, leaders agreed to the proposal to also convene a special leaders meeting of the MPS whilst in Palau. The chairmanship of the MPS will also be handed over from Palau to Nauru at this meeting. Nauru will host the 20th Micronesian President's Summit in 2021.

A request was also made for Nauru Airlines to run a service across the five island countries to 'pick up' delegates for the meeting in Palau, to which President Aingimea responded, "Two thumbs up, you have Nauru Airlines' support."

In the words of Palau President Thomas Remengesau Jr., "Hosting the MPS either in Palau or Nauru, we still have the message of solidarity of the Micronesian group. We can also showcase that economy is important but also the health of our people is important."

The Micronesian group of islands remains free of the coronavirus •

## NCD taskforce talk awareness, regional commitments

The Nauru National NCD Taskforce held its first meeting for the year, addressing capacity building and to support and complement the work of the taskforce, 2-3 September.

The objectives of this meet focuses on raising awareness on the most recent regional commitments on NCDs in the Pacific and to discuss examples of strategic objectives, key actions of an NCD national plan, that is to align with Nauru's current status and way forward in terms of its commitments to the health dashboard - Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA dashboard).

The workshop also discussed examples of NCD committee structures and terms of reference; explore the role of NCD alliance-CSOs-diabetes associations in addressing NCDs; and facilitate empowerment of the NCD taskforce in training on how to approach and handle stakeholders, communicate for advocacy and awareness, strategise to act on opportunities in NCD landscape, and mobilise resources; as well as explore opportunities for funding and support to the Nauru NCD

Multisectoral Taskforce.

While Nauru's NCD Manager Don Kadir facilitated from Nauru, his colleagues from the Pacific Community (SPC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) connected via webinar from Fiji.

"Lately we have been having quite a few webinars and it's sort of becoming a norm. But in saying that we are still learning on the use of technology and being comfortable doing trainings through webinars," Mr Kadir said.

"I think it's quite important that we continue to engage with our stakeholders and support each other to not only better manage NCDs in Nauru but also provide opportunities and strategies to assist individuals, families and communities make healthier lifestyle choices."

Facilitating the different segments of the workshop from Fiji are the SPCs NCD Advisor for Monitoring, Evaluation &

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## NCD taskforce talk awareness, regional commitments

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*The NCD taskforce meet for the first time this year with WHO and SPC experts connected virtually from Fiji*

Surveillance Dr Ilisapeci Kubuabola, NCD Advisor for Policy & Planning Dr Amerita Ravuvu, and NCD Advisor for Public Health Nutrition Elisiva Na’ati.

Facilitators from WHO comprised, NCD Consultant Dr Lusiana Manoa, Technical Officer NCD Dr Ada Moadsiri, Consultant Shelley Wallace, and NCD Technical Officer Saula Volavola.

The workshop was requested and coordinated by Nauru with its technical partners whom Mr Kadir says is beneficial as it builds capacity and allows the local staff to learn from other pacific island countries on “what works and some challenges faced in regards to the NCD taskforce and working groups.”

The taskforce was formed in November 2018 and in July 2019 four NCD working groups were formed, for: tobacco, alcohol, nutrition, and physical activity working groups, with the objective of coordinating policy recommendations and align NCD activities to better manage, control and prevent the rise of NCDs on Nauru.

The working groups met four times last year.

The draft Nauru NCD Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is under review and comment by stakeholders. The plan aligns with the overall strategic plan of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services •

## Year 9 scholarship for Queensland, Nauru students in Aus and Fiji now eligible

The Department of Education reminds parents and students in Year 9 of the annual government scholarship scheduled for next week, 15 to 18 September.

The department also confirms that Year 9 students residing in Australia and Fiji are now eligible to sit the exams in Brisbane and Suva. The exception is made in light of travel restrictions posed by COVID-19 restricting students from returning to Nauru to sit the scholarship.

Each exam day will be held from 9am to 11am at the Erange Room, Meneñ Hotel.

There will be a bus pick up commencing 7.45am and bus drop off at the end of each exam day.

For more information, contact the scholarships office on 5573143.

Don’t be late and best of luck!

## Final presentation for US ventilators

The final handover of the ten ventilators donated by the government and people of the United States was formally presented to His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea by the U.S Ambassador to Nauru Joseph Cella who was joined by Nauru’s High Commissioner to Fiji Michael Aroi for the video link from Suva, 28 August.

The ventilators arrived in Nauru in August and a presentation made to Mr Aroi mid-August as the ventilators made their way to Nauru.



*In a virtual meeting, President Aingimea extends Nauru’s gratitude to the people and government of the US for their donation of 10 ventilators*

President Aingimea expressed his congratulations to Ambassador Cella for the “commendable job in building the bridges and solidifying that pathway that is easy for both countries [Nauru and the US] to traverse.”

“It has brought in closer ties between the Pacific and especially Nauru and the United States and through you we’ve had more assistance coming in from the United States than we’ve had ever in our history. We are humbled by that,” the president said.

In addition to the ventilators, USAID is funding tailored packages of support that includes clinical training for the frontline health workers to safely use and maintain the ventilators •

Date	Subject
15 September, Tuesday	English
16 September, Wednesday	Mathematics
17 September, Thursday	Science
18 September, Friday	Social Science

## Judge Khan extends tenure

Justice Mohammed Shafiullah Khan extends his tenure as a judge in the Supreme Court of Nauru a second time at a swearing-in ceremony, 9 September.

The ceremony was presided over by His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea and observed by Chief Justice Filimone Jitoko and Registrar Ronald Prakash.

Judge Khan recalls fond memories of this first appoint in 2014 describing it as a “very momentous occasion for Nauru as the entire judicial system had been re-established once again.”

In 2014, Judge Khan entered the Nauru judiciary at a swearing in ceremony along with another judge and a chief justice during what was a trying time in Nauru’s judiciary. His tenure was later extended in September 2017.

“Despite criticisms from some sectors, we were able to establish a fully functioning judiciary and we were able to serve Nauru and its people,” Judge Khan said.

In times of COVID, Justice Khan stated the progress to be made in audio-visual technology and teleconferencing is important to enable uninterrupted access to justice for all Nauruans.

“We are in the midst of carrying out legislative reform so that parties can have access through audio-visual links, this is indeed a huge departure from the traditional operations of court but we have no choice.”

His Honour Chief Justice Filimone Jitoko endorsed sentiments of a thriving and functioning judiciary and welcomed Judge Khan back



*Justice Khan takes the oath a second time extending his tenure as a judge in the Supreme Court of Nauru*

“into our chambers to continue the good work he has done.”

“What we really would like to see is a functional court that accommodates all the changing circumstances that we confront, especially this time, the difficult times we are having,” CJ Jitoko said.

President Aingimea concluded the ceremony by thanking Judge Khan for the work previously done recognising “the world of experience that you have brought to the judiciary here in Nauru,” and to serve again as justice “gives good continuity and strength to the judiciary.”

As a former practicing lawyer, President Aingimea holds dear what happens to the judiciary and its independence and agrees that changes need to be made to adapt to new technology and the management of the judiciary •

## Airline converts second freighter plane

Nauru’s national carrier is expanding its freight services with the conversion of a second passenger plane to meet demand for air freight carriage.

Nauru Airlines announced in March the conversion of VH-ONU which served as a passenger aircraft since January 2015.

The aircraft arrived in Miami, Florida at the end of July to be converted into a 10 pallet freighter and weight capacity just under 20,000kg. The aircraft is due back into Australia in December with hopes of having it registered back under Australia’s Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and operational soon after.

“The Airline is adapting to these changing demands and making sure we are best placed to continue into the future meeting the needs of Nauru and our people as well as ensuring Nauru Airlines as a business is in a strong commercial position,” Chairman Dr Kieren Keke said.

Airline chief Geoffrey Bowmaker adds the “demand for freight carriage has increased significantly as a result of reduced passenger aircraft movements due to the impact of the coronavirus.”

“A significant advantage of having a second freighter aircraft in our fleet will be in the potential securing of longer term freight contracts because of the fact that we can demonstrate a ‘back up’ aircraft to ensure continuity of service should we have a mechanical fault with one of the planes,” Mr Bowmaker said.

In recent months, Nauru Airlines has been operating a number of additional freighter services into Nauru while maintaining its regular support of Qantas Freight in undertaking their regular overnight freight movements between Australian capital cities as well as undertake charter flights for the World Food Program (WFP) sponsored by the United Nations from Australia, to Fiji,



*VH-ONU is being converted to a freighter plane, making it the second freight carrier for Nauru Airlines*

Nauru and Kiribati, with more WFP charters in the future for other Pacific destinations.

Mr Bowmaker says historically, the freighter has been chartered also to service Norfolk Island as well as the export of fish products from Kiribati, as well as charter flights to Indonesia, Invercargill, Manus Island, Tonga and Vanuatu carrying a variety of products

“The addition of the second freighter will allow us to seize more opportunities to participate in the current stronger freight growth sector whilst we navigate through the COVID period of reduced passenger demand ahead of us,” the CEO said.

The completed freighter will transport a variety of goods for Nauru and the region carrying fresh food, mail, medicine, and other freight.

The Nauru government and the people of Nauru have recently increased their reliance on the freighter service since the start of the coronavirus pandemic and travel restrictions.

This year is the 50th anniversary of Nauru Airlines (formerly Air Nauru and Our Airline) and celebrates 50 years of continuous service •

## President concludes historic school visits

President Lionel Aingimea concludes his school visits this month with infant schools Boe, Nibok, Anetan and Meneñ.

First arriving at Boe School, 1 September, the president and delegation were greeted by students with garlands and leis before proceeding to each of the seven classrooms for an inspection and to engage with the young students.

At the school assembly President Aingimea shared the story of a pig, a whale, and a monkey and the friendship they share with the deeper message of helping one another regardless of size, colour or where one lives.

Later that morning at Nibok Infant School, His Excellency once again engaged with students in the six classrooms and at assembly shared the story of the Tortoise and the Hare and likened the determination of the Tortoise to finish the race, to the school's motto, Never Ever Give Up!

Deputy Minister for Education, Richard-Hyde Menke addressed the assemblies with words of encouragement about the benefits of attending school and to do their best.

Teacher-in-charge at Boe, Claire Bam addressed the delegation saying she hoped that what they have seen is agreeable with the delegation in the way the students are taught as they do their best to educate Nauru's future.

President Aingimea was accompanied on the visits by Minister for Health Isabella Dageago and Deputy Minister for Education Richard-Hyde Menke.

The following week was Anetan and Meneñ Infant Schools' turn, 8 September.

On arrival at Anetan Infant, President Aingimea and Madam Ingrid Aingimea were pleasantly surprised by the impressive traditional costumes of various countries the students wore for this special occasion, prompting His Excellency to take selfies with the students.

Teacher-in-charge Sibillia Ika addressed the school assembly saying the school ensures that quality learning and teaching is provided for the students daily along with good manners which she affirms is "very much needed to be instilled in our children so they become good citizens for our society."

"Overall, what our students strive to do today with the guidance of their teachers will make a positive impact on their lives tomorrow," Ms Ika said.

The school's motto, 'I strive to do my best' encouraged President Aingimea to share a new story with the students about 'Ping' who was tasked by the king to plant a seed which he failed at. However his perseverance to do his best won him the king's respect and was eventually bestowed as the new ruler of the kingdom.

The presidential delegation then proceeded to Meneñ Infant School, where teacher-in-charge Calista Cain says the visit "symbolises a closer partnership between the government and our school."

"As goes our school motto, 'hand in hand we can'," and "with the same determination and perseverance to ensure that our children receive quality learning and education at Meneñ Infant School," Ms Cain said.

President Aingimea again used 'Ping' as a character to a different story about helping one another to achieve something, and reflecting the school's motto that hand in hand, we can.

The visits concluded with a discussion with teachers thus providing them the opportunity to share, raise questions or make suggestions



*President Aingimea and Madam conclude school visits with the infants (from Top) Boe, Nibok, Anetan and Meneñ*

about issues they see would better themselves as teachers and improve the learning environment for students.

All the schools have put in various requests, some of which will be donated by President Aingimea and the ministers, such as shaded picnic tables for lunch breaks and some electrical items, while other requests will be put through the department of education for budgeting allocations •

## Finance, CIE: swear oath of appointment, secrecy

Staff of the Departments of Finance and Commerce, Industry and Environment (CIE) swore their Oaths of Appointment and Secrecy at official ceremonies on 28 August and 11 September, respectively.

The office of Planning and Aid Division (PAD) at the finance department was the venue for the finance oath ceremony, while CIE hosted its staff ceremony.

There are 112 staff employed at the finance sections of PAD, customs, revenue, treasury and the Bureau of Statistics.



*The oath of appointment and secrecy ceremonies are presided over by the acting chief secretary, secretary for corporate services and a representative of the justice department*

CIE has 36 staff excluding project officers who are at the end of their project terms. Sections of CIE are climate change, environment, agriculture, waste management, commerce and energy.

This important ceremony was previously afforded to a select few until a recent change in direction extending it to all public servants across the 26 government departments.

The ceremonies are presided over by acting Chief Secretary Sasikumar Paravanoor and witnessed by Secretary for Corporate Services Peta Gadabu, and a representative from the justice department •



## NUC rebate still open

The Nauru Utilities Corporation's low carbon fund rebate scheme is still open and encourages the public wishing to benefit from the initiative to fill out an application form.

The energy efficient appliances earmarked for this grant are: washing machines with 4-star energy rating or higher; and refrigerator/freezer with a 3.5-star energy rating or higher.

To qualify an applicant must have purchased their energy efficient appliance after 31 December 2016 and bought for personal use and is also required to have original receipts of the purchase.

Each individual is allowed two applications per year.

NUC says the benefits of the initiative include a rebate of 30 per cent on the initial purchase price of each appliance; reduced household electricity consumption; and you contribute to reducing carbon emissions.

Nauru's global contribution to carbon emissions is 0.003 per cent.



*Purchase washing machines with 4-star energy rating or higher and refrigerators/freezers with 3.5-star energy rating or higher to be eligible for the rebate*

Energy efficient appliance is registered with the Australian Energy Rating database.

Application forms for the rebate can be obtained from the NUC website [www.nuc.com.nr](http://www.nuc.com.nr) and also at the NUC customer service office at Civic Building, Aiwo or the Renewable Energy office at the NUC power station main office.

For further information, contact NUCs customer service on 5574035, 5574038, or 5574069 •

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Republic of Nauru

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