

Protest marches will not be allowed

We are in a pandemic that is affecting the globe. PNG is no exception. There is so much misinformed, whether deliberate or otherwise, being disseminated in the social media.

A notice has been sent out about a **“peaceful protest march”** planned for Monday November 1. This is over the issue of mandatory vaccination.

The notice being circulated is false and misleading. Vaccination is not mandatory and remains a personal choice.

Whoever is caught spreading this false information causing public tension will be arrested and dealt with accordingly.

Under the National Pandemic Act 2020, I as Controller, have issued a number of measures aimed at mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus. One such measure includes the ban of gatherings of more than 20 persons. This planned protest march is therefore not approved and against the efforts of the PNG government in stopping the spread of the virus.

Also, the decision to decide specific measures for provinces rests in the provincial administration apparatus set up to tackle the pandemic.

The NCD Provincial Health Authority, the NCD City Manager and the Office of the NCD Metropolitan Superintendent as a body is entrusted with deciding measures specific to the NCD and this includes whether to have a lock-down or not. This body, together with the National Control Centre, also approves events and activities within the city. Accordingly, this body, nor the NCC have approved this planned protest march for Monday.

This march is therefore illegal and will not be allowed to go ahead. Organizers of this march will be identified and dealt with. NCD police have been directed to stop any gathering of more than 20 people around the city.

I appeal to our citizens to please work with us. We are in difficult times and need your help, support and cooperation. We are not your enemy. COVID-19 is. So please help us to help you.

Authorised by:



MR DAVID MANNING, MBE, O.St.J., QPM, DPS
CONTROLLER, NATIONAL PANDEMIC RESPONSE
NATIONAL CONTROL CENTRE