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August 16, 2022

Ngiwal State Visit

Office of the President
Koror, Republic of Palau

Ngiwal, PALAU - Concerns about housing, water, and cost of living were raised by people in Ngiwal on Monday night as President Surangel Whipps Jr. continues to meet with residents around the country.

At Labek, Ngiwal, the President, accompanied by members of the Cabinet, provided an update on some of the issues the Republic faces. Ngiwal was the ninth state visited for discussions.

Gov. Francisco Melaitau raised the point that the State Government of Ngiwal had increased their minimum wage to \$4. Meanwhile, the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of the National government continue discussions on raising the minimum wage for our people in the government and private sector, from the current \$3.50, where it's been since 2013 - that was nine years ago.

Meanwhile, as noted by the people of Ngiwal, and reiterated by Palauans during other state visits, the cost of gas, power, housing and other necessities has increased.

Several residents voiced concerns about Pension. While retirees received their pension payments days ago, many are worried still that the pension plan is in danger of collapsing. This is why the Ministry of Finance and the Office of the President has been working with consultants on the Pension Plan. It would allow two things - pension payments to continue for current retirees, and current employees to have pensions when they retire in the future.

President Whipps said this is why he, as noted by Gov. Melaitau, the people's Office of the President has to fight to increase the minimum wage. The Judiciary had increased their minimum wage and we also commend the OEK leaders who recognize the increased cost of living and addressed this with their employees either through wage increases or cost of living allowances.

We now need to turn our eyes to the rest of the nation, the employees of the executive branch and the rest of the government and private sector.

Teachers living in Ngiwal also raised concerns about wages, which the President said the Ministry of Education is working on a proposal to address.

See photos at: <https://bit.ly/3CnLR9G>

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