



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Office of the Minister

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PRESS RELEASE

Minister Dekena: Department to strengthen school security

The Department of Education is taking immediate steps to review and strengthen school security across the country following a violent intrusion at Nawaeb Lutheran Secondary School in Lae, which left nine students injured.

Minister for Education, Hon. Lucas Dawa Dekena, strongly condemned the criminal actions and reaffirmed the government's commitment to making all schools safe and secure for students.

"We will not allow criminals to bring fear into our schools. Every student has the right to feel safe and protected while they learn.

"The Department is already working with the Morobe Provincial Education Division, police, and local leaders to ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice and that measures are in place to prevent a repeat of this horrific incident," Minister Dekena said.

He added: "The incident at Nawaeb Lutheran Secondary School was a grave violation of student safety and security.

However, through the swift efforts of school leaders, provincial authorities, and law enforcement, the situation has been brought under control."

The school has since resumed normal classes. This week is the assessment period, and the school will close for the Term 2 break on Friday, 20 June 2025. Security has been increased on campus and students are being monitored closely to ensure their safety.

In response to the incident, the Department, through the Morobe Provincial Education Division, will immediately review school security measures in the province.

This review will also apply to all schools nationwide. The measures include: Tighter gate access control; more police patrols during vulnerable hours; stronger community partnerships to improve school safety; and psychological support for affected students.

On the evening of Thursday, 5 January 2025, seventeen armed individuals, believed to be part of a criminal group, entered the Nawaeb Lutheran Secondary School grounds and attempted to steal mobile phones from the girls' dormitory.

During the confrontation, seven female students were stabbed, and two male students were hurt while trying to drive the attackers away. Two of the female students remain in critical condition at Angau Memorial Hospital, while the rest have been treated and discharged.

Secretary for Education, Dr. Uke Kombra, confirmed that the attack was not linked to land disputes, school fees, or internal issues.

"This was an act of opportunistic criminal behaviour targeting students," Dr. Kombra said.

The Department is urging parents, community leaders, and citizens to work together with schools to prevent such incidents and ensure schools remain safe spaces for learning and growth.

Approved for release by:

HON. LUCAS DAWA DEKENA
Minister