Presidential Communications Operations Office
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON AND CHIEF PRESIDENTIAL LEGAL COUNSEL SECRETARY SALVADOR PANELO MARCH 10, 2020 (12:37 P.M. – 1:11 P.M.)

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Good afternoon, MPC. We have Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and Spokesperson Secretary Salvador Panelo.

SEC. PANELO: Good afternoon, MPC. Virus-free afternoon…

VIRGIL LOPEZ/GMA NEWS ONLINE: Sir, clarify lang. So the President will push through with his visit to Boracay on Thursday?

SEC. PANELO: Yes, there's a scheduled event on distribution of certificate, land certificates on Thursday afternoon.

VIRGIL LOPEZ/GMA NEWS ONLINE: Tapos, sir, will he go around Boracay or—

SEC. PANELO: No, I don't think he will go around. After the event, there is another event in the evening.

VIRGIL LOPEZ/GMA NEWS ONLINE: Saan, sir? Sa Boracay din?

SEC. PANELO: Doon din. One of the hotels, I think, to meet with some tourists ... guest of Secretary Berna.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, I understand this is being done ostensibly to promote tourism because I think the tourist spots in the country have been badly affected.

SEC. PANELO: Not necessarily. That's why—what he said yesterday was, "I'm going there to distribute certificates."

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Will the President's movement be limited given what—although kahit sinabi niya na medyo hindi niya gusto iyong sa PSG na…

SEC. PANELO: Then you have the … you have the answer.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: I mean will he be limited … the movement?

SEC. PANELO: Even if you limit him, he doesn't want to be limited.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, iyon pong DOT is trying to promote iyong mga domestic tourism. First off, given what had happened, iyong mga local transmissions 'no, ano po iyong …

talk to the public now, ano po iyong dapat advice sa kanila? Should they be going out of town, go around or maybe just stay at home?

SEC. PANELO: Well, as the DOH says, stay indoors would be the ideal, avoid crowds. If it's not that important or urgent, then we should stay at home. Those who want to travel abroad, if it's not really that important, I think—I understand there have been many among my friends texting me that they are cancelling their flights to Europe, US, Japan, Korea – that's a good decision. Anyway this is just temporary.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, just to continue your sentence. Those who are planning abroad, better that they cancel?

SEC. PANELO: Well, the prudent thing to do is to reset whatever travels you have in mind if it's not that important. If it's a matter of life and death, then…

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, iyong nasa tourism 'no, what are you going to do about iyong effect ng COVID sa mga tourist spots natin because especially it's going to be summer na in the next few months and baka natatakot iyong mga tao to travel? So first question is: How are we going to help the tourism industry?

SEC. PANELO: Tourism industry all over the world will be affected, so we have to brace ourselves for that. Whether we like it or not, there will be business losses and we should brave ourselves for that.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Would you advise people to travel during the summer?

SEC. PANELO: Come again?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Would you advise the public to travel during the summer?

SEC. PANELO: That's for them to decide. But the prudent thing, as DOH says and the World Health Organization, is to stay put.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay, thank you.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Hi, sir. Sir, si Congressman Salceda po, he is insisting to implement the 7-day lockdown. And then sa Senate interview kay Senator Bong Go kahapon, parang … it seems na parang sinusuportahan niya at baka maibulong daw niya sa Presidente. Nagkita sila kagabi. Anong take ng Presidente dito, sir, at kung naibulong nga ba?

SEC. PANELO: Oh, eh 'di ba you heard him. You heard him during the meeting, he said it's not the time yet. He hopes and prays that it will not come, the situation where we will be forced to lockdown.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Oo, kasi parang contention yata ni Congressman Salceda is bakit daw kailangang sundin iyong policy, eh parang hindi na daw dapat—

SEC. PANELO: 'Di ba may response si President doon, "It's not that, but you have to weigh things." Sabi niya 'di ba, you were listening to him. He already responded to that.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Sir, one thing. Doon sa 'no touch' policy ng Pangulo—sa Pangulo actually…

SEC. PANELO: He won't follow it. He did not follow it.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: [Laughs] He did not, kasi kahit—sa Cabinet ba, sir, sa Cabinet members niya, ano iyong protocol na pinapa… ang pinapasunod sa inyo, sir—

SEC. PANELO: Wala.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Kasi he's like—

SEC. PANELO: Eh he keeps on shaking the hands of members of the Cabinet, hindi ba?

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: So, hindi kayo kasali?

SEC. PANELO: Ano, ano?

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Hindi kayo, sir, kasali doon sa 'no touch' policy sa Presidente?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, kasali. Pero how can you stop the President from shaking your hands?

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Yeah, iyon nga. So malalagay siya sa alanganin, sir, if in case na gawin niya iyon in public?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, wala naman kay Presidente iyon 'di ba? "If it's my time now, it's my time. Goodbye!" Hindi ba ganiyan ang palaging sagot niya.

JINKY BATICADOS/IBC: Okay, sir. Thank you, sir.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Hi, sir. Good afternoon. Sir, after the presscon last night, there were mixed reactions all over social media. Some saying, many [were] saying that after the President's briefing, they were not somehow satisfied. They were looking for assurance from the President and didn't get it from the press conference last night. Your reaction to this, sir?

SEC. PANELO: They were not assured of what?

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: They were not assured of some sort of security or they were not appeased or they didn't feel that the government was ready, or at least that the government can address the problem.

SEC. PANELO: That means they were not listening to the President. The President was very clear – with respect to money that is needed to be used for containing this disease, we have the money; with respect to protocols, we have the protocols.

You know, it's more—I think, it's more of community cooperation and self-help. We have to do our part. We cannot be insisting on traveling when it is not the right time to travel.

You must remember that China now has dramatically decreased the number of confirmed cases and others I think. But in Italy, it's worst – there is a nationwide lockdown. But according to Secretary Duque, it's 'hilaw' because everybody can still travel from one place to another in Italy. Baka iyong lockdown nila eh no-in, no-out sa Italy mismo. 'Di ganoon din iyon. Kasi the purpose of the lockdown is to contain you precisely in your place/places eh. Pero kung nakakalabas ka pa rin papunta sa kabila, eh hindi nga naman lockdown iyon.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Sec., clarification lang. Iyong declaration ni Presidente kagabi na walang pasok from—

SEC. PANELO: Yes, up to Saturday.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Oo, up to Saturday. Iyong mga bata sabi niya, kailangan kung hindi papasok at dahil nga walang klase naman, mag-stay sa bahay.

SEC. PANELO: Sa bahay na lang, yes.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Kung makikita ba sa labas ng bahay, ano ang instruction? Tama ba iyong narinig namin sa mga barangay chairman, sa mga—

SEC. PANELO: Papauwiin.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Ano ito, huhulihin ba sila? Ikukulong sa barangay hall? Anong gagawin?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi. Sasabihin, "Umuwi na kayo."

HENRY URI/DZRH: Oh iyon, kung hindi raw ho susunod?

SEC. PANELO: Oh eh di tatawagan mo ang parent, 'Itong mga anak mo...'

HENRY URI/DZRH: Iyon ay kung menor de edad, ano ho?

SEC. PANELO: Oo.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Pero kung mga edad disiotso na iyan, college students na iyan, papaano ang gagawin diyan kung ayaw sumunod?

SEC. PANELO: You know, basta ginagawa ng pamahalaan ang dapat nating gawin. Pero kung you are doing your own at your own risk ka, kung ayaw mong papigil, alangan naman kaladkarin natin iyon.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Okay. So malinaw na instruction ng Presidente: Habang walang pasok, manatili ang mga estudyante sa loob ng bahay, tama po ba?

SEC. PANELO: Yes, what the malls and the movie houses should do is not to allow those students, 'di ba. They should also cooperate.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Oho. Is that the appeal of the President, the Office of the President or your office?

SEC. PANELO: No, I'm appealing to them.

HENRY URI/DZRH: As a Spokesperson, Secretary.

SEC. PANELO: Yes. Kasi nga kailangan tayong magtulungan. All of us should do something; we should be creative.

HENRY URI/DZRH: So iyong mga mall owners, movie houses owners, dapat huwag tatanggapin iyong mga estudyanteng manunood ng sine?

SEC. PANELO: They should not allow or discourage them from entering the malls or movie houses, para sa kapakanan nila iyon eh.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: So, sir, hindi lang naman po kasi malls and movie houses iyong public places—

SEC. PANELO: Mga gatherings.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBN NEWS ONLINE: Are you appealing to all establishments na nag-o-offer ng public service na huwag munang payagan iyong mga bata?

SEC. PANELO: Basta mga crowded areas, huwag na muna nilang…

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: This is an official appeal, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Discourage the students from—the very purpose nga of suspension is for you to stay indoors eh.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: And, sir, what happens to these malls kung nagpapapasok pa rin sila ng mga bata?

SEC. PANELO: Aba eh ano ang magagawa natin? I mean, ano lang naman iyong atin eh, baka gusto nila ng—

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: Appeal lang, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Kasi kapag nakapasok na, nagkaroon pa ng infection, di lalo nang may problema sila.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: So, sir, hindi magiging liable itong mga establishments na ito?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi naman. Nakikiusap lang nga tayo eh.

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: Sir, follow up lang. So ano iyong legal basis ng policemen and barangay officials doon sa pagpapauwi sa mga bata? Sasabihin lang nila, 'Dahil sinabi ni Presidente,' verbal order?

SEC. PANELO: We are in a state of national health emergency. In other words, there is a crisis. Bakit tayo gumagawa, for public safety, di ba inisa-isa ni Presidente – public safety, public interest, general welfare. That would be your basis.

CHONA YU/RADYO INQUIRER: So there is no need to issue a formal order—

SEC. PANELO: Iyon na nga iyon eh, that's the proclamation that goes with it.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Sir, ano iyong guidance ng Palasyo sa public, kasi marami iyong umaalma doon advise na social distancing, lalo na dito sa Metro Manila, lalo na kaming mga mahihirap sa MRT—

SEC. PANELO: Ikaw?

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Kami po sa MPC, sir, iyong mga nag-i-MRT, siksikan na doon. So paano iyon, sir, paano ang gagawin iyong social distancing kung hindi naman mapipigilan talaga, sir, na makipagsiksikan sa mga matataong lugar?

SEC. PANELO: Iyon namang sa atin ay suggestion lamang, for their own safety. Hindi ba?

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Kasi iyong sinasabi nila, iyong mga advice daw po ng gobyerno ay para lang sa mga mayayaman, doesn't really apply doon sa mga nagko-commute, for example?

SEC. PANELO: Ang balita ko ay kakaunti ang nagbibiyahe ngayon ah, totoo ba? Wala daw trapik?

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: May trabaho pa rin kasi, sir.

SEC. PANELO: Pero… iyon ang naririnig ko. Eh ako, maiksi lang iyong ano, kaya hindi ko napapansin.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Sir, iyong appeal ninyo for malls and movie houses. Was it discussed during the meeting last night? Kasi sayang iyong opportunity na nandoon na rin iyong mga mayors.

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, hindi na discuss iyon.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Mayroon po bang specific directives si President Duterte to LGU leaders during the meeting?

SEC. PANELO: They should help, kasi nasa proclamation iyon. They should help in the containment of the virus, all measures that they can undertake pursuant to the medical advisories of the DOH.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Ano naman po iyong naging response nung LGU leaders to the President?

SEC. PANELO: Whatever the President says, they said they will follow. In fact, iyong mga ibang mayors yata, like Mayor Isko, even without the directive pa, nag-suspend na siya ng klase eh. Nauna pa nga siyang nag—si ano rin, si Mayor Toby. Mayroon ding mga events like doctors na mga malalaking gathering, kinasel nila.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: Related pa rin sa COVID-19. Sir, Senator Gatchalian is calling on the Department of Education to suspend graduation rites muna, kasi March na, sir. Does the Palace—what's your take on this, sir? Kasi dahil daw po sa threat ng COVID-19.

SEC. PANELO: We will leave it to the Secretary of Education kung ano ang rekomendasyon niya. Saka sa parents siguro. Eh kung ako naman ang parents, eh siguro iisipin ko rin kung ano ang maganda sa anak ko.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: Pero, sir, hindi po ba ito na-discuss kagabi?

SEC. PANELO: No, nobody raised it. Saka graduation rites naman can always be reset ah.

ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBNnews.com: So, is the Palace suggesting moving—

SEC. PANELO: No, we are not suggesting. We will let the Department of Education decide on that.

FRANCIS WAKEFIELD/TRIBUNE: Sec, iyong related sa COVID-19. Iyong kay Pangulo naman, kasi na-mention niya na plano niyang mag-travel sa Kuwait, given the COVID problem, sir. May nabigay ba siyang date kung kailan siya pupunta?

SEC. PANELO: Wala pa, wala siyang binigay.

FRANCIS WAKEFIELD/TRIBUNE: So he will push through with the travel kahit alam naman natin na may ano rin ang PSG na i-limit iyong kanyang pag-travel or iyong pagpunta sa mga lugar na potentially baka maging ano sa kanyang health, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Knowing this President, I think he will pursue what he said.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Sec, ano iyong mga na-discuss kagabi with the mayors na hindi nabanggit sa presscon at hindi pa rin nailalabas ng Malacañang?

SEC. PANELO: Actually, na-discuss ng mga mayors kagabi, more on the suspension of classes lang eh. Wala namang ibang diniskas [discussed] kagabi. Iyon lang ang diniskas [discussed] nila.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Doon sa lockdown, was it just the decision of the President or—iyong mga mayor, ano ang kanilang opinion doon sa proposal na lockdown?

SEC. PANELO: I did not hear any comment from the mayors. Kasi ang lockdown, lumabas lang iyon during the presscon eh. Tinanong lang ng isa sa inyo kung magla-lockdown o hindi. Doon lang lumabas iyon, hindi napag-usapan iyon during the meeting.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Okay, thank you.

SEC. PANELO: Kasi I think—there was kasi a statement coming from Secretary Duque that this is not the time for a lockdown. Siguro tinanong siya during his presscon, sa lockdown.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, given po iyong local transmission and—

SEC. PANELO: Given iyong what?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Local transmission, sir. Public point of view: When they hear news about suspension of classes tapos limiting of movement, given what had happened and pinagmitingan kahapon. Answer this question, sir: Should we be scared?

SEC. PANELO: No!

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Because po?

SEC. PANELO: Because we have the appropriate protocols for the containment of this disease. The Secretary of the Department of Health has assured us that all the established measures in tracing, treatment, testing, nandoon lahat eh. Even iyong mga testing devices, mayroon na tayong mga darating; dadagdagan iyong mga nandiyan na dati. Pagdating sa pera, we were assured by the Budget Secretary, we have the necessary funds.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, with regard to tracing ‘no, is it possible, sir—I think as much—the DOH can concede as much ‘no, medyo kulang tayo ng testing kits ‘no?

SEC. PANELO: Ng what?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Testing kits po, parang kulang. We only have 2,000 testing kits—

SEC. PANELO: Oo, pero mayroon nang darating eh.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Augmentation, okay. Sir, is it possible na there is a COVID case na hindi pa nadi-detect ng DOH na pagala-gala and continues to—

SEC. PANELO: Everything is possible dahil iyong incubation period noon, 18 days; ang iba, wala pang symptoms na lumalabas.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: So ibig sabihin, sir, my point is, may way ba to aggressively look for these cases? I mean—

SEC. PANELO: 'Di ba iyon nga ang ginagawa, iyong tinatawag na contact tracing.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: But you have to start with a patient, right?

SEC. PANELO: Correct! Eh saan ka mag-i-start? Wala ka namang … how will you start?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: So papaano, sir, kung halimbawa … ang question is: How do we limit the spread? Contact tracing pa rin, especially if you have local transmissions na?

SEC. PANELO: Unless na we have so many testing centers and everyone of us will volunteer to test ourselves there.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: That's the only time?

SEC. PANELO: Oh iyan ang....

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Sam?

SEC. PANELO: Pero maganda iyong suggestion ni Secretary Duque. If you feel—or iyong one of the doctors, if you feel something is wrong with you, medyo may cough ka or may sinat ka, punta ka na sa doktor.

SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR: Sir, ibi-verify lang po namin kung may plano po ba ang government na i-avail iyong loan na inu-offer ng Asian Development Bank na 12 billion dollars para po sa mga countries na affected ng COVID-19? Mayroon po bang plan iyong government na to make a loan—

SEC. PANELO: I will ask the President on that. Ngayon ko lang narinig iyan.

SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR: So sa ngayon po ay wala pa pong plano ang government to loan—

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, ngayon ko lang nga narinig. I will ask him.

Isulat ninyo nga iyong ano ... can you list down, kasi when I talk to the President, somehow hindi ko na maalala iyong mga gusto ninyong itanong, kung hindi nandiyan sa harap ko iyong susulatin. Ipaalala ninyo nga sa akin.

TINA MENDEZ/PHIL STAR: Sir, kahit gusto ng Presidenteng pumunta sa Kuwait, may travel ban ang Kuwait sa pitong bansa, kasama ang Pilipinas. So iri-respeto natin—

SEC. PANELO: Eh puwede… puwede namang pag-usapan iyan, government to government. They can always exempt the President.

TINA MENDEZ/PHIL STAR: So we will request them to exempt President Duterte, to allow him to visit?

SEC. PANELO: Siguro. Halimbawa, if I call somebody … or the ambassador calls the head of Kuwait at sinabing the President desires to go there, 'Sige, ayos.' Oh di ba, sila-sila na ang mag-uusap niyan.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Sir, may panawagan ang TUCP na… sa mga manggagawa na magkaroon daw po ng flexible work arrangement—

SEC. PANELO: Magkaroon ng ano?

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Flexible work arrangement.

SEC. PANELO: Flexible.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Telecommuting, remote work, work from home schemes. Posible rin po ba ito sa mga government employees, sir, para po daw sa COVID-19?

SEC. PANELO: Ngayon ko pa lang narinig iyan. But I think—pag-aralan natin. We'll study it.

GEN KABILING/MANILA BULLETIN: Sir, is the President open to probably extending the suspension of classes beyond March 14?

SEC. PANELO: Ang sabi niya, 'di ba, tingnan natin iyong magiging epekto ng suspension. If there will be a dramatic increase or mahinto natin, tingnan natin, then we will decide.

GEN KABILING/MANILA BULLETIN: So puwedeng… possibility?

SEC. PANELO: Ha?

GEN KABILING/MANILA BULLETIN: It's a possibility to extend—

SEC. PANELO: Hindi pa natin alam, kasi ano eh… question mark iyon. Tingnan natin kung anong resulta.

JULIE AURELIO/PDI: Sir, kanina you mentioned that more of class suspension iyong na-discuss amongst the mayors kagabi. Were there other measures na pinarating po sa mayors natin on how they could locally manage iyong COVID-19?

SEC. PANELO: Wala, wala. Kasi iyong mga measures, alam na nila iyon eh kasi they listen to the DOH regular briefings and advisories. So they are adopting that.

JULIE AURELIO/PDI: Sir, the DOH has been criticized for not giving out enough information about iyong sa mga patients na confirmed to have COVID-19. Like, citing the example of Singapore na they really publicize iyong where the patient went or iyong mga whereabout niya for the past few days. Magkakaroon po ba tayo ng directives sa DOH to be more transparent than it is now, especially now people are concerned about catching the disease?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi totoo iyong criticism na iyon, iyong sinasabi nilang underreporting. How can they report kung hindi pa nila alam? At pagdating naman doon sa mga sinasabi nilang hindi nila alam, eh hindi kayo siguro nakikinig sa mga briefings. That is precisely why, remember yesterday, I was appealing to all media outlets na ilabas ninyo iyong mga briefings, advisories ng DOH para makarating sa tao. Kasi kung limitado lang … dito sa press briefing nila, kung hindi napanood tapos hindi uulitin, dapat constant. Magtulungan tayo … sa radyo, sa mga TV stations.

JULIE AURELIO/PDI: I think, sir, iyong criticism was over iyong details of the contact tracing. Like for example, Patient A, ito iyong naging whereabouts niya for the past few days. Kumbaga, not like other countries na nilalabas iyong ganoong details, dito sa atin, sa DOH, parang medyo limited po iyong information when it comes to—

SEC. PANELO: Eh kasi kung wala namang ilalabas, papaano? Paano maglalabas kung wala. Kasi contact tracing, you will have to, first, interview the patient – sino ba ang mga na-contact niya? Ang pangalawang ini-interview nila ay iyong mga parents at/or family para malaman kung ano iyong naging lugar ng mga pinuntahan niya. That takes time. Iyong iba—I forgot the country eh, parang nilalabas nila publicly.

JULIE AURELIO/PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER: Yeah, precisely—

SEC. PANELO: Para iyong mga alam na, "Uy, that guy! I was there," o 'di magbo-volunteer na iyon. Pero dito sa atin kasi mayroong batas – privacy law. In fact, I raised that kahapon kung puwede nating gawin pero hindi pa—although that is an exemption to the rule. Pero sabi ni Presidente, sa ngayon baka hindi pa natin kailangan.

JULIE AURELIO/PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER: But can't we do that here, sir, despite the privacy law kasi siyempre ano eh... may public health emergency na nga po eh?

SEC. PANELO: Sa ngayon, according to—but I talked to Secretary Duque – in fact, I talked to him two hours ago – and I reiterated that probability of them doing it kasi 'ka ko may emergency naman tayo eh baka—titingnan daw. He will give me an answer within the day. They will study it.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Secretary, kasi si Secretary Duque may binanggit na iyong Japanese man traveled to the Philippines at nagkaroon ng COVID. Sabi niya, 'checked-in at three hotels in Metro Manila.'

SEC. PANELO: Okay.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Ngayon, iyong hinihiling po ng ating mga kababayan na hindi ba dapat sinasabi kung saang mga hotels ito for the sake of transparency na rin at nang makaiwas sila kung saan man po itong mga hotels na ito. With all due to respect doon sa mga may-ari po at doon sa management ng mga hotel na ito.

SEC. PANELO: Eh ang problema nga, pinapasok nila iyong privacy law. Iyon ang binabalanse nila eh. Tingnan natin. Kasi gaya ng sinabi ko sa iyo eh, inulit ko iyong suggestion ko kagabi during the meeting and Secretary Duque, they will study it.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Kasi may binanggit din siyang tatlong hotels … na nag-check-in eh; hindi ho basta dumaan lang. Checked-in at three different hotels.

SEC. PANELO: Eh 'di tingnan natin kung anong magiging desisyon nila mamaya.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Pero hindi ba natin puwede silang i-compel na i-divulge itong information kung saan po itong mga hotels na ito for the sake of transparency because si Presidente rin ho gusto niyang maging transparent ang DoH eh?

SEC. PANELO: If you will ask me as a lawyer, we can. Pero binabalanse nga nila. But they will, I think they will study that. I have already made the suggestion.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Binabalanse is—ano iyong binabalanse?

SEC. PANELO: Binabalanse nila iyong privacy kasi baka 'pag sinabi mo baka naman lalong mag-create daw ng panic.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Oho.

SEC. PANELO: Baka mag-create na ng panic, maaapektuhan naman iyong establishment, 'di ba?

HENRY URI/DZRH: Iyong binang—

SEC. PANELO: Pero kung if they can trace kung saan siya nag-check-in, kung saang kuwarto siya, saang floor, saan siya nagpunta, malalaman din nila – matagal nga lang.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Sec, iyong binanggit ninyo, "as a lawyer, we can," is that an opinion as a lawyer only or as a Spokesperson and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel?

SEC. PANELO: As a lawyer. Kasi in fact, the President, when I raised that last night, tama siya eh. Naniniwala siya doon sa ano na 'pag may national emergency, puwede iyon. Pero hindi pa raw. Kumbaga, we have not reached that level. 'Pag dumating tayo diyan.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Opo. Pero binanggit na ninyo we have crisis, we have declaration of—

SEC. PANELO: Pero may mga degree kasi ang crisis eh. Sa pananaw ni Presidente at ng DoH eh hindi pa tayo nakakarating doon sa level na kailangan gawin natin iyon.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Alright, sige po. Thank you.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: So, sir, kailan tayo darating sa panahon na mas lamang na ang public safety sa privacy rights ng pasyente?

SEC. PANELO: Siguro if there is—ang pagkakasabi ni Presidente, there's a dramatic increase in cases, medyo may problema na tayo doon. Baka—

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Dramatic increase is like 10, 20? Kasi kahapon 10, naging 24 – 100%. Ilang percent?

SEC. PANELO: Eh kung ikukumpara mo naman tayo sa ibang lugar eh sila hundreds eh, tayo wala pang … less than thirty. 'Di ba sa mga iba, hundreds eh. May thousands na nga eh.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: In the previous declaration din po ng Presidente, sa Boracay, in-invoke niya rin iyong public safety eh. So ngayon, hindi puwedeng agad i-invoke din ng—although may state of emergency? Why can't we be transparent?

SEC. PANELO: Kaya nga may proclamation, in-invoke niya nga ang public safety eh.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Even without identifying the patients, direct name, pero iyong mga places where they've been. Sir, ano bang—

SEC. PANELO: Ganito na lang, let us not ano—siguro, tinitingnan ni Presidente iyong sitwasyon and he will respond to it 'pag nakita niya. Cautious ang Presidente kasi, hindi siya...he does not act on a whim; pinag-aaralan niya eh. Kaya let's wait for him.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Sir, pa-clarify rin. Sa mandatory reporting sa hospitals lang ba iyon o anong role ng mga barangays? Mayroon kasing perceived underreporting, sir eh.

SEC. PANELO: Kasama iyon. Pati iyong mga LGUs, they have to report.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: LGUs na—tapos wala sa ospital lang. Paano iyong nasa bahay lang nag-treat, hindi nagpa-ospital? Baka maging—may mga symptoms ng ubo, lagnat pero hindi nagpapa-ospital. Paano, sir, kino-consider iyon o ina-assess iyong ganoong cases?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi. Kaya nga hindi ba ang advice eh ‘pag you feel na mayroon kang cough or sinisinat ka or nagda-diarrhea ka eh punta ka na sa doktor.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Pero kung ayaw noong tao, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Maaari bang—bakit naman ayaw?

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Can the government now force or use—

SEC. PANELO: Mayroon naman tayong mga health centers na libre. Mayroon tayong mga government hospitals, libre iyon.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Sir, dati kasi sabi ng DoH, kino-convince lang nila. Eh ngayon, under the proclamation of the President of state of public emergency, the powers of the police and the barangays, they can now forcibly take these suspected patients away from their homes and take them to the proper hospitals for treatment.

SEC. PANELO: Alam ninyo ‘pag mayroon kang sakit, gusto mong magpa-doktor kung libre naman; hindi mo na kailangang pilitin. The parents, member of the family will certainly welcome that na pupunta ka nang libre para makita kung—everyone siyempre is concerned with his own health at ‘pag mayroong nakitang sintomas na ganiyan sinasabi ng DoH, siyempre concerned ka. At kung mayroon ka namang pupuntahan na libre, ba’t naman hindi ka pupunta? You don’t have to be forced, you will welcome it.

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: How about addressing iyong stigma, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Iyong alin?

TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR: Stigma, sir, being a COVID-19 patient po – positive?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi naman eh. Kung ako ang biktima, I will even ask them publish my name kasi hindi ko alam kung saan ako nagpunta. Kawawa naman iyong mai-infect ko. Ano namang stigma doon? It’s a disease eh. Kung na-infect ka nang—hindi mo naman gusto iyon. Sino bang may gusto noon?

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Maraming salamat, MPC. Maraming salamat, Usec. Rocky. Maraming salamat, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Secretary Sal Panelo.

SEC. PANELO: Ang importante, hindi tayo infected dito ngayon.

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Balik tayo sa Radyo Pilipinas, People’s Television.

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Source: PCOO-NIB (News and Information Bureau-Data Processing Center)