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PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON HARRY ROQUE
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SEC. ROQUE: Magandang tanghali, Pilipinas. Well, nakipag-usap muli po ang ating Presidente kagabi sa taumbayan 'no. At unang-una po na lumabas po dito sa ating pag-uusap sa taumbayan ay umapela po ang ating Presidente sa mga pribadong ospital na taasan ang kanilang bed capacity na nakalaan para sa COVID-19 patients habang patuloy na tumataas ang kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa.

Inatasan naman po ni Presidente ang Department of Foreign Affairs na tingnan ang mga kababayan nating Filipino seafarers na stranded abroad sa gitna ng pandemya.

Inaprubahan din po ng Presidente ang rekomendasyon ng Task Force on PhilHealth na sampahan ng criminal and administrative cases ang executives ng PhilHealth, kasama po rito ang dating presidente na si General Morales at karamihan po ng executive committee na minsan nang tinawag ni Senator Ping Lacson na mga members ng mafia sa PhilHealth.

Well, kung inyong matatandaan sa aming press briefing noong una ninyong narinig ang direktiba ni Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte na bumuo ng isang panel para imbestigahan ang mga napapabalitang katiwalian at anomalya sa Philippine Health Insurance Corporation. Binigyan ang Task Force ng tatlumpong araw lamang para isumite ang kanilang report at rekomendasyon. Kahapon, September 14, ang deadline ng Task Force, at naisumite naman po kagabi kay Presidente ang kanilang report and recommendations.

Sa kabuuan, makikita na ang mga taong inaasahan na magbigay ng polisiya at operational guidelines sa management ng PhilHealth ay walang due diligence sa pagpapatupad ng kanilang tungkulin. Ang tinutukoy ko po ay ang board of directors at executive committee.

Makikita ang lack of diligence at due care sang-ayon sa Task Force sa mga sumusunod: Una, ang pag-apruba at pagpapatupad ng interim reimbursement mechanism or IRM ng walang sufficient standards. Pangalawa, ang pag-apruba ng PhilHealth Information and Communication Technology Budget dahil lamang sa sinabi ng SVP in-charge na babagsak daw diumano ang buong management information system ng PhilHealth kung hindi maaprubahan ang budget. Pangatlo, ang pag-adopt ng corporate policies at practices na nabigong tingnan, imbestigahan, usigin at bigyan ng karampatang parusa sa mga PhilHealth personnel, healthcare institutions at professionals na nagkakasala.

Sa IRM, makikita ang lack of due care, if not outright negligence, sa pag-apruba at pagpapatupad ng IRM. Sang-ayon sa report ng Task Force, makikita ito sa mga sumusunod:

- Minadali ang IRM fund releases kahit na hindi pa epektibo ang circular na nagpapatupad ng scheme. Nasa batas na kinakailangang maka-deposit muna sa Office of the National Administrative Register ang circular na hindi nangyari sa kasong ito.
- Ipinatupad ang IRM na walang sapat na standards and guidelines kaya naabuso ang fund releases.
- Tinanggal sa circular ng prior board approval for IRM fund releases tuwing mayroong fortuitous event na mangyayari.

- Tinanggal din ang ilan requirements tulad ng survey at post-survey requirement, at sinentralize [centralized] ang evaluation ng IRM fund beneficiary sa Office of the President and Chief Executive Officer.
- Ginawa ang IRM fund releases kahit walang mekanismo para i-monitor ang fund utilization at liquidation at non-withholding of taxes.
- Itinago ng ilang miyembro ng executive committee ang mahahalagang impormasyon o mga dokumento para makuha ang board approval sa ICT procurement.
- In-adopt din ng PhilHealth management ang mga kuwestiyonableng polisiya at mahinang pagpapatupad ng practices na nabigong tingnan, iimbestigahan, usigin at parusahan ang mga pagkakasala.
- Kasama rin dito ang pag-adopt ng polisiya para sa settlement ng claims ng walang accountability at pagbibigay ng wholesale amnesty pabor sa healthcare institutions or HCIs. Kabilang dito ang mga kaso na mayroong kinalaman sa fictitious crediting of remittances, ang penalty na pagsususpende ng operasyon ng ginawang payment of fines ng board at libu-libong may kinalaman sa healthcare insurance at mga empleyado ng PhilHealth na hindi man lang kinasuhan.

Naka-flash naman po sa ating screen ngayon ang liability ng PhilHealth board at corporate officers. Ang sabi po nila, mayroon po talagang negligence 'no. At ito po, lumalabas nga po dahil nga po doon sa pagpapatupad ng IRM, doon sa computer program at doon sa kapabayaang nila na parusahan iyong mga nangungotong sa PhilHealth.

Now, nagrekomenda po ang Task Force ng pagsasampa ng mga kasong kriminal laban sa mga taong nagrekomenda ng proposed ICT procurement, nag-disburse ng IRM funds bago ang effectivity ng circular, at nag-release po ng IRM funds kahit na walang sapat na standards for implementation at saka po iyong non-withholding of taxes sa IRM disbursement.

Sinu-sino po itong nirekomendahang sampahan ng kaso? Una po iyong dating presidente na si General Morales at iyong SVP Limsiaco. Kasama rin din po diyan iyong COO De Jesus at saka iyong SVP Vargas. Kasama rin po iyong SVP Aragonas at among others 'no – Aragonas at saka Gabuya and Division Chief Crisostomo.

Now, kahapon po sinimulan natin iyong paghihimay natin ng Bayanihan II Act or iyong RA 11494. Sinimulan po natin kahapon iyong saan pupunta iyong almost 165 billion na pondo na galing sa kaban ng taumbayan. At ngayon naman po ay tingnan natin ang mga ilan sa mga special powers na ibinigay ng batas sa ating Presidente.

Unang-una po, kasama po diyan iyong kapangyarihan na magkaroon ng deployment of critical information and communications technology infrastructure tulad ng additional cell towers, equipment, software at wireless technologies sa buong bansa. Para magkaroon ng katuparan ito, ilan sa mga measures ang mga sumusunod:

1. Pansamantalang suspension ng requirements para makakuha ng permits at clearances sa pagtatayo ng telco at internet infrastructure.
2. Pag-streamline sa regulatory processes at procedure para magkaroon at mapabuti ang digital internet at satellite technology infrastructure.

Ano po ang ibig sabihin nito? Lahat ng pending at new applications para sa pagpapatayo ng bagong cell sites, cell towers, roll-out ng fiber, paglalagay ng poles, ground terminals at iba pang mga

kinakailangang madesisyunan sa loob ng seven working days mula sa araw ng matanggap ang date of application. Ito po ay non-extendable. Ang application na hindi po aaksiyunan sa panahon na iyon ay deemed approved.

Isa lang po ang ibig sabihin nito, wala na pong lusot ang ating mga telecoms providers kung palpak pa rin ang kanilang serbisyo – lahat po nang hiningi nila ay binigay na natin. Tingnan po natin pagkatapos ng Bayanihan II sa Disyembre ng taong ito, dapat magandang-maganda na ang serbisyo ng mga telecoms company.

Isa rin sa mga special powers ay ang pagdi-discontinue ng appropriated programs, activities at projects ng anumang ahensiya sa executive department na hindi magagamit dahil nga po sa COVID-19 outbreak. Kasama rito sa puwedeng i-discontinue ang discretionary foreign travel, representation, mass events at iba pa.

Prayoridad naman para sa budget augmentation ang mga sumusunod: Sa DOH, iyong operational budgets ng mga ospital ng gobyerno – temporary treatment, isolation, quarantine and monitoring facilities, prevention and control of other infectious diseases, emergency preparedness and response at quick response fund.

Para naman po sa Pamantasan ng Pilipinas, iyong operational budget ng ating Philippine General Hospital; sa National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management fund or calamity fund; sa mga programa ng DOLE tulad ng CAMP, TUPAD, AKAP, para sa OFWs; sa DTI, livelihood seeding program at negosyo-serbisyo sa barangay; sa DA, ang Rice Farmers Financial Assistance Program; sa DepEd, ang school-based feeding program, digital education, digital infrastructure, support to alternative learning modalities at printing and delivery ng self-learning modules.

Sa iba-ibang programa sa ilalim ng DSWD, assistance to individuals in crisis situations; distribution of food and non-food items; livelihood assistance grants at supplemental feeding program para sa day care children.

Sa DWPH, local infrastructure programs at allocation sa LGUs kasama rin ang special powers ang pag-enforce ng bed capacity allocation ng government at private hospitals na nakalaan sa COVID-19 response.

Kapag may surge ng COVID-19 cases, at least 30% ng bed capacity ng government hospitals ay dapat ilaan po sa COVID-19 patients; at least 20% naman po ng bed capacity ng pribadong ospital ay dapat ilaan sa mga COVID patients.

Binibigyan din po ng awtoridad ng Presidente na i-direct ang operation ng private establishments tulad ng private hospitals at passenger vehicles para maging tirahan ng health workers o maging quarantine areas, quarantine centers, medical relief at aid distribution locations, at pampublikong transportasyon ng mga health emergency at frontline personnel.

Tulad ng sinabi ko po kahapon, ang Bayanihan 2 ay hindi lamang para sa mga health workers.

Sa mga gurong nagtatanong, mayroon pong ayuda na nakalaan sa inyo. Ito po ay P300 million na subsidies at allowances para mga na-displace na teaching at non-teaching personnel including part-time faculty sa pribado at pampublikong paaralan ng elementarya, secondary at tertiary level at kasama rin dito po ang part-time faculty sa mga state universities and colleges. USec. Malaluan, I hope you read this provision of the law.

COVID-19 update naman po tayo. Ito po ang global update ayon sa Johns Hopkins University, mayroon na pong 29,159,839 cases sa buong mundo at mayroon na po tayong 926,307 deaths. Nangunguna pa rin po sa top 5 ang Estados Unidos, mayroon po silang 6,552,590 cases samantalang ang mga namatay ay 194,466. Pumapangalawa pa rin po ang India – 4,846,427; ang deaths po nila ay 79,722. Ang Brazil ay pangatlo pa rin po – 4,330,455 with 131,625 deaths. Ang Russia po ay pang-apat – 1,064,438 cases at 18,573 deaths. Ang Peru ay pang-lima – 729,619 cases and 30,710 deaths.

Sa Pilipinas po, mayroon na tayong 265,888 cases at ang deaths po natin ay 4,630 or 1.7% case fatality rate.

As of September 14, mayroon na po tayong test na mga kababayan natin. Na-test na po natin ang mga 2,921,142 na mga kababayan natin gamit po ang RT-PCR. Ito po ay ginawa sa 93 licensed RT-PCR labs at sa 29 licensed GeneXpert laboratories.

Ang aktibong kaso po ng COVID-19 ay 53,754. Samantalang sa numero pong ito, ang asymptomatic ay 8.2%, ang mild ay 88.4%, ang severe ay 1.3% lamang at ang critical ay 2.1% lamang po. Marami po ang ating recoveries, ito po ay 207,504; mga namatay po, gaya ng sinabi ko kanina, ay 4,630. Nakikiramay po kami sa lahat ng mga naging biktima.

Ang mabuting balita po pagdating po sa ating critical care capacity, wala po tayong problema. Sa ICU beds, 50% pa po ang available; sa isolation beds, 56% pa po ang available; ang ward beds natin, mayroon pa pong 52% available; ang ventilators natin ay 73% available.

Ganoon pa man, kinakailangan po ingatan natin ang buhay para tayo ay maghanapbuhay. Ayaw po nating ma-ospital kayo. Madali lang po iyan, magsuot ng mask, paghuhugas ng kamay, pag-iwas at pagsuot ng face shield sa mga lugar na dapat naka-face shield po.

Well, kasama po din natin ngayong araw ang dalawang panauhin natin. Kasama po natin, walang iba po kung hindi ang Kalihim po ng TESDA, si Secretary Lapeña, para bigyan po tayo ng summary kung paano po nakakatulong ang TESDA sa panahon ng pandemya na ang dami-dami nating mga OFWs na bumabalik dahil nawalan ng trabaho at ang dami rin nating mga kababayan na nawalan ng trabaho. Paano kaya po nagri-retool o nagri-retrain ang TESDA? Paano makapag-avail ng training ng TESDA? Saan pupunta at anu-ano itong mga programang ito?

At siyempre po, medyo matagal na nating nakasama, alam ninyo naman kapag hindi natin nakasama linggu-linggo itong ating tinutukoy, ang Chief Implementer ng National Task Force, ay parang naliligaw ako. So, kasama rin po natin ngayon si Secretary Galvez, Chief Implementer ng National Task Force on COVID-19.

So, unahin po muna natin si Sec. Galvez. Chief Implementer, nasaan na po tayo sa laban natin sa COVID-19? The floor is yours, Secretary Galvez.

SEC. GALVEZ: Maraming salamat po, Secretary Roque.

Sa lahat po ng bumubuo ng National Task Force Against COVID-19 sa ilalim po ng pamumuno ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana; ating pinuno ng Local Government, Secretary Eduardo Año, isang magandang tanghali po sa ating lahat.

Noong nakaraang linggo, idineklara ng University of the Philippines OCTA Research Institute na na-flatten na natin ang COVID 19 curve sa ating bansa pero katulad po ng sinasabi natin hindi tayo maaaring magkumpiyansa, kinakailangan gawin pa rin natin po ang magandang nasimulan at ang ginagawa po natin ngayon. Ito ay upang matiyak na hindi magkakaroon ng tinatawag na second wave of infections.

Maganda po ang balita po natin at sa ngayon po, sinabi nga ni Secretary Roque na nakapagtalaga na po tayo ng P3 million—nakita po natin sa pamamagitan ng ating Testing Czar, Secretary Vince, mayroon na po tayong 2.9 million individuals na na-test na po at ito po ay 2.6% ng ating population. Nag-a-average na po tayo ng 10,000 plus daily test average at natutuwa po kami dahil na-break na po natin ang 40,000 mark. Nagkaroon po tayo ng 43,555 highest daily output as of September 10, 2020.

Iyon pong ating mga testing laboratory, aside from—sa sinabi po natin na mayroon na po tayong 122 na laboratories, mayroon pa po tayong nag-a-apply na 102 na nagpapa-license. At ito po ay nasa 70% po iyong mga stage 3 at natutuwa po kami kasama po iyong GenSan ay nagkaroon na po ng tinatawag nating [unclear].

And then magmula po nang mag-peak tayo ng mga bagong cases noong first at second week ng August, dahil sa agresibo natin na pagtanggap ng mga positive cases sa kanilang mga kabahayan, bumaba na po ating bagong cases dahil nakatulong po tayo na maialis ang mga COVID positive sa kanilang mga bahay nagsimula pa po noong Agosto.

Sa pamamagitan ng programang Oplan Kalinga sa pamumuno ni Secretary Vince Dizon at Director Mike Salalima ng MMDA, tinutulungan po natin na ang mga COVID positive ay mailipat sa mga isolation or quarantine facilities mula sa kanilang mga bahay. Sa pagka-quarantine ng ating mga COVID positive patients, mayroon tayong 20 mega quarantine facilities pero bukod po doon ay kumuha po tayo 29 hotels all over NCR, Region IV-A, at Region III na may capacity na 2,622 beds. Sa kabuuan po ay nakapag-isolate po tayo ng 24,538 na pasyente or iyong COVID positive at napakalaking tulong po nito na epektibo po nating maibaba ang ating mga cases sa NCR.

Kung titingnan po natin sa mga datos natin noong August 14 - 88,109 ang ating kaso ng active cases; ngayon po ay mayroon na po tayong 53,754 noong September 14, ibig sabihin po napababa po ng 34,355. So, kung titingnan po natin napakalaki po ang naitulong po na nai-isolate natin iyong 24,538. Kung hindi po natin na-isolate iyan baka may dagdag po tayo na 100,000 na new cases and it will be compounded exponentially increase. So, napakalaking tulong po talaga ng Oplan Kalinga.

Pero tinitingnan din po natin ang tinatawag natin na mga non-COVID cases kasi sa ating istrategiya at sa ating plano, tinitingnan din natin ang ating tinatawag na non-COVID patients. Kasi iyon po ang—sabi po ni Dr. Saniel na isang tinatawag nating eksperto, na kapag once mako-commit tayo ng mga meds para sa COVID cases ay nagkakaroon din ng compromise ang mga non-COVID cases. So tinitingnan po natin ito katulad po ng ginawa po namin sa Cebu at namigay po tayo ng mga more or less na mga 20 dialysis machines galing po sa ating mga business sector.

So iyon po, sa datos po ng DOH, ang pinakamataas na cause of death ay mga communicable diseases kagaya ng TB, non-communicable diseases kagaya ng heart disease, hypertension, diabetes at saka cancer. So iyon po ang sinasabi po natin sa ating mga LGU na kung maaari magkaroon sila ng desisyon na magkaroon sila ng COVID-dedicated hospital at saka ang mga tinatawag nating non-COVID hospital para po hindi ma-compromise ang ating mga tinatawag na mga critical patient.

And then tingnan po natin, sa huling bilang na mayroon po tayo - 122 level 3 hospitals. Ito po iyong mga hospitals na may kakayahan po na magkaroon ng surgical at saka mga intensive care unit. Kulang na kulang po ang ating lumalaking populasyon na tinatawag nating mga bed allocation. Kung titingnan po natin, the country has around 108,000 hospital beds as of 2019 o kung titingnan po natin for 1,000 kailangan mayroon pong isa. Sa average ay nakikita po natin na talagang tayo po ay naiwan, so meaning mayroon po tayong dapat na 54,000 additional beds.

So ito po ang ginagawa po natin, katulong po natin ang DPWH sa pamumuno ni Sec. Villar at saka ng DOH, si Sec. Duque na kailangang ma-increase ang level 3 hospitals natin lalo na sa Region III and IV para hindi po magkaroon ng tinatawag nating 'overwhelmed ang NCR'. I-increase din po natin ang mga tinatawag nating mga facilities doon sa mga regional hubs, katulad ng mga city natin sa Visayas at saka sa Mindanao.

Ito po ang tinitingnan po natin para at least makita po natin na iyong ating strategic move na habang ginagawa po natin ang pag-response sa pandemya, ang titingnan din po natin ang tinatawag nating future na mga gaps. Magamit po natin iyong mga tinatawag nating mga Bayanihan Funds para mailaan po na magkaroon po tayo ng mga additional beds at saka magkaroon po tayo ng hiring ng more or less 10,000 na healthcare workers.

Iyon po at marami pong salamat. Back to you, Secretary Roque po, sir.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Secretary Galvez. I hope you can join us for our open forum. I'm sure maraming tanong po iyong mga kasama natin dito sa Malacañang Press Corps.

At kagaya ng aking nasabi kanina, kasama rin po natin ang ating Secretary Lapeña ng TESDA. Ano ho bang mga programa ang pupuwedeng ma-avail ng ating mga kababayan lalung-lalo na iyong mga OFWs na napauwi at iyong mga natanggal sa kanilang mga trabaho? Secretary Lapeña, the floor is yours.

SEC. LAPEÑA: Maraming salamat sa iyo, Secretary Roque. And thank you for this opportunity given to TESDA to update our kababayans on the efforts and initiatives that we have been doing to help our country in our fight against this current COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to share to our kababayans that immediately upon the declaration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine in March, we at TESDA, immediately crafted the 'Oplan TESDA, Abot Lahat: TVET Towards the New Normal. This contain the guidelines and policy directions in response to the ongoing crisis and the ways forward post pandemic.

Please allow me to report to our people some of the more important actions that we have initiated as we join the whole of government approach to address the pandemic.

At the onset of the pandemic, TESDA immediately responded by expanding and intensifying the TESDA online program accessible via www.tesda.gov.ph and developed blended and flexible learning modalities. We actively promoted to the public the free and easily accessible online courses from TESDA. As such, at the start of the Enhanced Community Quarantine, we saw the spike in the number of people registering in the platform.

Until now, thousands of individuals in the country and Filipinos in foreign countries continue to enroll in the TESDA online program. During the quarantine period, from March 16 to September 13, total registrants with the program reached 908,396; some 71,251 of these are OFWs or their dependents. These were 965,929 total enrollments during the period. 452,992 learners have already completed their courses.

We have also added relevant and timely courses for added usefulness of the TESDA online program to the public. These are practicing COVID-19 preventive measures in the workplace, facilitating e-learning sessions, performing proper waste management in the workplace.

Another good news to the public, we have partnered with Globe Telecom to make TESDA online program more accessible even for those who have no data or internet connection. Now subscribers can access the TESDA online courses even without their data load.

To also help our people start a simple and relevant livelihood project, we made the tutorial video on how to make face mask. This is also available in the TESDA online program.

At the onset of the pandemic, TESDA also immediately called on all TESDA Technology Institutions, regional and provincial offices to help the country provide a free face mask, disinfectants and other personal protective equipment to those in need. We distributed these to the frontliners from the hospitals, health centers, barangays, LGUs and even police officers and military at the checkpoints.

As of September 10, TESDA has produced the following as shown in the chart: 420,433 face masks; 40,807 face shields; 1,205 goggles; 10,060 protective suits; 12,621 sanitizers.

We also saw the need to help affected communities with their food supplies and quickly acted on it. It is good that we have many organic farms in all TESDA training centers located nationwide. TESDA's advocacy for agriculture sector as well as food security helped us immediately respond even during the pandemic. Our mini organic farms have been the source of farm products that were distributed to 29,345 individuals in the nearby communities.

Our latest data also show there were 197,580 beneficiaries of TESDA prepared food packs made by TESDA trainers. In summary, we were able to produce and distribute 181,854 baked products; 85,835 food packs; 5,739 kilos of organic vegetables; 7,770 various seeds and seedlings nationwide.

As OFWs are forced to return home due to the pandemic, we also launched in June the 'TESDA Abot Lahat ang OFWs'. This was an offshoot of the first consultation we had with the global OFW community last May. We provided easy access and registration for skills training. We created the special link on the TESDA mobile app where OFWs, including their dependents, can easily fill out the registration form. At present there are 4,939 OFWs who have registered online.

Aside from that, TESDA regional and the provincial offices setup their respective OFW Desk. This is dedicated to attend and assist OFWs. This is apart from the existing TESDA Malasakit Help Desk located at the airport. Because of our close coordination with the OFW community, we have now an ongoing training on scaffolding work inspection with a former OFW as a trainer. This online training is attended of OFWs from different regions, former OFWs and even those who are currently abroad.

The effects brought about by the pandemic affected workers from various sectors including the Technical Vocational Education and Training sector or TVET.

TESDA assisted some 18,432 trainers and assessors in their application for DOLE's COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program or CAMP. So far, 2,276 applications have been approved and the rest are still being processed.

As there are private Tech-Voc Institutions or TVIs who felt the impact of the pandemic, TESDA devised a more flexible payment arrangement so that the affected private TVIs who were already implementing scholarship programs or trainings at the time of the imposition of community quarantine will be given equitable compensation.

Under the new normal, using the blended and flexible learning modalities, TESDA's trainees or scholars are supported with the training allowance of 160 pesos per day, additional 500 pesos for data or internet allowance to support their online training, one year accident insurance and another 500 pesos for their health protective equipment for them to be ready and safe as they start their training with us.

The pandemic also prompted TESDA to developed competence standards for contact tracing.

Last July, TESDA together with the Department of Health developed the competency standards for contact tracing level 2 to respond to the need to train contact tracers to stop the spread of coronavirus. TESDA National Capital Region launched the first batch of contact tracing level 2 training program last September 9. This will be followed by all TESDA regional offices nationwide.

We are also conducting our other health related training programs nationwide.

Consistent with the government's thrust on food security during pandemic, TESDA being the lead agency for the poverty reduction, livelihood and employment cluster for the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict and being a member of the IATF sub task group on food security, work with other government agencies and private partners in implementing development projects in priority barangays for Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas or GIDAs in all regions of the country.

Some of the successful development projects that TESDA has launched are as follows: in Region XI, the Agak Center. This project aims to assist, protect and sustain IP communities. With Leadtech Incorporated as Agak Center operator and Hijo Resources as processors, which buys pre-processed agri-products of the Indigenous People.

Agak Center was first established in Prosperidad, Monte Vista, Davao De Oro and is now replicated in eleven other locations in the areas including Davao Del Norte.

TESDA Region XI has also partner with San Miguel Corporation in the implementation of other development projects and San Miguel Corporation initially provides chicks under the training cum production scheme and subsequently purchased them after 28 to 30 days, mga about 1 kilo na iyan.

In Region XII, we have TALA or TESDA Alay ay Liwanag at Asenso, representatives of at least 100 households in Sitio Blit, Barangay Ned in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato were trained to install and maintain solar lights inside their homes, this is after 70 years of living without electricity. Finally, this place was lighted. And of course, agricultural organic production follows.

In Region VIII, we have the AKKAP Project or Agrikultura at Kabahayan Tungo sa Kaunlaran at Pangkapayapaan Project. The beneficiaries of this program are former rebels in the peace and prosperity village in San Isidro, Leyte.

The Filipino people can expect more from TESDA and we will continue delivering services despite the challenges and risks brought by the pandemic. It is during this most difficult time that we have to do more for the people. TESDA is one with the nation. We will heal and recover as one. Maraming salamat po.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Secretary Lapeña. I hope you can also join us for our open forum. Simulan na po natin ngayon ang open forum. Let's call on USec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Good afternoon, Secretary Roque. Good afternoon, Secretary Lapeña and Secretary Galvez. From Tina Mendez of Philippine Star: Please provide daw po context on President Duterte's statement saying he does not want the Philippines to give cash advance to western countries to ensure access to the vaccine against COVID-19. Does it mean the government won't pursue participation in Gavi COVAX Vaccine Alliance? Are we withdrawing participation from this alliance?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi po. We will continue our membership in the alliance. Ang konteksto lang po, sinasabi niya na ang mga western companies ngayon pa lang humihingi na ng kumbaga reservation fee. Samantalang ang bansang Tsina at Rusya ay wala pong ganiyang hinihingi at pupuwede pa ngang utangin kung magkakaroon sila ng vaccine.

Maricel Halili, please, of TV5.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Hi, sir! Magandang hapon po. Sir, regarding doon sa report ng Task Force on PhilHealth, why was there no mention about Health Secretary Francisco Duque or is he part of the recommendations submitted by the task force?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, the task force said that there was negligence on the part of the members of the Board including the Chairman 'no and the members of the board. So it's not just Secretary Duque, there is also the ex-officio members of the board 'no which includes at least 5 sitting secretaries 'no.

Now having said that, the report also said that somehow they're negligence in allowing the IRM, in voting for the ICT contract and in the failure to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of fraud in PhilHealth who were somehow mitigated by the fact na maraming mga dokumento at mga facts na itinago ang mga miyembro ng execom sa mga members ng Board of Directors.

So, sa rekomendasyon po na binasa naman ni Presidente, ang rekomendasyon ay strong admonishment sa Chairman ng PhilHealth at sa mga members of the Board of Directors na kinakailangan talagang pinag-iingatan po ang mga salapi na galing sa kaban ng taumbayan.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Sir, does it mean that Secretary Duque is not yet absolved of any charges in relation to PhilHealth issue?

SEC. ROQUE: This is only the beginning 'no. Nakasaad din po sa report na magpapatuloy po ang imbestigasyon ng NBI at ng DOJ at magpapatuloy pa rin po ang mga imbestigasyon ng Ombudsman. Last week po nag-request po sa akin sa Ombudsman to clarify na although they are cooperating with the task force, they do not form part of the task force because they are constitutional body. So tama naman po iyon 'no pero I understand that the Ombudsman will

continue also with its investigation. So ito po ay pauna lamang given the very limited period of time na binigay po sa task force to come up with its recommendations.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: And, sir, one last na lang po. Clarification lang on the statement of President Duterte last night. He mentioned na hindi dapat paniwalaan iyong mga criticisms coming from 'dilawan'. Is he referring to a particular issue or what particular issues is he referring to?

SEC. ROQUE: He was referring to COVID po and the fact that we have made inroads in the fight against COVID being denied by the 'dilawan' and the opposition.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much, Maricel. Let's go back to Usec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, from Celerina Monte of Manila Shimbun: The President did not read anything about Secretary Duque from the task force's report about PhilHealth last night. Is Secretary Duque exonerated from possible charges both criminal and administrative? If so, did the President not consider also the recommendation of the Senate?

SEC. ROQUE: Already answered na po. Tinanong na po iyan ni Maricel Halili.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Rose Novenario of Hataw: May ilang mall po ang hindi kinikilala ang IATF Media ID at hindi pinapapasok dahil walang quarantine pass kagaya ng City Mall sa Imus, Cavite. Tama po ba daw ito? Kung hindi ay ano po ang parusa sa establisyimento?

SEC. ROQUE: Sa tingin ko po dapat ino-honor naman ang IATF ID because that's makes you an Authorized Person Outside of Residence, APOR. Pero pagdating po sa parusa, wala naman pong parusa iyan 'no. Iyan po ay nakabase sa ordinansa dahil wala nga po tayong pangnasyunal na batas na umiiral kapag mayroon pong quarantine at hinihimok ko pong muli ang Kongreso na bumuo ng ganiyang batas.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Kris Jose of Remate/Remate Online: Pabor po ba ang Malacañang sa apela ni Bagong Henerasyon Partylist Representative Bernadette Herrera-Dy na ilagay sa Immigration watchlist at maglabas ng hold departure order laban sa mga opisyal ng PhilHealth na isinasangkot sa malawakang korapsyon sa loob ng ahensiya? Hiniling din niya na maglabas ng legal authorization ang DOJ at NBI para ma-secure ang mga files at computers sa PhilHealth na maaaring magamit na ebidensiya sa mga akusado. Posible daw kasi na magkaroon ng pag-delete sa mga files, pag-recover sa electronic trail at pagsira sa mga ebidensiya.

SEC. ROQUE: One hundred percent in agreement, magaling po talaga itong si Congresswoman BH.

Next question from Tricia Terada please, CNN Philippines.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Good afternoon po sa inyo, Secretary. Sir, just a further clarification about the reduced physical distancing because in an interview, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said that the new social distancing rule which took effect on Monday was not approved by the IATF. Sir, we'd like to ask for clarification about this. Hindi po ba talaga ito naaprubahan ng IATF because, sir, I remember in the IATF Resolution 69 and 70 hindi nga rin po ito nakapaloob?

SEC. ROQUE: What was approved was increased transportation 'no ang ibibigay natin sa ating mga kababayan dahil nga po nagbubukas tayo ng ekonomiya. Iyong detalye po, iniwan natin sa mga lead agencies kagaya ng DOTr. Bagama't ako po, um-attend po ako ng meeting na iyon, narinig ko ho iyan, iyong pagbabawas sa social distancing pagdating sa pampublikong transportasyon na naaprubahan po dahil diniscuss po iyan doon sa IATF meeting at hindi naman po tumutol ang DOH.

Pero kagaya ng aking sinabi po kahapon na rin 'no, eh pag-uusapan po ngayong hapon iyan sa IATF meeting dahil hindi naman po pupuwedeng balewalain ang mga sinasabi ng mga medical frontliners sa panahon ng pandemya.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Secretary, will there be at least a move to suspend this ongoing new physical distancing rule? And, sir, isabay ko na rin, kasi kung ang goal po is to accommodate more commuters, may nag-raise din po ba sa IATF na dagdagan na lang instead iyong mga ruta for public transport na bakit daw po hindi ito iyong gawin instead of reducing the distance? And finally, may aasahan daw po ba tayo na resolution tonight?

SEC. ROQUE: Magkakaroon po ng resolution diyan. Kung wala talagang resolution, the President will decide and I think that was very clear yesterday 'no. I, myself told the President that I was taking a middle ground on this issue knowing na importante talaga na magkaroon ng additional transportation para mabuksan na ang ekonomiya and observing na wala ngang objection iyong DOH during the IATF meeting, although Secretary Duque was not present in that meeting.

Pero at the same time, tingnan po natin iyong datos na ipapakita ng mga medical frontliners at ikukumpara rin natin ito sa ibang mga pag-aaral na ginagawa sa buong daigdig dahil hindi lang naman po tayo ang mayroong mass transport system 'no, halos lahat po ng bansa sa daigdig mayroon. Pero parang tayo lang po ang nag-i-impose ng one-meter distancing sa mga mass transportation modes 'no. So magkakaroon po iyan ng resolution and although we don't have a regular press briefing tomorrow, as soon as the meeting ends, I will issue a statement kung ano po ang napagkasunduan pagdating dito sa mass transportation.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Secretary, last question na lang po, tungkol naman po doon sa naging initial findings ng Task Force PhilHealth. So nabanggit nga po doon iyong recommendation to strongly admonish iyong PhilHealth chairman, that's Secretary Duque--

SEC. ROQUE: And the Board.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES:—and the members of the Board. Secretary, ito po bang negligence nila, is it somehow tantamount to incompetence na kumbaga it got passed them, all these things got passed them?

SEC. ROQUE: I can only quote the report, there was negligence somehow mitigated – nabawasan ‘no dahil nga po tinatago naman ng execom iyong mga katotohanan sa mga miyembro ng Board.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Salamat po, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Trish. Going back to Usec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, from MJ Blancaflor of Tribune.net.ph: It’s been six months since the government imposed varying quarantine classifications. How will you assess the country’s response to COVID-19? Ano po ang gradong ibibigay ninyo sa ating pandemic response?

SEC. ROQUE: I don’t know if I can give a grade ‘no kasi ang tinuro ko sa UP ay international law at constitutional law ‘no, so I’m not used to giving grades. However, we’d like to highlight that number one, iyon nga po ‘no, iyong expectations ng mga dalubhasa, mga mathematicians na aabot na tayo dapat ng three million noong buwan pa ng Hunyo – hindi po nangyari iyan.

Pangalawa po, mababang-mababa po ang ating case mortality rate. It is only at 1.7% at iyan naman po ang importante, kapag may pandemya dapat pangalagaan ang karapatang mabuhay ng mga mamamayan.

At pangatlo po, iyong ating health system hindi po overwhelmed. Fifty percent pa nga po ang available capacity ng ating ICU beds, ng ating ICU wards at ng ating mga hospital rooms at 76% o 74% ang available ventilators pa natin.

So all in all, I think we deserve a very good grade. I would give it a grade of 85%.

USEC. IGNACIO: In our four strategies – testing, tracing, isolation and treatment – what should be improved? What are our strength and weaknesses?

SEC. ROQUE: We clearly have the best testing policy in the whole of Asia and probably in the whole world because we have exceeded three million and as a percentage of total population, ano na po iyan, lubus-lubusan na po iyan doon sa sinasabi nilang 3% na dapat na ma-test ang population at patuloy pa po tayo ‘no. So, dadami po tayo and I think we will have the highest number of testing, one of the highest in the whole world. So, that’s clearly, our biggest strength.

We need to brush up po in our tracing at ngayong na-approve na po ang Bayanihan 2 and we will have 5 billion allotted for additional tracers sa tingin ko po we will have major in roads and successes using also the Magalong formula na kailan lang naman pong na talaga bilang Tracing Czar.

Kinakailangan din po natin nang mas marami pang mga isolation facilities kung ipatutupad po natin iyong gusto nga pong mangyari nga po ni Secretary Año na wala na talagang magho-home quarantine;

one limitation, of course, is we don't have enough isolation facilities. So dapat mas marami pang isolation facilities ang ating itayo.

Pagdating naman po sa treatment, I think the fact that 1.7% lang po ang case mortality rate proves that Filipino doctors know how to take care of COVID patients now. So, alam na po natin iyong mga gamot na available Remdesivir, Avigan, tapos may contribution pa tayo ang virgin coconut oil, ang Tawa-Tawa, ang Lagundi at alam na po natin na mas nakakabuting gamitin iyong high flow oxygen cannula kaysa sa mga ventilators.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Ang susunod niyang tanong: how will the government address criticisms that health experts and medical groups are not consulted in drafting policies being implemented? Is Secretary Duque still in-charge of the IATF which serves as the policymaking body of our pandemic response?

SEC. ROQUE: Wala pong katotohanan iyan! Ang DOH pa rin po ang tumatayong lead agency sa IATF, pinangungunahan po ng isang doktor, si Dr. Duque. Bukod pa po diyan, ang ating epidemiologist ay si Dr. Wong at ang ating mga Usec. po lahat ay doctor – si USec. Vergeire, si Usec. Tong-an, si USec. Vega at saka si Usec. ... iyong sa classification, USec. Lilibeth. Si USec. Lilibeth, siya po iyong nagbibigay sa atin ng guidance pagdating doon sa classification na ipapataw sa iba't ibang lugar.

Wala pong hindi doctor ang nagbibigay ng polisiya pagdating po sa COVID. Siyempre po tumutulong po ang lahat because we are employing the one nation approach pagdating dito sa pandemyang ito. Thank you.

Now we go to Melo Acuña please.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Good afternoon, Secretary. Hindi ko narinig kung anong bansa iyong gustong humingi ng down payment bagama't sinabi ng Pangulo na iyong Russia at iyong Tsina ay baka puwede pang magpautang. Ano po kayang mga bansa iyon?

SEC. ROQUE: Sinabi po niya kahapon, western.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Would we be more specific?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi po niya sinabi, so I cannot be more specific. Western country po.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: But, Secretary, there is another issue. Because I came upon the budget proposal for the Department of Health for next year, from 181 billion this year nabawasan po ito at naging 120, pero tumaas po iyong budget ng DPWH at ng Department of Transportation. Ano po kaya ang logic dito?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, kasi po iyong mga isolation facilities, iyong mga hospital nakapaloob po iyan sa budget ng DPWH kaya nga po ginawa nating Isolation Czar si Secretary Villar. So lahat po iyong mga additional bed capacity, hindi naman po iyan pumapasok sa budget ng Department of Health, iyan po ay public infrastructure spending pa rin sa ilalim po ng Department of Public Works and Highways.

Now, sa transportasyon po, hindi ko po alam ang detalye so I cannot answer you right away. Pero alam naman po natin na habang nagbubukas ang ekonomiya, dapat mas importante ang papel ng

transportasyon dahil hindi makakapunta ng trabaho ang mga manggagawa kung walang public transportation. At alam po natin na at 16.5 contraction, eh talagang malala po ang problema natin sa ekonomiya, kaya dapat gawin ang lahat para mabuhay muli at makabangon ang ating ekonomiya.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Opo. Para po sa ating mga kasama sa TESDA, may tanong lamang po ako.

Secretary Lapeña, magandang tanghali po sa inyo. Nakapagsanay na po kayo ng mga OFW na umuwi. Ano po kaya ang kinabukasang naghihintay sa kanila? Ano pong trabaho ang in demand sa labas at loob ng Pilipinas? At mayroon na po kayang nakapasok ng trabaho matapos magsanay sa inyo? Salamat po.

SEC. LAPEÑA: Maraming salamat sa katanungan po ninyo. At present ay mayroon tayong mga 73,000 na OFWs at saka mga dependents nila who have enrolled and graduated in TESDA's skills training program, kasama na po diyan iyong training sa TESDA's online program natin.

At iyong mga trabaho po na in need ngayon ay iyong sa agriculture, construction, IT-BPM, health and wellness, registration marketing also. At iyong aming survey, iyong mga nagti-train po sa amin ay we have a 85% employability rate. So more likely, our OFWs that were trained are either employed or they have their own business or livelihood po. And we continue to train our OFWs as stated earlier na mayroon kaming online na TESDA apps for registration and for enrollment.

And then kung mayroon pong mga naka-register na diyan, our regional offices at saka mga provincial officers namin reach out to them para makausap sila kung ano iyong mga interest nila, anong skills iyong gusto nilang ma-train at saka after that, they will be helped na magkaroon po ng trabaho.

Ang TESDA kapag po nag-train, it should result to a job or a livelihood after. So, ganoon po ang ginagawa ng TESDA sa ating mga kababayan.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Nabanggit po kasi ng Asian Development Bank kanina sa kanilang economic briefing na bababa pa ang ating growth rate by 7.3% hanggang sa pagtatapos ng taon bago makabawi next year. Pero ano po kaya ang impact nito sa employability ng mga nasanay ninyong mga OFW at mga Pilipinong naghahanap ng trabaho?

SEC. LAPEÑA: Well, tama po iyan because of the slowdown ang economic activities natin. That is why ang pinagtutuunan namin ng importansiya ay dito po sa agriculture field. Kasi sa agriculture field, that is a continuing training at saka ang demand po diyan ay dumadami rin because of the food security; as well as construction din po. And then pati na rin itong IT-BPM natin, because of the shift from the traditional learning system to blended or to a flexible learning modality.

So these are the three, iyong mga nangunguna na mga trabaho na puwedeng maaplayan ng ating mga kababayan during this time na medyo nagkakahirapan iyong ibang mga employment opportunities.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, from Gillian Cortez ng Business World. Basahin ko na lang din po iyong tanong niya: President Duterte said it is the western countries who prioritized profit when he mentioned about COVID-19 vaccines and slammed those who impose reservation fees. Who exactly are these pharmaceutical companies he was referring to, are they US-based?

SEC. ROQUE: I suppose US-based din po, but there are at least two western companies who have claimed to be on clinical trial third stage, that's the US and the UK.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. How are the statements of the President going to affect current talks made with western vaccine developers regarding COVID-19 vaccines since last week? The Department of Health said they are in talks with Pfizer and Moderna.

SEC. ROQUE: Wala naman pong epekto iyan, we continue to negotiate with everyone. In fact, the President wants to ensure na magkakaroon tayo ng vaccine kahit sino pang unang maka-develop niyan.

Thank you, Usec. We go to Pia Rañada, please.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Hi, sir. Good afternoon. Sir, just an update sana on the decision or the move to ban home quarantine. Has the IATF already consulted with the LGUs? And did the President say anything about this proposal?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, same status po. It's held in abeyance ang desisyon until we have consulted with the LGUs. I'm not aware if there's been any consultations because it was only last Thursday naman po na it was held in abeyance. But I'm sure it will be discussed again today and in the future meetings.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Okay. Sir, just following up again on the President's SALN because it's been a year since the President submitted his 2018 SALN and until now, it hasn't been published. So may we ask what's taking it so long? And the President has consistently promised to uphold transparency and yet he is the first President not to publicize his SALN?

SEC. ROQUE: I do not know if that has not been made available. But what I'm sure about is, it has been filed.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: How about, sir, iyong 2019 SALN? You promised to check if it has been submitted.

SEC. ROQUE: I'm sure it's been submitted. But whether or not it will be made public is outside of the jurisdiction of my office. But I'll inquire from the Office of the Executive Secretary.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Sir, how come you haven't discussed this issue yet and the possibility of making this public kasi, sir, it's a public interest document, right? And the President has consistently said that he respects FOI and that he would like to encourage all officials to publicize their SALNs, but he himself isn't doing it. I mean, have you even discussed the reasons why it's been kept from the public for so long.

SEC. ROQUE: I don't think the President is keeping anything from the public. The fact is, he is the only branch of government that has in fact issued an issuance, an Executive Order # 1 on transparency, and that is FOI, in the executive branch of government.

If you think it's not being made available to you, I enjoin you to resort to the EO 1 in seeking the document that you want.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Yes, sir, we have done that several times.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Thank you. Usec. Rocky again. Thank you, Pia.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Sam Medenilla of Business Mirror: Mayroon na kayang desisyon si President Rodrigo Duterte on the appeal of Filipino nurses to extend the period for exemption from the temporary deployment ban of POEA?

SEC. ROQUE: Wala pa po. And I think because ... it's because si Secretary Bello has been unable to attend the meetings. I'm not sure if he is still in isolation, pero I will ask po na, siguro in the next meeting with the President kung makakasama si Secretary Bello.

USEC. IGNACIO: Aside from the filing of charges against alleged erring PhilHealth officials, what are the other recommendations of the Task Force investigating the alleged anomalies in PhilHealth which was approved by President Rodrigo Duterte? Does this include the proposal of the DOJ for the reorganization of PhilHealth by the GCG (Governance Commission for GOCC)?

SEC. ROQUE: Sa rekomendasyon po na ibinigay sa akin na kopya, at ito naman po ay binasa ni Presidente, wala na pong ibang rekomendasyon ang Task Force other than continuing investigation pa po.

So iyong mga kasong dapat isampa po doon sa mga indibidwal na na-mention sa report, panimula pa lang po iyan; patuloy pa rin po ang magiging imbestigasyon at mas marami pa pong isasampa na kaso ang DOJ at ang Ombudsman.

Okay. We go to Joseph Morong.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Hi, sir! Good afternoon. Sir, pahingi kami ng kopya ng report ng DOJ. I understand it's 177 pages 'no. Pahingi kami, sir, ha?

SEC. ROQUE: Apparently, I cannot release it because in a press statement, in a press briefing, Usec. Markk Perete said that DOJ also said it cannot release the report because it contains information on ongoing investigations by member-agencies. The DOJ instead issued an executive PR that covers important and major portions of the report.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay. Sir, okay, going there, sa report ng DOJ, sir, would we be able to quantify 'no iyong amount of money that was lost in this anomaly? Kasi ang daming mga procurement na problema, iyong sa IRM. Would we be able to quantify the amount of corruption that is involved in this whole investigation?

SEC. ROQUE: That's a continuing thing, so ako, I cannot. But a source within PhilHealth has told me and has told the Philippine Daily Inquirer that it is at least a hundred billion pesos.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: No, just the ... also the findings of the DOJ?

SEC. ROQUE: Wala namang ganiyang finding ang DOJ. I'm just answering your question 'no. But the DOJ itself, the Task Force itself had no estimation. I'm unable to make an estimate. Although simple mathematics, magkano ang IRM, magkano iyong IRM na binigay sa mga areas na wala namang COVID.

Titingnan dapat iyong mga kaso ng mga nari-release na pondo intended for COVID sa mga areas na walang COVID. I'm sure may mga upcasing na tinatawag iyan, pinalalabas na COVID kahit na hindi. Tapos iyong failure to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of anomalies, eh 'di estimate mo kung sino iyong mga iyan na binigyan nila ng amnesty; magkano ang nahuthot sa gobyerno, then you can come up with the figure. But I'm not in a position to do that now.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, can you laymanize lang, sir, iyong sinabi ng DOJ na “strong admonishment versus the chairman,” who is Secretary Duque? What does this mean, sir? Parang warning lang at iyong sinabi ninyo po kaninang mitigated kasi itinago ang mga documents ng mga execoms. Is that even possible na magtago at mapalusutan iyong chairman ng PhilHealth about all these potential anomalies?

SEC. ROQUE: Ako naman po, uulitin ko po, hindi lang naman po sa board chairman iyong admonishment ‘no. It is intended to ... iku-quote ko po, “The foregoing notwithstanding the Task Force recommends that the President strongly admonish and remind the chairman and members of the board of the grave consequences of their action or inaction to the PhilHealth fund.” In other words, lahat ng taong gobyerno, we have to be good stewards of public funds; kinakailangan pinapangalagaang mabuti po. At iyan po iyong sinabi naman ng report, kinakailangan pagsabihan ang chairman at ang members of the board, including five Cabinet members na kinakailangan mas matindi ang kanilang pagbabantay sa pondo ng kaban ng bayan nang hindi po nawawala sa mga ganitong paraan.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, just last two questions for you. Sir, iyon pong sa desisyon ng DOTr, independent of maybe IATF, sir, is this symptomatic of how the government decides on policy? One department—

SEC. ROQUE: No, no, no.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: ... decides on its own without coordinating with another agency that is relevant to the decision?

SEC. ROQUE: Let me correct you. That was approved by the IATF. I heard it myself in the IATF meeting, and no one objected. Kaya naman ang punto naman ng DOTr, and I raised this with the President in fairness to DOTr, it was approved by the entire IATF because it came after the report by Secretary Chua of NEDA, showing through data, how you cannot open the economy without increasing access to public transportation.

So wala naman pong nag-object sa meeting na iyon. Wala nga po si Secretary Duque noong mga panahon na iyon, pero nandoon po iyong kaniyang mga alternates ‘no. At napakadaming alternates po ng Secretary of Health sa IATF, I can assure you that no less than four or five. So dapat kung mayroon ngang complaint, and I share the sentiment of Secretary Tugade, dapat nagsalita na sila.

Ang basa ko naman dito, ang nagsalita talaga ay via private medical practitioners, and the President naman, in fairness, they wrote him, he responded right away by bringing this up to select members of the Cabinet yesterday. But even before the President brought it to our attention, talaga naman pong naka-agenda na siya for this afternoon dahil hindi nga po pupuwedeng balewalain naman ang mga punto de vista ng mga medical frontliners.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Kay Secretary Galvez, sir, konti lang, short. Sir, last night, you said that there's a ... something like 120,000 possible cases that's why you underscored the need for more isolation facilities. First, on the figure. Tama ba, sir, iyong rinig ko, 128,000 possible cases? And if this is so, is this not worrying na baka ma-short tayo ng isolation facilities? At this point, how many do we have and how many more are we anticipating to isolate?

SEC. GALVEZ: Nakikita po natin na iyong sa lahat ng na-isolate natin is 24,530. Kung hindi po ito na-isolate, ito po ay nag continue sa home quarantine. Matatawag na exponential growth ito [garbled]. So, kung hindi natin natatanggal sa NCR at saka sa Region III at saka sa Region IV, hindi bababa iyong active cases natin. Napaka-klaro po eh, noon August 14 ang ating active cases is 88,109, ngayong September, 53,754. So, instead na mag-increase exponentially, napababa po natin iyong active cases na [garbled].

So, nakikita natin itong direct correlation ng ating aggressive isolation. At i-explain ko po sa inyo na iyong pinaka-primary role ng tracing, ng contact tracing at saka testing is to isolate [garbled]. Kung hindi po natin maa-isolate iyon ay para po tayong nagsasayang lang ng pera sa testing at saka contact tracing. Ang pinaka ano natin... ang tinatawag nating decisive point ng ating strategy is how we can unearth the unseen enemy and isolate and prevent it from transmitting the disease.

So, klarong-klaro, kitang-kita sa figures, sa report po namin kay Presidente, sa buong NCR, 35% po ang decline ng cases. Meaning, noong nagsimula po tayo ng Oplan Kalinga, napakabilis ng pagbaba po. And then ang nakita po natin iyong sa mga lessons learned natin sa Cebu na iyong 1,900 na naka home quarantine noong in-extract po natin nakita po natin ang Cebu ngayon hindi na tumataas even nag-MGCQ na siya. So, klarong-klaro iyong ating [unclear].

And then nakita po namin, pinlano po namin iyan kaya naisulong po namin na maisama sa Bayanihan 2 iyong 4.5 billion. Na-compute po namin na sa 4.5 billion ay puwede po tayong mag-home—ay, mag-ano... iyong tinatawag na isolate sa mga hotels na 128,000 COVID positive. So, ngayong nagkaroon po tayo ng arrangement sa DOT na iyong lahat ng 3-star, 2-star at saka iyong mga hotels ay gagawin po nating facility for positive at saka OFW. So, staycation po, 4-star at saka 5-star po ang staycation.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay, sir. Thank you for your time po.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much, Joseph. Back to USec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Secretary, mayroon na lang tayo ditong apat na tanong para sa inyo. From Joyce Balancio ng ABS-CBN: Six month into the lockdown nangangalampag daw po iyong unyon at workers ng konkretong plano from government on joblessness. Ano daw po ang reaction ng Palasyo?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, ang reaksiyon po natin diyan ay kaya nga po binubuksan natin ang ekonomiya, kaya nga po nag lunsad tayo ng isang kampanya, information campaign na 'Ingat

Buhay para sa Hanapbuhay' para maengganyo ang lahat po na lumabas, magtrabaho at kaya naman pong magtrabaho kung pag-iingatan natin ang ating mga buhay.

Nandiyan din po iyong mga pondo na inilaan natin para ipautang sa ating mga kababayan para magkaroon ng sariling negosyo, iyan po ay nasa loob ng Bayanihan 2; at bukod pa po diyan, abangan ninyo po iyong 2021 Budget dahil marami rin pong mga stimulus na nakapaloob diyan sa 2021 Budget.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Vanz Fernandez: Reaksiyon po sa sinabi ni Senator Sotto na dismayado daw po siya dahil hindi kinasuhan si DOH Secretary Duque at PhilHealth SVP Roberto del Rosario ng DOJ task force na nilabag ang Article 217 of the Revised Penal Code dahil sa kapabayaang sa paggamit ng pondo sa korapsyon kaya ipinaubaya na lamang daw po sa Ombudsman.

SEC. ROQUE: Gaya ng sinabi ko po, panimula pa lang naman po ito because they had very limited period of time given to them by the President na 30 days. Ipagpapatuloy pa po ang imbestigasyon ng DOJ, magpapatuloy pa po ang imbestigasyon ng Ombudsman.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Celerina Monte, Manila Shimbun: Regarding daw po doon sa admonition against Secretary Duque, posible bang nakaapekto ang unang sinabi ni Pangulong Duterte na mistulang iniligtas na niya ang Kalihim noon sabihin niya dati na posibleng hanggang negligence lang kung mayroon man ang dapat maipataw sa kaniya at hindi mas mabigat na criminal case?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi naman po siguro, kasi kung ganoon eh dapat wala ng admonishment na inirekomenda.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Vanz Fernandez para daw po kay Secretary Lapeña: Kung nagsimula na daw po ba ng contact tracing training ang TESDA para daw po i-assist iyong tracking down some individuals na nagkaroon na COVID-19 positive?

SEC. LAPEÑA: Yes, ma'am. Nag-umpisa na kami, it started here at NCR and with 25 mga trainees ang ating na-train na and these will be... ang mga trainees na ito will be duplicated in all the regions in the country. So, this is a priority activity ng TESDA as our part in the minimizing or the stop of the spread of the corona virus.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Secretary Lapeña, salamat po.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, USec. Rocky. Maraming salamat sa ating mga naging panauhin, ang ating Chief Implementer Secretary Galvez at si Secretary Lapeña ng TESDA. Maraming salamat din po sa mga miyembro ng Malacañang Press Corps.

Sa ngalan po ng ating Presidente, ito po ang inyong Spox Harry Roque nagsasabing: Kaya po natin ito. Inngatan natin ang ating mga buhay para tayo po ay makapaghanapbuhay.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong panunood, hanggang sa Huwebes.

Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

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