

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON HARRY ROQUE
JUNE 28, 2021 (12:05 P.M. – 1:06 P.M)

SEC. ROQUE: Magandang umaga, Pilipinas.

Good news Monday po tayo. Masaya po naming binabalita na mahigit sampung milyon na po or 10,065,414 na ang total doses administered as of June 27, 2021, ito po ay ayon sa National Vaccination Operations Center.

At kaninang umaga ay nagkaroon po ng ceremonial vaccination reaching ten million jabs sa lungsod po ng Valenzuela. At ang average daily administered doses natin sa nakaraang pitong araw ay nasa 236,867 doses. Tiwala tayo na maabot natin ang 500,000 daily vaccination rate nating target basta patuloy ang pagdating ng supply ng bakuna sa bansa.

Tandaan po ha, hindi kumpleto ang kalahati; kinakailangan nating kumpletuhin ang dalawang dose ng bakuna para sa pinakamalakas ng proteksiyon.

Another good news po: Dumating kagabi, Linggo, June 27, ang 249,600 doses ng Moderna vaccine sa Pilipinas po – 150,000 doses nito ay binili ng pamahalaan; samantalang ang 99,600 doses ay binili ng pribadong sektor. Habang isang milyong doses ng Sinovac naman po ang dumating kaninang umaga. Nakita ko pa iyan dumadaan sila ng Katipunan habang ako ay papunta ng opisina. Ito na po ang panlimang batch ng Sinovac na na-deliver ngayong buwan ng Hunyo. Nasa 6.5 million doses ang dumating ngayong buwan nang Hunyo, suma total, nasa 12 million doses ang Sinovac vaccine na ang dumating sa bansa. Sa ngayon, may limang COVID-19 vaccine brand na ang nasa ating supply inventory. Ito po ang:

1. Sinovac
2. AstraZeneca
3. Sputnik V
4. Pfizer
5. Moderna.

Nasa mahigit labimpitong milyon or 17,455,470 na po ang dumating na bakuna as of June 28 ayon sa NTF.

COVID-19 update naman po tayo, ito ang ranking ng Pilipinas sa mundo ayon sa Johns Hopkins: Nananatiling Number 24 po tayo pagdating sa total cases ‘no. Bumaba naman po tayo sa ranking, naging Number 27 tayo sa active cases. Dati po ay 24 din tayo. Number 131 po tayo sa cases per 100,000, at nasa Number 90 po tayo sa case fatality rate na nanatiling 1.7%.

Mayroon tayo pong 6,096 na mga bagong kaso ayon sa June 27, 2021 datos ng DOH. Nagpapasalamat po kami muli sa ating mga medical frontliners. At napakataas pa rin po ng ating recovery rate ‘no, ito po ay nasa 94.5%. Nasa 1,321,050 na po ang bilang ng mga nag-recover.

Samantala, malungkot naming binabalita na nasa 24,372 na po ang binawian ng buhay. Nakikiramay po kami sa mga naulila.

Puntahan naman po natin ang kalagayan ng ating mga ospital. Sa National Capital Region po:

- 45% po ang utilized na ICU beds
- 39% po ang ginagamit na isolation beds
- 32% po ang nagagamit na ward beds
- At 32% po ang nagagamit na ventilators

Sa buong Pilipinas:

- 57% po ang mga ICU beds na nagagamit
- 47% ang mga isolation beds na nagagamit
- 44% ang utilized ward beds
- At 37% naman po ang mga ventilators na nagagamit

Dito po nagtatapos ang ating briefing ‘no. Pero unahin na po natin si Makati Mayor Abigail Binay tungkol sa nagba-viral na video na diumano ay ang pagturok po ng bakuna na hindi raw po naibigay iyong bakuna ‘no. So, Mayor Abigail Binay, my kapatid, please the floor is yours.

MAKATI MAYOR BINAY: Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat. We acknowledge the video. It was human error on the part of the volunteer nurse. Volunteer po siya na nurse. That was immediately corrected. This happened June 25, and June 26 bumalik po siya aming tanggapan at pinakita po ang video at nakita naman po na hindi ho nga siya nabakunahan kung kaya’t binigyan ho siya agad ng bakuna.

So we simply ask for understanding from the public. Mahigit isang taon na pong naghihirap at nagtatrabaho po ang ating mga frontliners para ho mabigyan po tayo ng—para ho labanan itong pandemyang ito. Umaapela po kami sa mga nagkakalat ng video at nagbibintang nang kung anu-ano sa kawawa pong nurse na ito, huwag naman po ganoon lalo na at wala naman po tayong hawak na ebidensiya.

Ang nakakalungkot din po dito ay siyempre mag-ieleksyon na po next year at ang iba pong nagkakalat ng video ay tuwang-tuwa sa nangyari at ginagamit po itong paraan para po siraan ako at siraan po ang vaccination program ng Makati. Pero hindi ho nila nakikita na ang vaccination rollout ng buong Pilipinas po ang maaapektuhan kung sisirain po nila ang kredibilidad ng vaccination po natin. Maawa naman po kayo sa nurse na nagkusang loob na nag-volunteer ng kaniyang oras para lang po magsilbi sa ating mga kababayan. Tao lang po ang ating frontliners, napapagod, nagkakamali. Pero mahalaga po na itinama namin agad ang pagkakamaling ito at humihingi po siya at kami ng patawad, at nagbibigay din po kami ng assurance na hindi na po ito mangyayari muli.

Maraming, maraming salamat po.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, Mayor Abby Binay, I assure you po ‘no that your opposition in Makati will have to do a lot more para siraan po iyong vaccination ninyo dahil ang aking dating [unclear] po ay nasa Makati, at nakita ko po na iyong aking mga dating mga kasama ay sila po ay talagang nabakunahan na lahat ‘no.

At saka mga kababayan, tignan naman po natin, naka-10 million jabs na tayoy; at ito naman po ay isolated case talaga on the part of an overworked na volunteer pa na frontliners. So I'm sure the people will understand po.

Kasama rin po natin ngayon for more good news Monday ang ating Ambassador to Canada, si Attorney Rodolfo Robles. Dahil po sa time difference ay tineyp [taped] po namin ang aming panayam kay Ambassador Robles. Ito po ang aking naging conversation:

SEC. ROQUE: *Kasama po natin ngayon ang ating Ambassador to Canada, wala pong iba kung hindi si Ambassador Rodolfo Robles. Ambassador, mayroon yata tayong mga magandang balita 'no tungkol sa bakuna diyan po sa Canada. Ano ba ho itong magandang balita na ito? The floor is yours, Ambassador Robles.*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Salamat, Secretary Harry. Salamat at I'll be given a chance to explain what's going on in Canada with respect to vaccines.*

Let me start what's on the table. Right now, Canada has a contract of about 180,000 doses, and considering that they are about 40,000 even if they get double, they'll have an excess of about a hundred thousand doses. And I had the Philippines listed among those who are interested to get the excess of Canada.

Well, there's another aspect I would like to add, if I may. There is a manufacturing aspect which I will explain a little later if you will be interested to know about it.

SEC. ROQUE: *Tuloy po, okay lang po. We would be interested to hear—*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Okay*

SEC. ROQUE: *Clarification lang po: Is it a hundred eighty million doses or a thousand lang po talaga?*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Yes.*

SEC. ROQUE: *Hundred eighty million doses.*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Yes, million iyan.*

SEC. ROQUE: *Okay, go ahead po.*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Yes, 180 million doses and they are about less than 40,000 in population—*

SEC. ROQUE: *Forty million. Forty million po in population.*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: *Yes, yes. So that's mean we'll have about a hundred million doses for ... as an excess from Canada. And we are being listed among those who are interested to partake of the excess of the 100 million.*

SEC. ROQUE: *Kailan po kaya sila magkakaroon ng desisyon?*

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: Well, ngayon ay they are... they expect to have a full vaccination of everybody by the end of the ... by the middle of the fourth quarter. So before the end of the year, we will know already how many excess Canada will have. And I am really watching with an eagle eye on the prospect of getting some excess directly from Canada.

SEC. ROQUE: Iyong possibility po of manufacturing, ano po itong possibility?

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: Yes, it's very important because as early as January, I already contacted a company, they call in Medicago, in Canada. When the delivery of of vaccine in Canada was being delayed, they started to have their own and they started funding this Medicago. So I called them up and we had an exchange of views, and immediately they sent us a NDA or the non-disclosure agreement. But right now, it's still in the hands of DOST. And I just called them up this morning and asked what's the situation because with that, we can start negotiating more formally after getting that NDA approved by the Philippine government through DOST and I think IATF also. So I expect that to be proceeding faster as soon I get the confirmation.

SEC. ROQUE: So itong possibility pong ito, may posibilidad na joint venture ba ho itong manufacturing with the Canadian company pero dito po sa Pilipinas?

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: The situation is like this. They have now a factory in Quebec City and they will already be establishing two or three in different countries in the world. I think they have already contacted Germany for that purpose and I offered our pharmaceutical ecozone in Bulacan I think, and I gave them all the perks of having a manufacturing [plant] in the Philippines like trade free taxes, free capital importations and the like.

So, well, I cannot talk to them now because there is no NDA yet but we are registered. I talked with the CEO already and a negotiation in progress right now. But as soon as we get the NDA from Manila then I can proceed more rapidly about this matter.

SEC. ROQUE: Kayo ba ho, Ambassador, and your family have you been vaccinated in Ottawa?

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: I have my first and in a month's time I hope I'll have the second injection.

SEC. ROQUE: I see.

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: Canada, I think right now they have about 67% of their population already vaccinated but the double vaccination is about only 29% but by the end of the third quarter they said will be fully vaccinated, everybody. And so that's the time the excess will be counted.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Well, that's good news po and thank you very much for starting the week with this good news. Thank you very much, Ambassador Rodolfo Robles.

AMBASSADOR ROBLES: Thank you also, Harry. Thank you very much! Even after so many months we meet now in this digital space. Thank you.

SEC. ROQUE: *Thank you.*

Kasama rin po natin ngayon ang Sulu Governor Abdusakur Tan at si Ahod “Al-haj Murad” Ebrahim, siya po ang Interim Chief Minister ng Bangsamoro Transition Authority. Kaya po natin sila inimbita, noong Huwebes po ay nagkaroon po ng pangalawang pagpupulong ang Presidente dito po sa dalawang panig tungkol po doon sa posibleng extension ng transition para sa Bangsamoro Transition Authority.

Nakasaad po kasi sa BARMM organic law na iyong unang mga ihahalal na mga opisyaes ng Bangsamoro Authority ay isasabay sa eleksiyon nitong 2022. Humingi po ng transition ang ating Bangsamoro Transition Authority at ito po ang ii-explain ni Chief Minister Ahod “Al-haj Murad” Ebrahim at mayroon naman pong salungat na view ang ilang mga halal na governors at congressman diyan po sa BARMM.

Ang naging desisyon po ni Presidente matapos niyang pulungin nang dalawang pagkakataon ang kabilang panig ay neutral po ang ating Presidente, iniwan po niya sa Kongreso ang desisyon kung sila ay magpapasa ng batas na papahabain pa iyong transition period para sa Bangsamoro Transition Authority.

So, unahin na po natin siguro, Chief Minister Al-haj Murad Ebrahim. Bakit ninyo po hinihingi sa Kongreso na mapahaba pa iyong transition period ng tatlo pang taon. The floor is yours, Al-haj Murad Ebrahim.

Wala? Chief Minister? Well, anyway kung hindi po naririnig tayo ni Chief Minister Ebrahim, puntahan po muna natin si Governor Abdusakur M. Tan.

Governor, sa panig ninyo po, bakit ninyo naman po sinasabi na dapat na matuloy ang eleksyon dito sa BARMM kasabay po ng ating national elections sa darating na 2022? The floor is yours, Governor Abdusakur M. Tan.

Nawala po yata sila pareho. Nawala sila pareho! Okay! Habang inaayos po ang Zoom para kay Chief Minister at kay Governor Tan, simulan po muna natin ang ating open forum. Usec. Rocky, please.

Naku, wala rin si Usec. Rocky!

Okay. Ang tanong po ni Leila Salaverria ng Inquirer: What is now the President’s position on the extension of the institutional life of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority after the meeting in Malacañang last week? What consensus if any was reached with Congress and BARMM leaders?

SEC. ROQUE: Kagaya po ng aking sinabi, ang Presidente po decided to become neutral and will allow Congress to fully discuss the matter and to decide accordingly, respecting the plenary powers and wisdom of Congress.

Ang sabi kasi ni Presidente eh talaga namang may punto ang parehong panig. Doon sa panig ng deferment o iyong pagpapahaba pa ng transition, mahirap nga daw magkaroon ng eleksiyon po kasi wala pa silang Omnibus Election Code doon sa BARMM at wala pa pong batas para sa re-districting.

Pero sa panig naman ng dapat mag-eleksiyon, importante magkaroon ng mandato ang lahat ng mga political leaders natin para naman mayroon silang moral authority to lead. Kaya iniwan na po ni Presidente sa Kongreso ang desisyon.

Next question po ni Leila Salaverria: Based on current figures, are restrictions likely to be eased in NCR Plus in July?

Today po ang meeting natin ng IATF para sa mga quarantine classifications, so, again I will not prejudge pero sa tingin ko po ay GCQ po ang ating current quarantine classification sa Metro Manila, eh siguro po mahirap pong magbago ng classification as of now.

Okay? Mayroon na ba tayong Zoom? Gov. Tan is ready, I think. Governor Abdusakur Tan, the floor is yours.

Naku, wala pa rin po! Usec. Rocky, are you ready?

Okay, who is on the house na? Sino po ito? Okay! Governor Abdusakur M. Tan is on the house. Go ahead, Governor. Bakit ninyo po tinututulan iyong extension ng transition by another three years? Go ahead, Governor Tan, the floor is yours.

Siguro po dahil nasa Mindanao sila na medyo liblib ang mga lugar kaya mahirap.

Okay, go ahead Governor Abdusakur M. Tan of the Province of Sulu.

SULU GOV. TAN: Yes, Sir! Magandang tanghali po.

SEC. ROQUE: Magandang tanghali.

SULU GOV. TAN: Wala po kaming narinig kanina.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay po. Go ahead po, explain po bakit ninyo po tinutulan ang deferment of elections sa BARMM by another three years? The floor is yours.

SULU GOV. TAN: Ah okay. Thank you very much po, Secretary Harry Roque.

Actually, tinututulan natin iyan dahil iyan po ang batas. Ang batas ay nagsasabi that the elections or the term of the BTA would only be three years and that three years would end in 2022 and that the elections would be synchronized and therefore it should be 2022 together with the national and local elections.

Now, ang inaano natin, hindi dahil sa ayaw natin sa mga taga-BARMM or sa MILF, ang gusto lang natin ngayon ay magkaroon ng mandato ang ating mga opisyal dahil sinasabi natin, kahit doon kay Presidente na it would be very awkward na for the BARMM officials to be governing without any mandate and maybe requesting us or ordering us to assist them.

And kami nasa local government we have our mandate, and if ever we will be submitting ourselves to the people in an election in 2022 as well as those government entities or officials in government offices/national offices, they have mandates because they occupy appointive positions.

So, they are appointed to their positions. Unlike in BARMM officials, the positions are elective positions so the officials must also be elected. So iyon po, actually ang concern namin dito paano na after this administration. Ano kaya ang mangyayari sa amin kung hindi kami magkasundo ng mga bagong mga administrasyon? Sabihin na wala kayong mandato, 'di damay kami lahat kasi nasa BARMM kami.

Ang sinasabi lamang namin, in fact nagka-meeting na kami ni Chief Minister Murad together with his team, in fact iyon was invited alone to a dinner by the team of Chief Minister Murad. The night before the... another meeting with mga—before the convening of the council of leaders so nag-meeting-meeting kami. Ang sabi ko sa kanila ano tayo, wala tayong problema doon sa pamumuno. We will still support an MILF-led BARMM government. So whether may eleksiyon o walang eleksiyon susuportahan natin. So iyon ang napag-usapan namin.

But I would prefer kako na ito, we strengthen the position of the BARMM officials. So to strengthen it, we have to have a mandate. Anyway, susuportahan namin sila sa eleksiyon. Wala naman kukontra diyan, susuportahan namin. Sabi ko 'pag postpone 'yan, I will challenge it before the Supreme Court kasi mas gusto ko na magka-eleksiyon para malakas at matibay ang pamumuno ng ating mga BARMM officials.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. maraming salamat, Governor. Governor because of lack of time, maraming salamat po pero please stay on po dahil magkakaroon po tayo ng open forum with our colleagues in the Malacañang Press Corps. Pero for now po, can I call on Interim Chief Minister Murad. Chief Minister Murad, sa kabilang panig naman po, bakit po sa tingin ninyo justified na i-extend iyong transition period ng BARMM for another 3 years? The floor is yours, Chief Minister Murad.

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Yes. Good morning, sir. And good morning to everybody in the Zoom. So, I'll be very, very brief in my... direct to the point.

We have been requesting for this extension. Unang-una po, nakikita natin na very short iyong time na three years in order to restructure the government, iyong Bangsamoro government. Kasi po iyong Bangsamoro government is not like just changing of leadership, kailangan i-restructure natin ito. Because it is the structure of the government, is parliamentary ministerial under a unitary na presidential unitary system. So medyo mahirap ho iyon.

Pangalawa po is, there was a delay in the budget of the BARMM, in the autonomous government – 2019 po wala kami hong budget nang mag-assume kami. Iyong remaining budget lang ng ARMM ang nagamit namin. Pero hindi na namin nagamit lahat dahil po sa wala nang panahon na—so 2020 lang nagkaroon kami ng budget.

So itong 2020, just 3 months after 2020 nagsimula na iyong COVID-19 na pandemic. So instead of focusing on our task in the governance and also—kasi dalawa pong track itong naka-assign sa atin sa BTA – one is the political track which is the setting up of the government; and in the other is the normalization track which is the normalization of the situation in the area. So nalihis po iyong ating attention sa pandemic. So marami tayong hindi nagawa na task natin.

So—kaya nga after 2020 nakita namin na talagang kulang iyong—wala na kaming time in order to implement iyong iba pang mga task. So we requested an audience with the President, nag-audience po kami sa kaniya and then sinabi namin na we are requesting for extension kasi hindi namin makaya because one year ang nawala sa amin. So for the 3 years term, nakikita namin na very short pa rin iyon in order to implement all the task of the BTA. So kaya ito ngayon ang gusto namin na ma-extend.

In the first meeting with the President, talagang he expressed his very strong support. Sinabi niya sa amin hundred percent na suportado ko kayo diyan dahil alam ko na 3 years is a very short period for a transition. So nagsimula kami na mag—pero sabi niya hindi naman sa akin lang ang desisyon, it has to be the Legislative Branch. So kaya we engaged the Senate, we engaged po iyong Congress.

So after engaging, iyon na nga, nagkaroon ng kuwan na mayroong mga lumabas na dissenter, ayaw doon sa pag-extension. Si Governor Sakur na-express naman niya ang kaniyang kuwan. So last June 16 nagkaroon kami ng meeting, ito iyong last meeting before June 24 meeting with the President kasama rin ho iyong mga governor at saka iyong mga Cabinet members.

So itong June 16 na meeting, the President instructed us to convene the council of leaders. Sabi niya gusto ko iyong magkasundo-sundo kayo, sabi niya na mayroong ayaw, mayroong kuwan... I want everybody to—na magkasundo kayo. So we convened the council of leaders meeting in June 23 diyan ho sa Grand Hyatt Ballroom sa Manila. So physically present ay eleven - 8 po at tatlo po ang naka-Zoom.

Ang um-attend po is si Governor Mamintal Bombit Alonto Adiong, Jr. Del Sur, itong si Governor Abdusakur Tan, nag-attend po rin si Yshmael "Mang" Sali ng Tawi-Tawi, si Governor

Jim Hataman Salliman ng Basilan, si Congressman Yasser Balindong at sa BARMM po ako at saka si Senior Minister Abdulraof Macacua.

SEC. ROQUE: Oo. Chief Minister Ebrahim, with all due respect po ‘no because we have time constraint, can you just tell us kung ano po nangyari doon sa meeting na iyan and then we will proceed with the open forum ano po.

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Okay po. Doon sa meeting na iyon ay sa 11 nga out of 17 ang nag-attend. So doon sa 11, 10 expressed they’re in support of the extension. So ni-report namin ito, it was only—to be very frank, it was only Governor Sakur na hindi po directly na nagsabi na he will support the extension kasi nga iyong—ganoon din, pinagkuwan niya iyong mga reason niya – legal, mayroong mga legal na kuwan.

So out of the 11, 10 po ang nag-express ng support for the extension. So we recorded this to the meeting of political leaders in same day doon din sa kuwan na iyon headed by Secretary Lorenzana. So naibigay namin sa kaniya iyong resulta and then last June 24 nagkaroon nga kaya tayo ng meeting, kasama ho kayo sa meeting na iyon, private meeting with the President. So nai-record din namin ito, iyong resulta ng—iyong council of leaders meeting. So iyon lang ho.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much, Chief Minister Ebrahim. Pasensiya na po kayo kasi talaga iyong Malacañang Press Corps, they really want time also for the open forum ‘no. So anyway, may isa pa pong issue. Ang isang legal issue that the President asked the Secretary of Justice and the Presidential Chief Legal Counsel to comment on is, kung ipu-postpone po ang halalan para sa Bangsamoro Authority, kinakailangan ba ho itong isumite sa plebisito? Iyong batas po kasi na bumuo ng Bangsamoro Authority ay bagama’t it is an act of Congress was submitted to a plebiscite by the people ‘no.

Ang problema po si Secretary of Justice ang sabi hindi kinakailangan, si Chief Legal Counsel ang sabi kinakailangan. So within the Cabinet itself eh two different opinions were expressed and I think that was also one reason why the President said magnu-neutral siya. He is asking Congress to consider all sides and he has asked Congress to exercise its wisdom ‘no kung kinakailangan talagang ma-extend o hindi iyong transition.

Punta na po tayo uli sa open forum. Mela Lesmoras, please.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Hi! Good afternoon, Secretary Roque, at sa ating mga guests. Secretary Roque, unahin ko lang po iyong COVID-19 Vaccination Program coming from the statement of Mayor Binay at kayo na rin po.

Secretary Roque, tanong ko lang din po: Kasabay nga noong mga bagong supply na dumating sa bansa, paano po iyong magiging distribution nito? At idagdag ko na lang din, para lang din assurance sa ating mga kababayan: Paano po natin ini-ensure na hanggang nga sa pagtuturok

ng bakuna ay talagang pinaghandaan at talagang safe and effective na maituturok iyong bakuna sa ating mga kababayan?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, lahat po talaga ng ating mga bakunang binibigay sa ating taumbayan ngayon ay dumaan sa masusing pag-aaral sa Philippine FDA at saka po sa WHO kung saan mayroon po silang tinatawag na Emergency Use List ‘no. So wala pong ibibigay sa inyo na hindi epektibo at hindi po ligtas.

Now iyong mga bagong dumating po eh mayroon na po tayong tinatawag na NCR Plus 8 Plus 10 ‘no, so bibigyan po natin ng karagdagang bakuna iyong mga lugar na ito dahil nga po importante na mabigyan sila nang mas marami dahil nagkakaroon po sila ng surges. Pero mahigit kumulang kalahati lang po iyang ina-allocate natin diyan at iyong kalahati will still go to the rest of the Philippines ‘no.

Sa ngayon po, mayroon na tayong 17,045,470 doses of vaccines na dumating na po dito sa Pilipinas.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Opo. And I understand, Secretary Roque, kanina nabanggit ninyo na rin po iyong issue ng quarantine noong nawala po iyong sa Zoom. Secretary Roque, tatanong ko lang po, iyong sinabi ninyo pong IATF meeting, may public address po ba si Pangulong Duterte mamaya? At ibig sabihin po ba, mamaya na maiaanunsiyo iyong bagong quarantine classifications for July?

SEC. ROQUE: This is the first time po kasi na idi-discuss ito ng IATF. May panahon pa naman kasi baka magkaroon po ng second Talk to the People pa. Hindi po sigurado ‘no pero baka magkaroon pa ng second Talk to the People within the week ‘no. So since this is the first time we’re talking about the quarantine classification, magkakaroon pa po iyan ng opportunity for the local government units to appeal before the recommendations become final to the President.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Opo. So, sir, sorry. May Talk to the People ngayon—

SEC. ROQUE: Mayroon po.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: —pero mayroon pang second for the quarantine. Tama po, sir?

SEC. ROQUE: Mayroon pong Talk to the People today but I’m not certain kung maa-announce na iyong quarantine classification kasi iyong initial meeting namin on quarantine classification eh mamaya pa lang po. So whatever the recommendations may be mamaya, subject to appeal pa po iyan ng mga LGUs.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Opo. And for my final question, Secretary Roque, kasi nabanggit nga rin natin kanina na posibleng GCQ pa rin. Pero ang issue rin po kasi, GCQ with some restrictions pa rin po dito sa Metro Manila. May chance kaya na maging ordinary GCQ na? At ang tanong

lang po ng maraming nanay at tatay, iyong mga bata po kaya na sobrang nainip na, iyong iba nalulungkot na iyong mga bata na nasa bahay, may chance din kaya na magluwag na rin para sa mga bata, sa mga teenagers specifically dito sa NCR po?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, ang possibility po—ang tinatanong mo kung may chance kung magiging regular GCQ? I would say may chance po iyan pero antayin na lang po natin ang anunsiyo. Sa mga bata, manatili pong homeliners pa rin tayo dahil hindi pa po tayo nagbabakuna ng mga kabataan and we want to keep them safe together with the seniors. So iyong mga seniors po na hindi pa rin bakunado, homeliners pa rin po tayo.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Okay. Thank you so much po, Secretary Roque, at sa ating mga panauhin.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Mela. Punta tayo kay Usec. Rocky now.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Good afternoon, Secretary Roque. At good afternoon din po sa ating mga bisita.

From Kris Jose of Remate/Remate Online: Suportado ba ng Malacañang ang drive-through vaccination project ni Vice President Leni? Makakatulong kaya ito para makamit ang population protection bago matapos ang taon? May nakikita bang risk ang gobyerno sa proyektong ito?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, unahin ko lang po ‘no: Noong inanunsiyo po ng Imus, Cavite iyong kanilang kauna-unahang drive-through vaccinations, sinuportahan po iyan ng ating Presidente kasi ang bakuna naman ay binili po ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas sa administrasyon ni Presidente Duterte. At saka iyong method ng pagbibigay, iyong drive-through, eh talaga naman pong makakatulong ito para mas maraming mabakunahan.

So hindi po nagbabago ang posisyon ng Presidente dahil ito po ay isang pamamaraan na mapabigay sa ating kababayan iyong bakuna na procured by the Duterte administration. We welcome of course this initiative after the initiative of Imus.

At lilinawin ko rin po, sabi po ng Imus ay hindi lang po sa Imus—kasi this is in partnership with the private sector, with Robinsons ‘no. So ang sabi po ng Robinsons at saka ng Imus, matapos po ang Imus, they have tapped also local governments of Bacolod, Iloilo, Tagum City and Valencia in Bukidnon for future drive-through initiatives. Lahat po iyan suportado ni Presidente because it is further means of bringing the vaccines to the people.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. From Lei Alviz ng GMA News for Mayor Abby Binay.

SEC. ROQUE: Wala na po si Mayor Binay. Ang kasama na lang po natin ay si Chief Minister Murad at saka si Governor Tan.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Question from Celerina Monte para po kay Chief Minister Murad: In the event that polls push through next year in BARMM, will you run for a post? If ever, anong position?

SEC. ROQUE: Chief Minister, the question is directed to you.

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Thank you. If there will be election, we will be kuwan eh kasi nga hindi namin natapos iyong [unclear] then we will be also running for the position of Parliament Member. Kasi ang pagbubotohan lang sa BARMM is iyong parliament. Ang Chief Minister po ay—ang buboto po ng Chief Minister ay iyong mga nanalong member ng parliament. So kailangan lang na member ka ng parliament and then the majority of the member of the parliament will elect who will be the Chief Minister.

So, I will still be opting to run as member of the parliament. Iyan po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Secretary Roque.

SEC. ROQUE: Yes. Punta tayo kay Trish Terada of CNN Philippines, please. Trish? Okay. What about Pia Gutierrez?

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Hi, sir. Magandang hapon.

SEC. ROQUE: Go ahead, please.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Yes, sir. Sir, the President said last Friday that he was open to arming civilian groups to help the government enforce the law. Could you explain the context of this statement? And how would the Palace address concerns that this will lead to a rise in vigilante groups and that it would result in even more crimes?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, as you said, he is open to the idea pero wala pa naman pong finality ‘no. At siguro the best view expressed so far is the view of PNP Chief Eleazar ‘no which I share ‘no that kailangan intindihin naman natin na kapag ang mga volunteer groups ay mayroong banta sa buhay nila eh mayroon din silang karapatan na depensahan ang kanilang mga buhay.

Now sabi nga po ni Chief PNP, we cannot allow these criminals—we cannot allow our volunteer groups to be at the mercy of criminal elements that we encourage them to fight alongside with us ‘no. So there is not a policy yet, I’m sure it will be subjected to full staff work. Pero meanwhile eh may reyalidad na habang tumutulong ang mga volunteers ay may banta rin sa kanilang mga buhay.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Pero, sir, are there measures already in place to ensure that arming civilian groups would not lead to abuse? Kasi si Senator Lacson, he noted the cases, iyong mga killer cops – sina Jonnel Nuezca and Hensy Zinampan – and he asked that if our law officers

who are supposed to be trained are prone to lapses, how much more in the case of untrained civilians.

SEC. ROQUE: You know, it's really speculative to discuss this kasi wala pa naman talagang policy on this 'no. So let's not waste time speculating. Kapag naging polisiya na iyan then I'm sure there will be the corresponding training to be given to everyone. Pero for now, it's speculative.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: All right, sir. Sir, on another topic, iyong doon sa Sinovac. There are questions on the efficacy of Sinovac particularly doon sa new variants of COVID-19. Because in Indonesia, it was reported that at least 10 of the 26 doctors who died from COVID-19 had received both doses of Sinovac so fully vaccinated na sila. So, how do you address these concerns especially doon sa mga nabakunahan na ng Sinovac especially since the government has repeatedly assured the public that getting both doses of vaccines can protect us from severe symptoms and death from COVID?

SEC. ROQUE: Ang pinaniniwalaan ko po pagdating dito ay mga doktor. Eh sinabi po ni Dr. Solante at saka ni Dr. Lulu Bravo and Dr. Salvaña na lahat po noong ginagamit nating mga bakuna are equally effective against all variants 'no. I know po na may isang pulitikong nagsabi na we should prioritize one brand over the other, pero that goes against po the opinions of experts. Eh ako naman po abogado din ako 'no, wala akong alam diyan so I will have to take the views of the doctors and the scientists in lieu of my personal opinion.

Wala pong pagbabago ang opinyon ng mga dalubhasa, ng mga doktor na lahat po ng mga bakuna equally effective laban po sa lahat ng mga variants.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Sir, speaking of vaccines, si Presidente, was he able to get his second dose of vaccine na?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, as clarified by General Durante, hindi pa po.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Pero, sir, what's keeping the President from getting his second dose?

SEC. ROQUE: I do not know po. It could be, because alam ko nagpa-test na siya sa antibodies niya, mataas daw. But anyway, I don't know. We will just be speculating.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Opo, don't you think that this runs counter to the government's messaging that people should get their second dose to be fully protected against COVID, especially with the risk of Delta variant?

SEC. ROQUE: No, because I am not saying he will not have his second dose 'no. He just has not had his second dose.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Sir, last na lang. Kasi marami po ang naghahanap sa Pangulo noong Sabado, nasaan po siya at bakit hindi siya nag-attend ng libing ni PNoy?

SEC. ROQUE: Nandito lang po siya sa Manila. In-explain ko na po iyan, na noong Huwebes matapos po ang meeting namin with the BARMM officials, and parehong Governor Tan and Chief minister were there as well, tinigil na nga niya iyong aming discussion at 11:00 PM kasi sabi niya gusto niyang pumunta doon sa lamay ni dating Presidente Noynoy Aquino. Sinabi pa niya in public, Noynoy was a friend, not a close friend, but a friend. I supported him in 2010 elections pero hindi ko sinuportahan iyong kaniyang successor. So, he wanted to go, but he was informed that the urn of the former President had already been moved to the private residents in Times, so hindi na po nakapunta doon si Presidente.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Pero noong libing, sir?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi ko na po alam kung bakit. It could be because it's pandemic and we are trying to limit the numbers and, of course, the presence of the President would encourage crowds.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Pero there were efforts naman, sir, from the President or the OP to extend their condolences directly to the family?

SEC. ROQUE: There was a personal conversation with members of the family. There were offers for the family to have all the honors that the republic can give to a former president. But of course, the Palace had to bow to the wishes to the family for a more subdued ceremony. Although, as everyone saw, he was accorded full military honors befit of a president. Ang sabi ko nga hindi ko na naalala kasi iyong honors which we bestowed on former President Cory Aquino, pero parang sabi ko nga mas moving nga iyong ating military honors compared to the honors in the UK. I thought ours was more solemn and more dignified and more moving.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Sir, last na lang po, phone in question. The Financial Action Task Force has placed the Philippines on its gray list or jurisdictions under increased monitoring after failing to address strategic deficiencies in their regimes to counter money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing. Your reaction to this?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, wala pong counter measures imposed. So wala pa pong desisyon. Ibig sabihin lang nito – increased monitoring. At tayo naman po ay nangako na ipatutupad iyong ating action plan kasama po noong pag-amyenda ng passage ng anti-money laundering at saka CTF (Counter-Terrorism Financing) laws, iyong enhancement ng ating AML (Anti-Money Laundering) at CTF supervisory framework, reinforcement of money laundering and terrorism financing investigation and prosecution and campaigns to increase public awareness. So, wala pa pong desisyon. They will monitor our progress. So we have not been put under negative list, pareho pa rin po tayo, but they want to see further improvements.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: Yes, sir. Maraming salamat po.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Pia. Let's go back to Usec. Rocky please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes, Secretary. Hindi po nakapasok sa Zoom si Trish Terada ng CNN Philippines, itatanong ko na lang po iyong tanong niya. Iyong first question po niya, nasagot na ninyo.

SEC. ROQUE: Wait, nandito yata si Trish. Ay, wala na rin daw. Okay, go ahead.

USEC. IGNACIO: Iyong first question niya nasagot na po ninyo about sa wake ni former President Noynoy Aquino. Second question niya: Vice President Leni Robredo and Senator Ping Lacson said arming civilian and anti-crime groups is dangerous as it is prone to abuses. Has the President thought over his idea of arming the Anti-Crime volunteer Groups?

SEC. ROQUE: It's an idea. As I said, it is not yet policy. I'm sure all these views would be taken into consideration.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay, iyong third question po niya, Secretary, ay nasagot na rin ninyo about doon sa global money laundering watch list inclusion of Philippines. Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Punta naman tayo kay Melo Acuña.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PAXIFIC DAILY: Good afternoon, Mr. Secretary. Ang unang tanong po ay para sa inyo. Binanggit po kasi doon sa Financial Action Task Force statement na kailangang paigtingin iyong kampaniya laban sa terrorism finance. Would we have specific projects or programs to stall whatever financing for terrorist groups in the Philippines?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, obviously po, iyong CPP-NPA na terrorist group, mayroon pa ring pondo, so kinakailangan talaga, isarado natin kung sana nanggagaling iyong mga pondo nila. So, this is also to the benefit of the republic and we agree that more efforts have to be exerted para talagang mawalan ng pondo iyong mga teroristang iyan.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PAXIFIC DAILY: Okay, may itatanong po sana ako sa dalawang panauhin natin, kina Chief Minister at kay Governor. Magandang hapon po, Chief Minister and Governor Sakur Tan. My question has something to do with the reports released by the World Bank last June 15 about under nutrition. Sinasabi po na ang pinakamataas na under nutrition ay nasa BARMM. At sinasabi rin na 58% ng mga mamamayan ay hindi makabili ng masustansiyang pagkain ayon sa report ng World Food Program-Philippines office. Sa ganito pong pagkakataon, mayroon po ba kayong programa to address poverty and under nutrition in the BARMM? That's my first question for you.

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Well, unang-una po, talaga pong isa sa pinakamalaking programa namin is to address medical and health here. So iyon po ang una – anim po ang aming priority

– and pangalawa po is, iyong education na talagang pupondohan namin. Then, pangatlo po is iyong food security. So, pang-apat po is strategic infrastructure. So panlima is on social services. So iyon po ang priorities namin. And ito po, simula sa pagkuwan namin, we allocated more budget on those six priorities. So patuloy po ang aming kuwan. Ano iyong tanong ninyo?

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PAXIFIC DAILY: Sinasabi po kasi na 58% ng mga mamamayan ng BARMM ay hindi makabili ng masustansiyang pagkain. So, it has something to do with poverty.

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Yes po, so iyan nga ang kasama sa i-address natin. Kaya ang isa sa malaking budget namin is social services para ma-address namin iyong – because in reality talaga ay medyo mababa iyong – ang problema namin is really poverty.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PAXIFIC DAILY: Opo, nabanggit po kasi ninyo, na iyong budget ninyo ay 2020 na yata dumating. Ano po ba iyong nadatnan ninyo noong ARMM na natungo sa BARMM, may pera pa po ba iyong regional offices na saklaw ng ARMM before it got to be BARMM?

CHIEF MINISTER EBRAHIM: Mayroon pong pera, pero lahat iyong pera is naka-program na po, so hindi na namin puwedeng i-revise iyong program, so naka-program na po iyon ng ARMM, iyon ang kuwan. So wala po kaming nagagamit noon na program namin.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Salamat po, Chief Minister. And we have an invitation for you for Monday ‘no, we will talk about it later. Thank you very much.

Para po kay Governor Sakur Tan. Governor, pahabol ko po sa inyo. Binabanggit po kasi na kailangan magkaroon ng tighter border control. Eh kayo po ay nasa Sulu, next to Tawi-Tawi, have you been monitoring people coming in from Malaysia and Indonesia into the Philippines? Dahilan ang sabi kailangan na mahigpit ang ating borders para maiwasan ang pagpasok ng iba pang may karamdaman. Governor Sakur Tan, please?

GOVERNOR SAKUR TAN: Please paki-ulit, Melo, iyong question ninyo.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Opo. Governor, iyong border control sa pagitan ng Malaysia, ng Indonesia at ng Pilipinas, kayo po ay nasa Sulu at katabi lang ng Tawi-Tawi, mayroon po ba kayong efforts to check on people coming in from the southern backdoor?

GOVERNOR SAKUR TAN: Of course, we have the security sector including the Philippine Coast Guard, the Philippine Maritime na Police natin, and then iyong Philippine Navy natin except siguro baka kulang ang assets nila. Kasi archipelagic ang mga bayan natin so kailangan natin ang mas maraming assets. So but meantime, even local governments are also monitoring entries of mga watercrafts sa mga shores nila. So iyan ang ano natin, ginagawa natin.

Now, I just would like to go back to iyong matter iyong sinasabi ninyo na paano iyong mga nahihirapan na mga tao. Tama iyon, para makabili dapat ibaba natin ang incidence of poverty dito sa ating region at sa mga probinsiya dito sa BARMM. And to do that, we have to have a regular government. Kasi ngayon ang poverty incidence sa BARMM ay more than 70%. Ang national average is less than 20%, so more than three times ang ano natin, ang incidence of poverty dito sa atin.

So kung ang government natin ay hindi regular ay medyo alanganin ang mga programa natin, kaya iyon ang hinihingi natin na maging very regular tayo at saka maging strong ang posisyon natin diyan sa BARMM. So iyan po.

Now, going back doon sa mga ano natin, iyong sa border patrol, mayroon naman iyang nagbabantay ang Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard, iyong maritime, police maritime. At sabi ko nga, iyong local government natin ay nagbabantay rin, including iyong mga barangay officials.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Mangangailangan po ba kayo ng suporta mula sa Department of Health upang ma-testing iyong mga pumapasok sa ating nasasakupan?

GOVERNOR SAKUR TAN: Actually, dito sa Sulu, ginagawa po natin iyan. Kaniya-kaniyang may mga protocol iyan, at ang national protocol, consistent tayo roon sa nasyonal. And of course, iyong mga municipal ay binibigyan na natin ng instruction na ito ang gawin ninyo, at nagmonitor. So sa tulong ng Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Maritime, the barangay mga ... maraming barangay tanod na nagbabantay. Kaya wala tayong problema. Actually, walang problem sa mga entries at namonitor natin.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Maraming salamat po. Congratulations, ang ganda ng internet connection ninyo! Congratulations! Thank you.

GOVERNOR SAKUR TAN: Thank you. Thank you, Melo.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Salamat, Secretary Harry.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Thank you, Melo. Let's go back to Usec. Rocky please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes, Secretary, from Haydee Sampang of DZAS: May mungkahi na magpatupad na rin ng travel ban ang ating pamahalaan sa bansang Indonesia kung saan mataas ngayon ang mga kaso ng Delta variant. Similar question with Rosalie Coz of UNTV.

SEC. ROQUE: I'm sure that will be considered by the IATF po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question niya: Dahil malapit lang ang Indonesia sa Pilipinas, may paghihigpit ba sa backdoor entry points sa Mindanao para hindi makalusot ang mga mas nakakahawang strain ng COVID-19?

SEC. ROQUE: Dati na pong mahigpit iyan ‘no, mula noong nagsimula ang pandemya. Lahat po ng repatriation ngayon ng mga Pilipino from that area ‘no, hindi lang Indonesia kasama na rin po sa Sabah, have to be organized repatriation po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Iyong third question niya ay—hindi ako sure, Secretary, kung nasagot ninyo na kasi po nagloko ang internet. Mayroon labindalawang doctors sa Indonesia na namatay pa rin sa COVID-19 kahit fully vaccinated na sa Sinovac. Sa palagay ninyo, makakaapekto ito lalo sa ating vaccine hesitancy ng ating mga kababayan, lalo na raw po sa Chinese brands ng bakuna?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi po kasi, unang-una, ang Sinovac po ay aprubado hindi lang ng Philippine FDA, aprubado rin po iyan ng WHO ‘no. Pangalawa, sa dami naman po ng mga Tsino na iyan ang ginamit ay hindi naman po natin nakikita na nangyayari ito. Hindi pa po natin alam kung bakit namatay iyong sampung doktor na iyan pero hayaan muna nating pag-aralan ang mga dalubhasa iyan. Meanwhile, dahil ako po ay hindi doktor, nilalagay ko po ang aking sampalataya sa mga ekspertong nagsasabi, ang Sinovac po gaya ng lahat ng binibigay natin ay ligtas at epektibo.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Question from Sam Medenilla of Business Mirror: May naging aksiyon na kaya si Presidente Duterte sa possible extension of Bayanihan II and the passage of Bayanihan III?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, ang Bayanihan III po, wala pa talagang aksiyon po iyan dahil gusto ngang malaman muna ng ating economic team kung ilan pa iyong natitira sa 2020 budget, sa 2021 budget at saka kung ilan pa ang natitira sa Bayanihan II.

Iyong extension ng Bayanihan II, well, I have no advice yet. Pero kung napansin ninyo po, balita kanina na nine billion out of 18 billion na unobligated have been released ‘no by the DBM. So kalahati na po ng 18 billion ay na-obligate na po ‘no. So mukha naman pong maski umabot tayo sa end of the month ay kaya namang i-obligate iyong remaining eight billion na lamang po na natitira sa Bayanihan II. So antayin po natin.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Second question po niya: Will there be a scheduled talk between President Duterte and US President Joe Biden next month? If yes, ano po ang issues that will be discussed?

SEC. ROQUE: I can only recall what Ambassador Babes Romualdez said that the first possible meeting could be in the US-ASEAN—anong tawag doon?

USEC. IGNACIO: Summit.

SEC. ROQUE: US-ASEAN Summit to be held in Brunei.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from MJ Blancaflor from Daily Tribune: Can the government assure the public that there will be no more rotational brownouts in Luzon following President Duterte's meeting with NGCP officials last week?

SEC. ROQUE: Okay, thank you for that question. Unfortunately, I was not in that meeting but I've been given extensive briefing 'no by those who were present.

Ang bottom line, sinabi ni Presidente, "Ayaw kong magkaroon ng rotational brownouts."

Ang sagot naman ng NGCP eh nai-compare po iyan sa isang voltage regulator ano. They have the legal basis to purchase power pero it is only to promote stability of the grid; it is not to provide further supply to the grid kasi NGCP nga po sila ano.

So, ang sabi naman ng NGCP, it is a supply problem. Kulang daw po talaga ang supply and iyong kanilang ancillary authority to purchase power is only to provide stability on the grid. Pero ang sabi po ni President "I don't want rotational brownouts."

And I will also confirm that the President did raise the issue of an SSS property of around six hectares in Pasay which was expropriated by NGCP and I confirm that the officials of the NGCP could not justify why they went for expropriating six hectares land when all they needed was 2,000. But they apparently give the President an assurance that they will not proceed with that particular expropriation in Pasay.

So, iyon po iyong suma tatal ng nakuha kong impormasyon. Itago na lang natin sa pangalang Secretary Meynard Guevarra iyong nagbigay sa akin ng briefing kung ano ang nangyari sa meeting na iyan.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Second question po: Should the NGCP worry that it may lose its concession agreement to operate the grid if it will not abide by the provisions of its contract with the government?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, I think Secretary Cusi has made that warning but ang sabi nga po ng aking bubwit, ang sagot naman po ng NGCP is their legal authority to purchase power is not to provide further supply, it is only to promote stability of the grid, so iyon po. But Secretary Cusi has made that warning.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Jam Punzalan of ABS-CBN Online: When President Duterte daw po sent a short message during a convention of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines on Saturday, some NUPL members changed their profile picture with the phrase, "Stop the attacks on lawyers and judges."

SEC. ROQUE: Ano pong tanong?

USEC. IGNACIO: Iyon lang po iyong ano niya. Does the President know—

SEC. ROQUE: Anyway, wala pong reaksiyon si Presidente. Alam ninyo naman kung ikaliligaya ng NUPL iyon eh ‘di hayaan natin, eh ‘di naging maligaya sila. I don’t know what that achieved but if that made them happy, well and good!

USEC. IGNACIO: Does the President know about this and how did he react? What do you make of criticism that the Administration has supposedly not done enough to stop attacks on judges and lawyers?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, hindi po alam ni Presidente iyan because it was pre-recorded. But now that I found out about it, I feel somehow bad because I was instrumental in providing that message. Ni-request po iyan ng IBP President and I made sure that the President will make this tape. So, I feel kind of bad na iyong accommodation na nga ni Presidente was met by this kind of action ‘no.

Now, before making the recording, sinabi nga niya na medyo masama ang loob niya sa IBP because of a past incident pero nonetheless he proceeded to record a message because he knows that IBP is still the association of all lawyers, his fellow lawyers. So, sa akin, the President did not know about it, he probably does not care, but I personally feel that since I was instrumental in making that record. Hindi ko maintindihan iyong kaligayahan na makukuha ng mga NUPL lawyers na iyan.

Now, have we addressed the killings of lawyers and judges? Of course, we are. Abogado po ang ating Presidente at talaga naman pong ang kaniyang utos, lahat ng mga pinatay lalung-lalo na ang mga abogado at mga mahistrado kinakailangan maimbestigahan at kinakailangan maparusahan ang mga pumapatay sa kanila.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Joseph Morong of GMA News: Can you give us the percentage of those vaccinated in NCR and then the provinces out of the target. And there’s consistently low number of COVID cases in NCR, new cases dropped by 9%. Would you already attribute it to vaccination? If not, where?

SEC. ROQUE: Iyong datos na hinihingi mo I don’t have it kasi ang aking pakiusap sa inyo, if you have factual questions give it to me ahead of time so I can get the answer because I don’t have all the facts with me.

Pero can we attribute the decline in cases to vaccination? Let’s just say the vaccination – because some cities are close to reaching 70% na po of vaccinating their people – let’s just say that the vaccination already has some impact but probably is not responsible for the decline. Sa tingin ko po niyan sa patuloy pa rin iyan ng mask, hugas at iwas at patuloy nating

prevention, detection, isolation and treatment kaya po napababa natin ang kaso sa Metro Manila.

At kaya nga po, the lesson for all the areas with surges, hindi po gamot ang bakuna huh, kinakailangan pa rin mask, hugas, iwas; prevention, detection, isolation and treatment.

USEC. IGNACIO: Last question, Secretary Roque, may tanong lang po si Josef Ramos of Business Mirror Sports: Any situation or status about the application of the PBA to open its Season 46 this July?

SEC. ROQUE: Naku, Josef talagang miss na miss mo na ang PBA. Wala! Wala pa po akong balita but I will inquire for you. Okay.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay! Salamat po! Dahil wala na po tayong mga katanungan, I would like to thank our guests of course si Interim Chief Minister Ahod “Al-haj” Murad B. Ebrahim; our Governor of Sulu Abdusakur M. Tan; and previously earlier our Philippine Ambassador to Canada, Attorney Rodolfo Robles; and as well as may kapatid Makati Mayor Abby Binay. Maraming salamat din sa iyo, Usec. Rocky!

Sa ngalan po ng ating Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte ito po ang inyong Spox Harry Roque nagsasabing: Pilipinas, narito na po ang mga bakuna, wala nang dahilan para hindi po tayo magpabakuna. Ito po ay magiging proteksiyon hindi lamang para sa ating mga sarili kung hindi lalung-lalo na sa ating mga mahal sa buhay.

Good afternoon Philippines!

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