PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
NEWS AND INFORMATION BUREAU

INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE BRIEFING WITH CABINET SECRETARY KARLO ALEXEI NOGRALES
APRIL 3, 2020 (9:34 A.M. – 10:08 A.M.)

[Airing starts] … The Western Visayas Medical Center in IloiLo City, the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center in Cebu City, and the Southern Philippines Medical Center in Davao City.

Ang pagdagdag po ng testing facilities natin ay makakatulong sa agarang pag-identify at isolation ng mga individual na may COVID-19. At this point, we cannot overemphasize how important it is for our health professionals and workers to properly identify and treat not just those who have been infected, but potential carriers as well.

Kaya po napaka-importante na magsabi nang totoo sa ating mga doctor at nurse, lalo pagdating sa mga travel history natin. We urge everyone to be completely truthful because many others could suffer if you are not.

Sa Olongapo po, may mga doctor ngayon na naka-quarantine dahil may isang driver na nagsinungaling tungkol sa travel history niya na ngayon ay positive na sa COVID-19. Inuulit po namin, wala pong rason para ilihim ang bagay na ito.

Sabi nila, "the truth will set you free." In the case of this outbreak, the truth will help us contain this virus. Other measures have been put in place to help slow the spread of COVID-19. We announced that the IATF now requires all individuals in ECQ areas to wear masks, all or alternatives when they go out of their homes.

Gusto lang po naming igiit, kung wala po kayong face mask, puwede naman po kayong gumamit ng panyo o tela para lamang takpan ang inyong bibig at ilong.

The reality is that, while the majority of the population remains at home during the ECQ, there are still people who need to leave their homes to report for work such as our health personnel and those working in essential industries; and in previous resolutions, we have enumerated who these are. And currently, personnel at checkpoints are now able to discern who are allowed to go out and who are not. Alam na po nila kung sinu-sino ang puwedeng lumabas at sino po ang bawal gumala.

However, the question is how do we limit contact between exempted individuals and personnel manning our checkpoints? How do we ensure social distancing when individuals must show their IDs and documents?

One way the IATF plans to address this is with the rapid pass system which we announced in a briefing last March 27, and we will formally launch this today, this afternoon.

Ito pong rapid pass system ay kinonceptualize po namin sa IATF para mapabilis ang sistema ng pag-check ng ating mga sasakyan at mabawasan ang person-to-person contact sa mga frontliners na gumagawa ng kritikal na serbisyo sa ating mga checkpoint officers.

So, how does this work? Sa launch po mamaya, maipapaliwanag po namin nang mas mabuti. But this morning, I would just like to give a brief overview. Sa rapid pass system, ang ating mga frontliners sa mga checkpoints ay gagamit ng QR code scanners na nandoon po sa kanilang mga smartphones at i-scan po iyong unique QR codes na ibibigay sa ating mga authorized individuals or vehicles. Pag-scan po sa QR code, puwede na po padaanin ang individual or iyong sasakyan.

Paano po tayo makakuha ng QR code? A rapid pass can be requested by frontliners or authorized personnel through the website, rapid-pass.ph, either on a desktop or a mobile device. Kapag approved na po ito, a unique and secure QR code and control number will be granted to each authorized person para magamit niya ito. Puwede pong i-print ang QR code at ipaskil sa sasakyan o puwedeng ipakita sa inyong smartphone. Sa mga walang smartphone or printer, ipakita lamang ang inyong control number sa ating mga nagtatao ng checkpoint kasama ang inyong valid ID.

Maraming salamat po sa Department of Science and Technology (DOST) which commissioned and authorized the creation of rapid pass by its partner, the non-profit organization Developers Connect Inc. or DevCon which is a large community of Filipino developers and IT professionals from all over the country. Shortly after a call for volunteers by its founder, Winston Damarillo, DevCon was able to form a global volunteer team of over 500 Filipino developers, creatives and subject matter experts.

Collectively known as DCTx, this community of volunteers developed rapid pass as volunteers, free of charge; and its software will be released as open source for the world to use. DevCon is collaborating with the Department of Information Communications and Telecommunications (DICT) to ensure that rapid pass adheres to government-approved standards for data privacy, security and resilience. Na-test na po sa field itong rapid pass sa tulong po ng PNP at AFP at iro-rollout na po namin ito mamayang hapon.

Ngayon, punta naman po tayo sa outbreak impact mitigation efforts ng gobyerno.

On April 1, World Health Organization Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries are asking people to stay at home and shutting down population movement which can help limit transmission of the virus, but can have unintended consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable people. He then

called on governments around the world to put in place social welfare measures to ensure vulnerable people have food and other life essentials during this crisis.

The Philippines is one of many countries that already have social amelioration measures in place to ensure that vulnerable sectors are provided for during the ECQ. The other day, the President announced the emergency subsidy program that intends to provide financial assistance to 18 million Filipino families. We have been informed by the DSWD that the subsidies will be distributed starting today in Manila and Parañaque. And we expect other jurisdictions to be distributing these to their residents in the next few days.

Hintayin lamang po ninyo ang pakikipag-ugnayan sa inyo ng mga naatasang kawani hinggil sa sistemang ipapatupad upang maayos itong maipamimigay. Sa mga benepisyaryo ng 4Ps, ngayong araw din po sisimulang ipasok sa inyong mga card ang benepisyong ito. Uulitin ko ang paalala, maghintay lang po ng anunsiyo upang hindi po tayo magkumpulan doon sa mga bangko.

On the other hand, the Department of Labor and Employment also reports that 34,253 workers have availed of the COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program or CAMP. The CAMP is a one-time P5,000 subsidy for workers whose incomes have been affected by the ECQ, and we urge employers to work with DOLE so their employees can get this benefit.

Sabi po ni Secretary Bello, kung ayaw po ng employers mag-submit ng payroll or hindi nila kaya, iyong mga manggagawa na mismo puwede mag-submit ng listahan ng mga kasamahan nila. Bukod po sa P5,000 CAMP subsidy, ang DOLE po ay nakapag-distribute na rin ng 165,929 family food packs para sa ating mga manggagawa.

Aside from financial assistance to those who need it, both government and private sector have also suspended payments and waived fees for payment that fall within the quarantine period. Ang pagbayad ng tubig at kuryente, bayad sa upa, housing loan sa PAGIBIG at iba pa ay puwedeng ipagpaliban muna hanggang matapos ang ECQ. Hindi ninyo na kailangang isipin – kumbaga sa video sa Facebook o sa Youtube, naka-pause po ang lahat; kasama dito ang pagbayad ng buwis, pag-renew ng lisensiya, pagrehistro ng sasakyan at pag-renew ng prangkisa – in-extend po lahat nang walang penalty.

All these are being done so everyone can focus on keeping each other safe from the virus; Para matutukan natin ang kalusugan at kapakanan ng ating mga pamilya.

Habang nananatili sa kani-kanilang tahanan ang ating mga kababayan, thousands of Filipinos have actually enrolled for free online courses offered by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority through the TESDA Online Program or TOP. In fact from March 16 to March 29, a total of 19,598 enrollees have signed up to learn from 68 online training courses in the platform. Among the top sectors being picked by the enrollees are: electrical and electronics, tourism, entrepreneurship, information and communications technology and 21st century skills.

Libre po ito, and after undergoing online activities and passing the quizzes, learners may download certificates of completion as proof that they've finished the online courses. The TOP website is www.e-tesda.gov.ph can actually also be accessed through the TESDA app which is downloadable from Google Play and Apple Store.

Also, TESDA regional and provincial training centers and other training institutions around the country are continuously producing washable face masks. As of March 28, 57,000 face masks have been produced and donated to frontliners such as healthworkers in the hospitals, barangay health centers, PNP/AFP checkpoints, LGUs, employees of government, members of the media and barangay tanods.

SEC. NOGRALES: TESDA training centers in partnership with private sectors or private TDIs *[TESDA Development Institutes]* have also been making DIY face shields with 266 face shield already distributed to frontliners in Luzon, 809 in the Visayas and 250 in Mindanao. Some TESDA regional offices are also starting to make protective suits, disinfectants and sanitizers; while TDIs have been continuously baking bread and pastries and distributing them to our frontliners.

Before wrapping up, we would like to thank again all our health workers, frontliners and those in essential industries who worked to produce, move and sell the goods we need to survive. Hindi man kayo empleyado ng gobyerno, lahat po kayo ngayon public servants.

Every day we are reminded of the risk all of these living heroes take for all of us. In Cagayan Valley, on our health workers in the surveillance team, doing contact tracing is one of the region's newest COVID-19 cases. Yesterday, we lost our first career diplomat to the virus with the passing of Philippine Ambassador to Lebanon Bernardita M. Catalla. Ambassador Catalla, our thoughts and prayers are with you and all of your families.

Mga kababayan, our frontliners needs us and we need each other to overcome this crisis. Together we can beat COVID-19, together we heal as one. Muli, bahay muna, buhay muna. Daghang salamat and may God bless us all.

Babasahin ko na po iyong mga katanungan muna sa media.

From Joyce Balancio/DZMM: *Si Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas, disappointed daw po sa DepEd, kailangan pong gumawa ng MOA sa kanila before i-allow ang schools na gamitin as facility for PUI and PUM. DSWD limited lang din daw po ang budget for assistance sa Region 6. Marami pang proseso ang bureaucratic processes na kailangang daanan before help gets in. Ano po ba ang marching order sa DepEd at DSWD para mapabilis ang kanilang pagbigay ng tulong sa LGU?*

- Sinabi po ni Pangulong Duterte na bilisan ang lahat ng proseso, ipag-paumanhin po ninyo kung kinakailangan ninyo ng MOA from DepEd. Ito ay napag-usapan na at pirmahan lang naman ng MOA iyan at this is for the safety of everybody. Iyong ibang

mga bureaucratic processes tulad ng DSWD, I'm sure lahat naman ito pinabiblis na 'no, everything. DSWD is trying its best na mapabilis ang lahat ng proseso. Makipag-ugnayan lang po and lahat ng ito ay pabibilisin, because iyon po ang utos ni Pangulong Duterte. At kaya nga po isinama na natin iyong ARTA sa IATF, itong Anti-Red Tape Authority para sila rin po ay tutulong na pabilisin ang mga proseso tulad nito.

From Vanz Fernandez/Police Files: *May mga senior citizens na nagtatanong, kung puwede daw magamit ulit iyong expired prescription nila for their maintenance para makabili ng gamot dahil daw hindi available ang doctor nila and one thing more, ayaw nilang magpunta sa mga ospital, iko-consider po ba ito?*

- Ire-refer po natin ito sa DOH. Pero para sa akin, kung ano ang magpapabilis, dapat gawin para wala nang hassle para sa ating mga senior citizens.

From Hanna Sancho/SMNI: *Kino-consider ba ng pamahalaan ang magkaroon ng hospital ships kagaya ng ginagawa sa US at iba pang country sa tulong ng Navy para tutukan ang mga COVID patients?*

- Opo. Na-announce na po namin before na pati ang vessels po ay nire-reserve na din po ng Department of Transportation para gagamitin natin as isolation and quarantine facilities para sa PUIs at PUMs.

From Rose Novenario/Hataw: *Good morning po. What is DOLE's policy on workers' retrenchment during the Enhanced Community Quarantine. Thank you po.*

- Alam naman po ninyo na even before the Enhanced Community Quarantine DOLE has been issuing advisories, labor advisories na mag-alternative work arrangement po tayo para maiwasan iyong retrenchment ng ating mga workers. So, tuloy-tuloy pa pong ginagawa ng DOLE ang mga hakbang at pakikipag-ugnayan sa ating mga employers to prevent any further retrenchment ng atin pong mga workers.

From Tina Mendez/Philippine Star: *Around 40,000 container vans remains stacked at the Manila Port Area amid the implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine due to COVID-19 pandemic. How is IATF addressing congestion at the port during the lockdown? What is the Bureau of Customs doing regarding this?*

- Paulit-ulit na po naming sinasabi sa Customs na bilisan po ang mga processes nila. According to the Bureau of Customs, wala na po sa kanila ang bottleneck, tapos na po at naproseso na po nila lahat ng mga kailangang proseso para ma-withdraw na po ang lahat ng mga containers na naiwan at naipon doon sa ating mga ports.

- According to the PPA, kino-contact na rin po nila iyong mga consignees ng mga kargamento na ito at mayroon pong problema doon sa mga consignees at shippers at kung sinuman ang may–ari ng mga containers na ito na hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa nila kine-claim at ipino-pullout ang kanilang mga containers; pero tuloy-tuloy pa rin po

ang pakikipag-ugnayan at tinatawagan na po at kino-contact ang lahat ng mga consignees na i-pull out na para mawala na iyong port congestion natin.

From Joseph Morong/GMA7: *What's the breakdown of the intended expense for our COVID response, you mentioned before its between 200 to 400 billion. How are we planning to spend it? Are we budgeting that for the next three months?*

- Ngayong Sabado po iko-collate—actually, we have been collating 'no since the start of this week, kino-collate na po naming lahat ng accomplishments at expenses ng lahat ng different agencies and departments of government especially with regard to COVID-19. Kasi ang aming deadline is every Saturday dapat submitted na po lahat to be able to prepare the President's report to Congress na dapat i-submit by Monday. So Saturday ang collection and then ibubuo iyong report, the President's report to Congress. So, by Monday siguro kapag na-submit na iyon, then we can report on the budget breakdown.

From Triciah Terrada/CNN Philippines: *Two Congressmen and a business tycoon Ramon Ang called for the extension of the quarantine. I understand that there is a TWG, are they setting the parameters? But how are you going to factor in these recommendations?*

- Siyempre lahat naman ng recommendations ay pina-factor in naming 'no and we consider all aspects, all stakeholders are free to submit their recommendations to the Technical Working Group; pero hintayin na lamang natin, because ang proseso is the Technical Working Group will cosolidate all of these recommendations and come up with its final recommendations to the IATF and then magde-debate pa kami. And then we will release it as soon as we have finalized our resolution.

2.) *With our situation now, how close are we in reaching our goal in flattening the curve?*

- I will have to say, it's still too early, wala pang… even when the DOH, the Technical Working Group of the Department of Health made their presentation to the IATF noong Wednesday, even that Technical Working Group is telling us, they have these numbers. But still really too early to give a conclusive answer to the question.

3.) People want to be ready, when can we expect the IATF to announce its decision about the extension or lifting of the lockdown? Or at least, ano po kaya ang inclination ngayon, for example, will we more likely have an extension just so we can manage everyone's expectation?

Pasensiya na, Trish, I cannot really answer the question. And even if I give my own opinion on the matter, it does not carry a conclusive answer from the IATF. We are a task force; we're inter-agency, and it has to pass through a process of open debate/discussion and finally, a resolution.

From Joseph Morong/GMA: *Can we also explain the massive testing on April 14, as announced by Secretary Galvez – only PUIs and PUMs and not the general population?*

Ang priority po natin obviously is the PUIs and PUMs. So doon muna tayo mag-prioritize, and the process is dito muna tayo mag-focus before we go even further than that. So PUIs and PUMs po muna!

From Henry Uri/DZRH: *Paano po ba ang step by step na paraan sa pagkuha ng cash assistance na sinasabi ng Pangulo? At sino po talaga ang mabibigyan nito at magkano batay sa binanggit ng Pangulo?*

Iyong magkano, I think the Department of Social Welfare and Development has already posted in several platforms iyong magkano per region, and that is based on the regional minimum wage – so iyon iyong magkano.

Sino po talaga ang mabibigyan? Gaya ng sinabi po namin, 4Ps muna. Iyong 4Ps, iyon ang inuna na natin ngayon kasi gaya ng binanggit ko, kung ano iyong nasa existing platform po ng DSWD which is iyong 4Ps program at siyempre iyon muna iyong uunahin kaya nga today, dahil may cash card naman sila, ay madali na lang iyon. From Landbank, diretso na doon sa cash card nila just like what we do sa mga CCT program natin. And then, mayroon din po tayong nilu-launch 'di ba, sa Manila, Parañaque, and then iyong other LGUs to follow.

So since the DSWD is asking for assistance from the LGUs, iyong LGUs po, based on iyong system ng pagbibigay nila or pamamahagi nila nang nauna ng food assistance gamit ang kanilang QRF, iyon iyong sistemang gagamitin natin, unless ma-tweak ng LGUs according to their experience. So ganoon po!

From Melo Acuña/Asia Pacific Daily: *Three concerns – how is the implementation of quarantine measures to stop the virus in Mindanao? There are reports of shortage of supplies and smuggling and kidnap-for-ransom activities may increase. It has also been reported that the Sulu Sultanate is complaining about Filipinos returning to BASULTA (Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi), and may create the spread of COVID-19 there.*

Iyong dito sa Sulu and sa BASULTA, we're already coordinating with the BARMM, autonomous government doon. So we've already been able to address iyong situation diyan sa BARMM; Iyong smuggling and kidnap-for-ransom, so far wala pa naman kaming nakikitang ganiyan; Iyong shortage of supplies, in particularly, are you talking of BASULTA? Because we are … as you know, ang chief implementor natin is si Secretary Galvez, and Secretary Galvez is our Presidential Adviser for Peace, Reconciliation and Unity. So obviously, because he is the man on the ground and he is the chief implementor, malapit sa kaniya iyong mga pangangailangan ng BARMM, immediately napapadala sa kaniya so he can immediately address the situation there.

So iyong sa Mindanao, tuluy-tuloy pa rin po iyong aming pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga LGUs to find out ano iyong mga needs nila.

Ella Mage/NPR: *What exactly is the concrete plan of the government to help solve the COVID crisis? What timelines are we looking at? Will this mean we are looking at an extended ECQ?*

Gaya ng sinabi ko, iyong extended ECQ, hintayin na lang po natin ano iyong magiging recommendation ng technical working group. Idi-discuss muna namin sa IATF, and then we will make the announcement.

Timelines? Well, timelines, that's been defined already 'di ba na by April 12 iyon iyong end ng ECQ.

What exactly is the concrete plan of the government? Well, as stated by the Chief Implementor, the concrete plan is to contain the spread, to heal those who have COVID-19 and then to give assistance to all of those in need, and transition to the new normal.

From Joseph Morong: *For transparency, would the IATF be willing to publish list of beneficiaries of the social amelioration program so that the list of names that the LGU-barangay gives to the DSWD may be counterchecked, verified by the public para hindi nagagamit ang names nila?* Yeah, as transparent as can be, we're all for it.

Also, would the IATF be willing to show also the procured items, expenses? Yes, that's also part of our report to Congress, the President's report to Congress.

From Bella Cariaso/Bandera: *Pa-ask nga kung totoo iyong kumakalat sa social media na ang primary cause ng pagkalat ng COVID ay mga groceries?* Wala pa po tayong advice tungkol diyan from the Department of Health, so habang wala pa iyong announcement ng DOH or ng IATF, hindi po conclusive iyong ganiyang klaseng mga kumakalat.

Ano ang magiging hakbang ng gobyerno since nananawagan pa kayo ng palawig hanggang 12 hours, iyong operation nila? That's for the groceries 'no.

From Haydee Sampang/DZAR: *Bakit sa April 14 pa ang mass testing according to Secretary Galvez? Hindi po ba ito puwedeng gawin nang mas maaga?* Palagay ko iyong sinasabi na ganito ni Secretary Galvez, like I said, uunahin muna natin iyong mga PUIs and PUMs. So ngayon, what we are trying to do is, we're trying to already bring to the isolation and quarantine facilities – PUIs, PUMs, COVID-19 positive – doon sa ospital. And then iyong PUIs and PMS, habang nandoon sila and while naghihintay sila ng kanilang test results … kasi iyon ang iti-test natin, to find out kung COVID positive sila para kapag nag-positive na po sila ay puwede na po natin silang i-shift sa anong facilities ang for COVID-19, whether mild or iyong moderate to critical.

From Mylene Alfonso/Bulgar: *Posible po bang pababain na lamang sa community quarantine level ang enhanced community quarantine sa April 15? Base sa opinion at sa napapakinggan daw ni Senate President Vicente Sotto III, salamat po?* Like I said, ayaw kong pangunahan kung ano ang magiging announcement ng IATF. Pero siguro, lahat naman ng mga recommendations ay

sinasama naman namin at pinapakinggan naman at kinukunsidera … kinu-consider naman po ng technical working group tapos they will give us their recommendations, so depende nga po.

Science nga ang gagamitin natin dito, we will use science as the basis for making our decisions, at gagamitin natin ang advice ng mga 'experts' tungkol dito, even from the academe and all other stakeholders.

So iyon lamang po ang mga katanungan. Siguro uulitin ko na lang po na at sometime this afternoon, I think at 4 P.M., we will be launching the rapid pass system. Gagamitin natin ang sistema na ito para mapabilis natin ang whatever bottlenecks there are at para mapabilis natin ang flow doon sa mga checkpoints ng ating mga kapulisan. All of these, we are doing para to prepare all of us, well, number one, to manage the flow these days na mayroon tayong ECQ; number two, whenever and when we transition to the new normal, we have these tools in hand. And then we will continue and continue to improve our systems para mas maganda iyong magiging flow natin even when we transition to the new normal.

In the mean time, naka-focus po tayo sa pagbigay at pamamahagi po natin ng ating social amelioration program para lahat po ng ating mga kababayan na nangangailangan ay mapagbigyan at mabibigyan ng tulong mula sa gobyerno. Ito po iyong top priority ngayon ng administrasyon. Ito ang paulit-ulit na ini-emphasize sa amin ni Pangulong Duterte kaya lahat po ng ahensiya ng gobyerno ay nakatutok po dito.

So para sa ating mga kababayan na talagang nagku-cooperate doon sa pananatili nila sa kanilang tahanan: Please be patient; help is coming, help is on the way. Darating na po iyong ating social amelioration program ni Pangulong Duterte para po sa inyo. And please continue to cooperate, manatili po tayo sa ating mga tahanan. Like I said and as we always say: Bahay muna, buhay muna.

Maraming, maraming salamat po! God bless each and everyone and protect all o your families. Daghang salamat. Maayong buntag.

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