

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

IATF VIRTUAL PRESSER WITH SECRETARY KARLO NOGRALES
April 17, 2020 (9:37 A.M. – 10:43 A.M.)

Mga kababayan, magandang umaga po sa ating lahat, at sa mga kaibigan natin sa media at sa ating mga magigiting at bayaning frontliners, at sa lahat ng mga nanunood ngayon. Thank you po for taking the time to learn the latest updates regarding the government's – your government's – measures to address the COVID-19 outbreak.

Unang-una, we would like to assure the public that the government continues to work to ensure that supplies of produce and food essentials remain stable during the Enhanced Community Quarantine. Alinsunod sa kautusan at direktiba ng ating mahal na Presidente, sinisigurado po ng gobyerno na hindi tayo mauubusan ng pagkain at bigas sa gitna ng ECQ. Para tuluy-tuloy po ang daloy ng agricultural cargo, in-extend po ng Department of Agriculture ang validity ng 91,274 food passes na ibinigay sa mga trucker at supplier ng pagkain.

To ensure continued access to affordable rice, the Department of Agriculture has directed the NFA to buy palay at P21.00 to beef up the NFA's 30-day buffer stock. According to the Department of Agriculture, the country should have sufficient rice supply good for 84 days by the end of June.

Bukod dito, tinutulungan po ng Department of Agriculture ang 114,649 na magsasaka at mangingisda sa ilalim ng sure aid at recovery project – mga maliliit at mahihirap na mangingisda at magsasaka ang tinutulungan natin dito. Kasama po ng Department of Agriculture sa pagpapaabot ng tulong pinansiyal ang Department of Labor and Employment at Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The DSWD reports that as of yesterday, it was able to distribute an additional 1.3 billion pesos worth of emergency subsidies to 236,331 low income, non-4Ps beneficiaries or families on top of the 3.72 million 4Ps beneficiaries that have already received assistance. The DSWD has also extended as of yesterday, 65 billion pesos worth of emergency subsidies to 1,228 LGUs for disbursement assistance to individuals in crisis situation beneficiaries.

Ngayon po, ang data ng Social Amelioration Program ay nasa P71,215,745,250 na po ang naibigay sa 1,648 LGUs, and this is for the Social Amelioration Program. So sa 71,215 billion pesos na na-distribute na po sa LGUs, malapit na po tayo sa 90% accomplishment sa Social Amelioration Program ng DSWD.

Kaya po tuluy-tuloy po ang panawagan namin sa mga LGUs na hindi pa po nagko-comply at hindi pa naibigay iyong sa Social Amelioration Program, paki-pirmahan na po ng inyong memorandum of agreement at pakibigay na rin po ng inyong budget proposal sa DSWD sa lalong madaling panahon para maibigay na rin po sa inyo ang Social Amelioration Program para inyo na rin pong ma-distribute sa inyong mga constituents.

Para po mapapabilis ang paglabas ng ayuda, sinabi po ng DSWD na tinanggal na po sa pre-requisite ng pagbigay ng ayuda ang validation stage para agad mabigay iyong P5,000 to P8,000 na Social Amelioration Program cash aid sa mga pamilyang nangangailangan. So under the amended measure, iyong validation of beneficiaries will be conducted after the payout of the subsidies.

Sa ganitong paraan, iyong LGUs will be able to proceed with the distribution of the cash aid within 24 hours upon receipt of the funds from DSWD. So, kapag nabigay na po ng DSWD sa mga LGUs, dahil almost 90%, halos more than 88% na po ng LGUs ay nakatanggap na po ng pera at ayuda mula sa DSWD para ipamahagi sa ating mga constituents, within 24 hours ay dapat po i-distribute na po ng LGUs iyan sa mga beneficiaries ng Social Amelioration Program. Iyong validation, to follow na lang po para mapabilis natin ang distribution.

Ngayon, pagdating naman po sa ating mga manggagawa, ni-report po ng Department of Labor and Employment na nabigyan na po ng ayuda ang 236,412 na mga manggagawa sa ilalim ng COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP). Nais ko lang po i-announce na tuloy po nating tutulungan ang ating mga manggagawa pero sa ibang programa naman, ito ang Small Business Wage Subsidy (SBWS) Program na iro-roll out po ng Department of Finance. Ito na po iyong nabanggit namin noon na programa para sa middle income.

So ano po iyong SBWS? Ang SBWS ay programa ng gobyerno na magbigay ng ayuda sa 3.4 milyong empleyado ng 1.5 milyong small businesses nationwide na apektado ng quarantine. The total budget for this initiative is 51 billion pesos. Bale sa programang ito, may matatanggap na P5,000 to P8,000 ang bawat empleyado, bawat buwan na ibibigay sa loob ng dalawang buwan, okay.

Kahit po ang mga empleyadong nakatanggap na ng ayuda mula sa CAMP ng DOLE ay maaari ring tumanggap ng ayuda sa SBWS, pero ayon sa DOF sila ay eligible lamang para sa isang buwan. Hindi puwede iyong dalawang buwan dahil lugi naman po iyong ano, nakatanggap na sila sa CAMP, so one month na lang po sa SBWS.

Ngayon, sino ang maaaring mag-apply? Ang mag-a-apply po ay iyong mga small business employers para sa kanilang mga empleyado sa pamamagitan ng my.sss account. Ulitin ko po, ang mag-a-apply po ay iyong mga employers para sa kanilang mga empleyado; hindi ang mismong empleyado ang mag-a-apply po.

So sino po ang eligible para sa programang ito? Qualified po ang mga sumusunod: Small businesses o lahat ng hindi kasama sa listahan ng BIR large taxpayers service; iyong mga maliit na negosyo na napilitang magsara pansamantala o magsuspende ng trabaho dahil sa ECQ o pinayagang mag-operate gamit ang skeleton work force.

Lahat ng apektadong small businesses ay tutulungan, ngunit ang unang makakatanggap ng tulong na ito ay iyong mga negosyong sumusunod sa patakaran ng SSS at BIR. So sila muna iyong uunahin kasi mas ano iyong sistema nila, integrated na sa SSS at BIR, so mas madaling ma-capture kasi nandoon na po iyong platform, nandoon na po iyong sistema. So mas madaling

unahin muna natin itong lahat ng ito na registered sa SSS at BIR dahil captured na po natin eh. Next batch na lang po iyong hindi captured ng sistema ng SSS at BIR.

Ano naman ang qualification para sa mga empleyadong tatanggap nito? Una, dapat nagtatrabaho sila sa isang eligible na small business; pangalawa, aktibong empleyado sa nasabing small business hanggang March 1, 2020 ngunit hindi nakatanggap ng suweldo ng dalawang linggo o higit pa dahil sa pansamantalang pagsara ng negosyo; at pangatlo, kahit anong contract or employment status – halimbawa regular, probationary, regular seasonal, project based, fix term; pang-apat, sertipikado ng employer na pasok sa criteria nang nabanggit ko na kanina.

Kapag ang empleyado sa isang negosyo ay makakatanggap ng ayudang ito mula sa gobyerno, dalawa po ang kundisyon: Para sa small business, hindi nila puwedeng tanggalin sa trabaho ang empleyadong nakatanggap ng wage subsidy; para naman sa empleyado, hindi siya maaaring mag-resign sa loob ng ECQ period. Dahil po ang purpose naman nitong programang ito ay para hindi mawalan ng trabaho ang ating mga empleyado kaya nandiyan po iyong dalawang kundisyon na iyan.

Now, para malaman po ng isang employer kung pre-qualified siya, puwede pong pumunta sa BIR website at i-click ang SBWS icon. Kapag kayo naman po ay qualified, pumunta lang kayo sa SSS website para mag-apply at gamitin ninyo po ang inyong my.sssaccount. Okay?

The application period for the SBWS is from April 16 to 30, while the distribution of the first tranche will be from May 1 to 15. Iyong second tranche po may be released within May 16 to 31 depending on the ECQ. So dahil sa programang ito, maraming, maraming salamat po sa Department of Finance na naghanap ng pera para dito, ang BIR at iyong SSS

As the IATF repeatedly stresses, improving our testing capabilities is one of government's top priorities. Yesterday, we announced that we have 16 testing centers nationwide; and the DOH reports that more will be operational soon, once they are certified.

To complement these efforts, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) has announced that it will set up sample collecting booths nationwide to facilitate government's expanding testing efforts. As part of its initiative, the regional offices of DOST, will partner with the Department of Health in setting up the specimen collection booths across the country... Initially, DOST plans to set up at least 132 specimen collection booths in different regions nationwide. Kaya maraming, maraming salamat po sa DOST at sa Department of Health.

Another priority of government is to prevent COVID-19 from spreading. And a key component of this effort is restricting the movement of the general populace – iyan po ang purpose ng ECQ. Simple lang po ang prinsipyo nito: Kapag nasa bahay po kayo, hindi kayo mahahawa. At kung kayo naman po ay may sakit pero walang sintomas, hindi rin kayo makakahawa ng iba.

The President himself has acknowledged that this has not been easy for all of us. Kahit si Presidente inamin niya na naiinip na siya. Kahit ako, aminin ko na, bago pa po mag-ECQ, hindi ko po alam anong ibig sabihin ng LDR. Hindi kasi uso ang shortcut noong panahon namin –

Long Distance Relationship pala. This term, well, used to apply to lovers or couples who remain together despite their long distance relationship – now it applies to all of us.

Lahat po tayo ay may LDR with our families, may LDR with our friends, may LDR with our co-workers. Pati ako, may LDR na rin ako with mga kaibigan natin sa media. Pero ginagawa natin itong lahat para hindi tayo makakahawa ng iba. Ako ginagawa ko ito para hindi mahawa iyong mga kaibigan natin na nasa media. Okay?

But the importance of social distancing is the rationale behind PNP's efforts to strictly enforce the ECQ, to put things in context. According to the PNP Joint Task Force COVID Shield, they've already set up mobile checkpoints in EDSA and other major thoroughfares of Metro Manila following multiple reports of violations of ECQ.

These mobile checkpoints inside Metro Manila are manned and supervised by personnel of the PNP-Highway Patrol Group who are tasked to check if private vehicle owners are complying with the guidelines of the ECQ. Nakikipag-ugnayan po sila ngayon sa MMDA para sa pagtatag ng mga mobile checkpoints sa iba't ibang lugar dito sa Metro Manila.

The PNP-HPG personnel manning the mobile checkpoints within Metro Manila will be tasked to check if the driver of the private vehicle is allowed to go outside of his house under the ECQ guidelines and/or falls under the list of exemptions that were previously announced by the IATF.

We recognize that we have to find ways to expedite or speed up passage through these checkpoints for people who are allowed to leave. As of yesterday, at least 200 scanners are now being used in the various quarantine control points (QCPs) in Metro Manila as part of the expansion of the implementation of our online identification system called 'Rapid Pass' which we already launched and announced earlier.

This system seeks to expedite the movement of our health workers and other frontliners amid the strict implementation of the enhanced community quarantine. The 200 scanners were already distributed to 48 QCPs, or quarantine control points, mostly located at the boundaries of Metro Manila and the provinces of Laguna, Rizal, Cavite and Bulacan where most Metro Manila workers come from.

The implementation of the Rapid Pass System is expected to address the long queues of private and non-cargo vehicles at the QCPs as policemen and soldiers manning the control points will no longer need to individually check the identification cards and other home quarantine exemption documents of the occupant.

Alalahanin din po natin na itong Rapid Pass System na ito also protects our policemen and soldiers dahil kung ii-scan lang nila ng kanilang QR scanner – actually, sa cellphone iyon eh, naka-download doon sa cellphone – pag-scan nila, hindi na nila kailangang hawakan iyong ID, hawakan iyong papeles, tapos magkahawaan.

Now, kung mahaba man ang pila sa mga checkpoints, pakiusap po sa ating mga kababayan, habaan din po natin ang ating pasensiya. Please be patient with our law enforcement officers as they are just doing their jobs. 'Ika nga: Trabaho lang, walang personalan.'

They have been directed to be strict because being lax will obviously have dire consequences for all of us. Let us keep in mind that our policemen and women are frontliners too, and they are also vulnerable to infection, in the course of them just doing their jobs. According to the PNP, there are already 59 PNP personnel who have contracted the virus. And it is very, very sad to note natatlo po sa mga na-infect na pulis ay pumanaw na po. So let's appreciate also the work that they are doing.

But despite the risks, the police continue to do their duty 24/7 to keep us all safe. Not only that, they have actually gone beyond the call of duty and have raised 69.1 million pesos from uniformed personnel and civilian employees for the Team PNP Bayahinan fund which seeks to augment the national government's cash subsidy and social amelioration programs to assist poor families affected by the ECQ.

Kaya sa ating mga kapulisan, mga kasundaluan – our men in uniform – maraming, maraming salamat po.

The three PNP personnel whose lives were lost to COVID-19 are not the only loses we mourn. Kasama po dito ang mga doctor at medical health workers na nagkasakit habang ginagampanan ang kanilang tungkulin – heroes who lost their lives on the frontlines of our battle against this disease.

I said the other day that today's heroes wear white, dadagdagan ko po – our heroes also don and represent our country's colors. One of them is Ambassador Bernardita Catalla, who succumbed to the disease while serving as our country's representative to Beirut. In her honor, Philippine flags in all DFA offices in the Philippines and abroad will be flown at half-mast.

Yesterday, 13 lives were claimed by COVID-19. This brings the total number of deaths in our country to 363. Umabot na po sa 5,660 ang nahawa sa COVID-19 sa buong bansa. Kahapon po may 207 nabagong kaso. But as Mahatma Gandhi once said: "In the midst of death, life persists. In the midst of darkness, light persists." Kahapon, 82 po ang naka-recover sa COVID-19. Lahat-lahat, 435 na po ang naka-recover sa sakit na ito.

Yesterday was the fifth straight day that the number of daily recoveries had increased. For this, we again thank all the medical personnel who tirelessly work to treat the sick at the risk of their own safety. Kahapon ang ikalimang sunud-sunod na araw kung saan nakapagtala tayo ng pagtaas ng bilang ng mga gumagaling sa karamdaman. Maraming salamat po sa ating mga doctor, nurse at sa lahat ng healthcare workers at frontliners po natin.

We need to stress, however, that all of us can play our role in influencing the numbers. We, in government, report every day. Lahat po tayo ay may maambag para pababain ang bilang ng nagkakasakit at namamatay dito sa COVID-19. Kailangan lang po natin na sundin ang payo ng ating mga doctor; manatili sa ating tahanan at huwag lumabas kung hindi kailangan; magsuot ng

mask; maghugas ng kamay; bahay muna, buhay muna. Sama-sama, magtatagumpay po tayo laban sa COVID-19. Together, we heal as one.

Maraming salamat po at magandang umaga po muli!

Ngayon babasahin ko na po iyong mga katanungan mula sa media.

From Vanz Fernandez/Police Files Tonight/DZRJ: “As we know, health workers working in the frontline are paid extra compensation. With this, will media personnel also receive the same compensation knowing that they are also directly at risk of exposure to infection in the frontline?”

Puwede naman natin mapag-usapan ito, puwede naman nating pag-isipan ito. Pero kailangan isipin natin ha. Sa amin, okay lang naman, but some sectors kasi might say—I am just thinking out loud ha. But some sectors naman might say na paano natin hindi ma-compromise iyong neutrality ng media, if the government now starts, you know, shelling out funds and giving it out to media? But, you know, if you want a further discussion on this, puwede naman nating pag-usapan.

From Ruth Gita-Carlos/Philippine News Agency: “Can you expound on President Duterte’s stand that the distribution of emergency subsidies could have been easier have the national ID been implemented and unopposed by leftist?”

Siguro, naiintindihan naman natin na from a management’s point of view and logistic point of view, kung mayroon po tayong national ID then, number one, may listahan naman po tayo ng kung sino iyong mga poor and marginalized families. So gamit iyan, mas madali po iyong distribution dahil lahat po ng Pilipino ay may ID. So in terms of distribution mechanism, mas madali kasi de ID na nga.

In terms of validation, de ID na rin, so mas madali iyon for the government to validate kung sila rin po ba ay iyong nakatanggap at hindi na natin kailangang magbigay pa ng mga social amelioration cards. At kung high-tech naman iyong ID natin and it is integrated into an ICT system, then mas madali rin po iyong pag-track ng mga nabigyan na ng Social Amelioration Program.

In fact, sometimes, in some more developed countries, they can use iyong national ID also to claim assistance from government. So ibig sabihin, if the ID is so high-tech na, it has a chip or it is integrated into the banking system. It may even act as a debit card, so puwede hindi na po cash ang ibibigay, kung hindi i-load na po iyong ID that access of debit card para sa pagbili ng mga kagamitan, supplies, groceries or mamalangka. Kung, well, integrated iyong whole system, banking system, then itsa-charge lang doon sa parang debit card ng national ID, if it’s that high-tech. Some countries are doing that. So marami na puwedeng use talaga ang national ID. At itong COVID-19, itong ECQ just showed us how important a national ID system is.

From Jofel Peleno/DWIZ: “Ano po ang plan of action ng IATF sa dalawang airport security na nag-positive sa COVID-19? Ano po ang tulong na maibibigay ng IATF sa dalawang airport security dahil naka-total isolation na po sila? Salamat po.”

Kasama naman namin sa IATF iyong DOTr, so ang Department of Transportation and its attached agencies are already acting on this.

“Marami po, sir, sa mga small time pensioner ang nagtatanong kung bakit wala daw po silang natatanggap na assistance mula sa DSWD. Hindi daw po ba sila kasama sa cash amelioration program ng gobyerno? Salamat po!”

Based on the guidelines, nandoon nakalagay kasi na kapag senior citizen that is currently receiving pension ay hindi po kasama. So kung ang tanong ay iri-review ba ito at may pag-asa po ba, well, that’s something na puwede nating pag-isipan. But the first thing we have to define is what counts as small time pensioner, ‘di ba? So anong level iyong sinasabi na small time pensioner. But because that is more within the expertise at sa realm ng DSWD, we have to relay the question back to DSWD.

From Kris Jose/Remate/Remate Online: “Reaksiyon po sa sinabi ni ACT Teachers Partylist Representative France Castro na hindi raw po dapat sisihin ang mga pasaway na Pilipino sa pagtaas ng kaso ng COVID-19. Ang pagiging incompetent at mabagal na pagtugon ng gobyerno sa COVID ang dahilan daw po ng pagtaas ng bilang ng kaso. Hindi raw po dapat pinapasa sa taumbayan. Kaya nakapasok ang virus dahil minaliit ang banta ng COVID-19 at binibeybi ang Tsina! Kaya libreng lumalaganap ang virus dahil hanggang ngayon ay wala pang katotohanan ang mass testing at contact tracing na batay sa karanasan ng ibang bansa ay pinaka-epektibong paraan upang pababain ang mga na-infect at namamatay.”

Lahat po ng sinabi ni Rep. Castro ay ginagawa na po ng gobyerno. Iyong wala po tayong ginawang pagmamaliit sa banta ng COVID-19. In fact, tayo po ang isa sa pinaka-unang nag-declare po ng ECQ. So nauna iyong public health emergency, tapos nag-community quarantine, tapos nag-enhanced community quarantine, tapos nag-declare tayo ng state of calamity. So, wala po tayong pagkukulang in terms of our reaction. In fact, ang projection nga ng WHO is kung wala tayong ginawa na aksiyon at a very early stage, we would have hit 75,000 infected.

Ngayon, iyong sa mass testing na sinasabi, nabanggit ko na rin po kanina na, number one, mayroon na pong kaugnayan iyong programa ng DOST at DOH na magkaroon ng mga testing booths para sa pag-collect ng samples tapos dadalhin sa lab iyon; at dinadamihan na rin natin iyong laboratories. Tapos, nag-utos na rin po si Pangulo na bumili na rin ng rapid test kits, at iyan po ay ipapasok na rin natin sa ating health protocols, iyong paggamit ng rapid test kits in conjunction with the lab-based PCR tests. In the same manner, tinutulak na rin po natin na—actually, marami na ring nag-a-apply na mga laboratories para sila po ay ma-accredit na maging PCR lab testing laboratories at ginagawa naman po natin iyan.

Iyong sa contact tracing naman, we’re already using mga apps at mayroon din po tayong – apart from the contact tracing na naka-set up na po on the ground down to the LGU level – we’re

already also utilizing mga ICT and mobile applications, and we're using and utilizing technology to be able to enhance iyong ating contact tracing.

Mayroon na rin po tayong mga quarantine facilities and isolation facilities na kung saan anybody na ma-contact trace natin, lalung-lalo na kapag symptomatic, ay agad nating ina-isolate, test and then health intervention agad.

Then kahapon, ina-announce po natin doon sa IATF na bagama't the WHO actually only requires us to report PUIs, tayo po, we made a decision sa IATF na iri-retain natin iyong PUMs. Kasi ang gusto nating mangyari is kahit iyong mga PUMs ay ite-test din po natin, which is over and beyond the requirements ng WHO. So ibig pong sabihin, kung mayroong mga ginagawang mga patakaran at polisiya ang WHO, we even go beyond that, 'di ba? Kasi sabi nila PUIs lang, tayo hanggang PUMs gusto rin nating i-test eh.

So palagay ko, hindi naman ... wala namang pagkukulang po ang pamahalaan. Pero thank you for the suggestion, but we're already doing everything that nasabi po.

From Bella Cariaso/Bandera: “Good morning. Ask ko lang po iyong order ni President Duterte sa DILG na i-probe kung sinu-sino ang sangkot sa sabong at inuman, at mayroon pa ngang bingo sa isang barangay sa Maynila. Kapag ba na-identify kung sino ang mga ito, automatic hindi na sila kasama sa second tranche ng SAP ng government?”

Wala akong nakikita sa batas na ganito. Pero ang nakita kong batas, kung mayroon mang magba-violate at nahuling nag-violate, mayroon po tayo na nandoon nakalagay sa Bayanihan to Heal as One Act – ang mga penalties na kasama po diyan. At kung babasahin ninyo po, it's fine, I think P10,000 to million ba iyon or imprisonment or both. So depende po! Matindi po ang nandoon nakalagay sa batas na penalties for anybody who violates, iyong Bayanihan to Heal as One Act. So mayroon po iyang fine, mayroon pong multa – two months imprisonment for violation of the law or a fine of P10,000 to one million pesos, or both. So mas matindi pa po doon sa sinasabing hindi sila makakatanggap ng second tranche.

From Gerg Cahiles/CNN Philippines: “What are the plans of the government to the Filipino crew of cruise ships that are scheduled to dock at the Manila port in the coming days?”

Na-announce na po natin kahapon, 'di po ba? We will allow them, the foreign cruise ships, to dock but mandatory 14-day quarantine at babantayan po ng pamahalaan ang pagka-quarantine po nila habang sila ay nandoon sa cruise ships. Meaning to say, kung ma-imagine mo iyong ginawa nating pagbabantay sa mga, noong unang pag-repatriate natin mula sa Wuhan, 'di ba nilagay natin sa Athlete's Village, tapos binantayan natin, minonitor natin, tapos kung may symptoms, agad dalhin sa ospital. So the same protocols po ang gagawin natin. Pero iyong kanilang venue for quarantine is doon sa foreign cruise ship kung saan sila nandoon na.

From Cleizl Pardilla/PTV: “This is in connection with vehicular accidents involving frontliners who are using bicycle. Do you have any info on how many frontliners nationwide –percent/range – are covered by Libreng Sakay?”

Department of Transportation po ang may figures.

“Ano ang plano/aksiyon ang gagawin ng IATF to prevent frontliners vulnerability from road accidents, especially iyong mga nagbibisikleta lang?”

Iyong ano kasi—lahat po down to the regional level, mayroon na pong equivalent ng IATF doon at mayroon na pong equivalent ng National Task Force COVID. So tulad dito sa Metro Manila, iyong MMDA is kasama diyan.

So pagdating dito sa mga specifics on prevention of vulnerability, alam ko—like for instance sa NCR, MMDA was already ... even before the ECQ, even before COVID-19, marami na silang hakbang na ginagawa to protect iyong vulnerability ng mga pedestrians, ng mga those traversing sa roads, those who are using our roads within the NCR. So ganoon din po iyong gagawin nila now na nasa ECQ tayo. So iyong vulnerability ng mga those who traverse and use our main thoroughfares and the roads will be under the MMDA.

From Patrick de Jesus/PTV: “Can you confirm if the IATF supports or backs the COVID-19 testing laboratory of Marikina City? Ano pong directive natin sa DOH para magamit na ang facility and how would it help sa testing capacity natin sa ngayon?”

As a general rule, the IATF fully supports the establishment and accreditation of all testing laboratories in the Philippines that will help us increase our testing capabilities and capacities. Necessarily, kasama na po diyan iyong Marikina City. But to tell you honestly, pinag-usapan namin iyong Marikina City noong last IATF at sinabi naman na paano ba natin—ano ba ang dapat nating gawin para ma-ano na ... ma-accredit na iyan? Ano ba iyong—paano natin gawin ang mga hakbang para mapabilis ang accreditation, not just of Marikina City, but all.

So as a general rule, we really want to help RITM, the DOH, and even DOH wants to help. Lahat naman tayo ay gusto natin pabilisin but it’s really a balancing of iyong biosafety dahil biohazard nga iyong laboratory and the speed of accrediting them.

So that being said, siyempre iyong sa Marikina kasi malapit na sila sa finish line, so meaning to say, kaunti na lang at maa-accredit na sila kaya siguro nagkaroon ng special discussion on Marikina City. Not that we are playing favorites here but it’s something that will also help guide us as policymakers.

So ngayon, ang commitment naman po ng RITM is, number one, they’ve been working naman 24/7; and number two, iyon na nga, 24/7 meaning to say seven days a week. So kahit Saturday at Sunday, nagtatrabaho iyan sila. Ngayon, iyong Marikina ano na kasi iyan eh ... malapit na eh ... malapit na silang ma-ano, so binilang namin ilan pa ba ang kailangan na requirements nila and how many days does it take for these requirements to be complied with and fulfilled?

So pagbilang namin, abot naman nang Monday, granting and under the condition na iyong personnel ng Marikina laboratory papasa doon sa proficiency test. So, there is a final test, there is a final exam which their personnel have to pass. Hindi na namin control iyon, kasi ibibigay iyong test sa kanila, correct? And kailangang pumasa sila without any aid from us. Ang tulong lang na

puwedeng gawin ng gobyerno ito: ‘Sige, i-fulfill natin ito. Sige, we’ll help you here. Ito, pabilisin natin. Tutukan ito ng RITM at DOH na lahat ng ito subject to your compliance ay maibigay.’ Okay, fine. Last step: Exam. Alangan namang tayo ang sasagot ng exam nila. Hindi naman natin puwedeng gawin iyon, that’s favoritism already at the most extreme, hindi ba? So granting na maipasa nila lahat iyan pati iyong exam, good to go na tayo.

So iyon po. Ano lang, we just want to dispel the notion na, you know, pinapahirapan; masyadong tedious ang mga requirements. Everybody passes through that and we, nakatutok po tayo doon 24/7. Nagtatrabaho iyong RITM and iyong DOH and everybody has to go through that, but iyon, tiningnan ng IATF, ilang araw ba talaga ito – ilang araw? So naging masinsinang discussion ito, not that we’re playing favorites but because it’s something that will help guide policy.

From Arianne Merez/ABS-CBN Online: 1. President Duterte warned of a Martial Law scenario if ECQ violations continue. How likely is it for the President to declare Martial Law? Will it cover the whole Philippines?

Ang sinabi ni Pangulo naman kagabi is very clear: Martial Law type. Meaning to say, you know, parang ang sinabi lang ni Pangulo kung talagang magmamatigas ang mga pasaway, then we will really employ and ask the military to come in and help with the police. Parang ganoon lang, that’s what he means.

But are we talking about Martial Law?—because that’s your number two question: “Is Martial Law now being considered by the IATF?”

Iyong Constitution is very clear naman, ‘in cases of invasion or rebellion’, okay? So iyon po ... kapag wala naman iyon, hindi naman ano iyong Martial Law. But the President is only trying to emphasize to the people na he also has the ability to ask for the AFP and military to help impose order if need be. He has that power, so warning lang sa mga violators at warning sa mga lumalabag at iyong mga pasaway na umayos kayo, mag-behave, let’s keep order.

“Yesterday, Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said a total lockdown is among the options. What’s the IATF’s take on this?”

Actually, I don’t know ano iyong ibig sabihin ni Spokesman Harry in terms of total lockdown. So maybe we should ask him what’s the definition of total lockdown because ECQ is already—nasa ECQ na tayo, so I don’t know what that total lockdown is.

Iyong fourth question mo: “What would a total lockdown look like and will it be limited to Luzon only, if ever?”

Wala pong ano ... we are not talking about that.

So among the three: “Martial Law, total lockdown, ECQ lifting, which is most likely to happen and why?”

Ang pinag-uusapan or iyong ipi-present sa Monday ng small group na inutusan ni Pangulong Duterte – made up of select group kasama iyong economic managers – is to talk about what happens after April 30. That will be presented to the IATF on Monday and we will discuss what that scenario or possible scenario will be. What are the pros and cons; what we are ready to allow; what would be the new do's and don'ts; what would be the new guidelines, etc., etc. after April 30?

So ayokong pangunahan because sa Monday pa naman iyan, number one. Number two, whatever we discussed sa IATF, kung anuman iyan, iyong gagawin natin sa April 30, we will recommend that to the President. Ultimately, si Pangulong Duterte magde-decide doon sa recommendations natin. Okay. Number three – and this is probably where Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque is coming from – is it depends siyempre on the situation on the ground. Meaning to say, kung nagko-cooperate naman ang mga tao dito sa mga ginagawa natin, then it makes it easier for us to make the decision because everybody is cooperating. Pero kung hindi naman at mas marami iyong hindi nagko-cooperate, mas maraming pasaway, then who knows what the decision will be. Number one, it will be more difficult for us to come up with a decision, kasi what good are imposing these guidelines if people don't follow naman, something like that 'di ba.

Kaya siguro iyong sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman na iyon, maybe he's thinking of something stricter. Kaya patuloy iyong aming panawagan sa taumbayan na make it easier naman for us to make the decisions, because the decisions are based on our assumptions of how the Filipino people will behave and cooperate 'di ba. So meaning to say, when we make the decision, o sige ito puwede nating gawin, ito puwede nating gawin, ito puwede nating gawin ... that's based on the assumption that people follow the rules, people cooperate.

But if they don't follow the rules, if they don't cooperate, it destroys all the assumptions then the model is also destroyed. Naintindihan ninyo, 'di ba? Gumagawa kami ng assumptions, gumagawa kami ng mga possible scenarios pero ang assumption po namin, sumusunod ang lahat. Pero kapag hindi naman sumusunod ang lahat, sira iyong ating assumption so sira iyong ating scenario.

Kaya si Pangulo, pumapasok siya at sinasabi niya "I will impose order," kasi sinisira ninyo ang lahat ng assumptions natin, nasisira iyong projections natin. Ang projections po natin, pinag-uusapan na projections iyong ilan ang magkasakit, ilan ang ma-hospitalize, ilan ang gagaling, ilan mamamatay, ilan mai-infect. Masisira lahat iyan kung may mga pasaway. Ganoon lang kasimple iyon.

From Joseph Morong, GMA7: "Can we shed light on what the President last night said about antibodies from horses? President Duterte also said that he has ordered the military and the police to be ready to take over the implementation of the ECQ. Is that what's going to happen?"

I wasn't with the President last night, so hindi ko alam iyong context doon sa ... iyong sa antibodies. Maybe somebody gave him some information about these antibodies. But I wasn't there last night, so hindi ko alam ano iyong context.

Iyong order of the military and police to be ready to take over the implementation of the ECQ, I guess what he means lang is the Police and military will become stricter sa implementation ng ECQ or it could mean that they will play a bigger role in the implementation. Actually kung tutuusin, kasi siyempre ano tayo, policy maker ang IATF ‘di ba, and then iyong National Task Force, tapos iyong Chief Implementer... so the National Task Force is si Secretary Del Lorenzana, ang Vice Chair niya si DILG Secretary Año. So doon pa lang sa structure na iyan is necessarily ang nagagamit sa implementation would be our law enforcement agencies ‘di ba?

From Darryl Esguerra/INQ: “President Duterte said last night that quarantine violators will not receive government aid. Will this be a government policy now na kailangan ipatupad ng local officials?”

President is the president, so he is the Chief policy architect of the Philippines. Kami sa IATF, we will make policy but we derive our directive, our ability to provide policy from the President. And if the President says something and that’s his policy directive, then it must be followed. Kami sa IATF, ano lang kami eh, dini-derive namin iyong powers namin and ang mandate namin to provide policy under this circumstances because we derive it from the President. The President is still the chief policy maker.

From Angel Ronquillo/DZXL-RMN: “Dalawang beses na pong nadawit si Sec. Duque sa kontrobersiya. Bakit sa tingin ninyo nasa kaniya pa rin ang trust and confidence ni Pangulong Duterte?”

Alam ninyo ganito iyan ha, number one, nakakapagtaka na noong lumabas iyong resolution calling for the resignation of Secretary Duque, nakakapagtaka na ang dami nang lumabas na mga pangalan, may mga pino-float na mga pangalan na ipapalit sa kaniya; na sina-suggest, nire-recommend na ipapalit kay Secretary Duque, okay.

So number one, nakakapagtaka po na ganoon ang nangyari. Parang kumbaga, wala, it’s just... kataka-taka ‘no, na pagkatapos ng labas ng resolution, mayroon na agad mga pangalan na lumalabas na puwedeng pampalit na parang... kumbaga wala, it’s just very strange. Okay, that’s number one.

Number two, iyong mga pangalan naman na pino-float, parang you know... when the news came out na ganiyan, ganiyan... may resolution etcetera. Lahat kami sa Cabinet, uttered our 100% support kay Secretary Duque, okay. And then shortly after, President gave a decision na he will keep Secretary Duque, okay.

The reason why, kami ha personally, ang gusto namin kay Sec. Pingkoy Duque, he will tell it as it is. No ifs and buts iyan. And in this crisis, what we’re facing now, we have to make hard decisions. You have to make decisions on the go – quick, decisive, hard decisions – at it helps us na nandiyan si Secretary Duque because he will tell it as it is. Walang ano iyan na baka we must be more sensitive dito or we must... wala! Talagang based on/backed up by science and data, we have to make this hard decision.

Iyong pag-ano natin, ECQ natin, based on the recommendations of Sec. Duque! Iyong kapag sinabi na ganito ang mangyayari, ito iyong data, ito iyong evidence, we have to make this hard decisions, we have to impose this, we have to community quarantine... this puwede, this hindi... Kailangan ganiyan eh sa laban na ito. Hindi ka puwede na, ah baka maging sensitive si ganiyan o ah baka magagalit si ganiyan... Hindi puwede ganiyan, and I think that's what the President appreciates because you have to tell it how it is right now. Walang sugar coating, walang kaartehan.

Kailangan ganito, and so far the decisions tugma doon sa mga nakikita namin kahit sa ASEAN countries eh, kahit sa Big 3. All of the decisions that were made came out to be, you know, the right decisions. If we had not imposed a 'community quarantine' immediately, if we had not done iyong travel restrictions immediately, if we had not done this, we have not done that, magkakatotoo iyong sinabi ng WHO na 75,000 tayo infected ng COVID-19.

So ganoon po. In this battle, alam ninyo, magkakaroon ng missteps eh because, number one, it's novel – it's a new virus! The world doesn't even know how the virus operates; how it reacts; how it moves. Kaya nga sabi ng ASEAN, we must do information sharing. We must do best practices. We must do sharing of information and data, etc., because all of us are somewhat blind. Ngayon pa lang unti-unti natin nari-realize at nakikita how the virus operates, how it reacts, what medicines to use. And up to now wala pa tayong vaccine.

So what I am saying is magkakaroon talaga ng missteps in any battle, whatever battle there is. But you have to keep moving; you have to keep making decisions; you have to keep going. Otherwise, mao-overtake ka ng virus. And we cannot be bothered by things like that, kailangan tuluy-tuloy ang laban natin dito. Hindi tayo puwedeng mag-stop and pause, stop and pause – we cannot. We cannot afford that.

So sinabi sa akin, cut na daw ako dahil mahaba na raw pero itutuloy pa rin natin kasi mayroon pa naman sa FB yata at marami pang katanungang, so ituloy na lang natin.

From Tina Mendez/Phil Star: “Apart from discussing ways to combat the virus and economy, is the IATF looking at how the pandemic has affected the psychological make-up of the Filipinos during this time of crisis? How is the IATF addressing such issues like anxiety or depression?”

Yes, in fact, the DOH has arranged already for doctors, practitioners in the mental health family to play an active role already. And in fact, the mental health practitioners have already, on their own, come up with initiatives already ‘no – on their own and with the support of the Department of Health.

So yes, even from the get go, sa umpisa pa lang na-take into consideration na iyong mental health dito sa laban na ito. It's very, very important that the mental health practitioners play a key role dito.

“There is an estimated 10.3 million Overseas Filipino Workers all over the world. They brought in around 30 billion US dollars in remittances last year. Hundreds of thousands of OFWs are likely to be displaced due to massive layoff due to COVID-19 crisis. What's the government's

plan to cushion the impact on the economy of the big decline on the billion dollar remittances that the OFWs bringing into the country?”

Well, it’s a balancing ‘no. Because number one, siguro because of this crisis what will happen and you will see that ‘di ba, na magkakaroon pa rin ng Overseas Filipinos. But because the market is changing, the world is changing and adjusting because of the COVID-19, ang demand for Overseas Filipino Workers will be on industries that are still operating and being given priority by the respective countries. Kaya iyong health sector will play a key role dito. IT sector will play a key role here. So some industries will flourish; some industries will go down, ganoon ang mangyayari.

So whatever it is, there will still be a demand for Overseas Filipino Workers out there, in fact, kita ninyo naman ‘di ba, iyong nurses, doctors, healthcare workers na Filipino ay in demand na ngayon abroad So we had to make a decision, etc., etc. That’s just one part of the equation.

So mag-a-adjust ang world, and we saw that sa discussion ng ASEAN, even the ASEAN Plus Three. Ang sinasabi nila, trade must go on; people to people exchange must go on. But necessarily, dahil nagtsi-change, nag-a-adjust ang world, there will be industries that will rise; there will be industries that fall. Whatever it is, the skill of the Overseas Filipino will still be in demand. But now, we have to contend with balancing it na hindi naman tayo magkaroon ng brain drain din dito, because we also need Filipinos in the forefront of this battle ‘di ba. So ganiyan iyan!

From Joyce Balancio/DZMM: “If tanggalin ang ‘validation phase’ sa social amelioration—

Hindi po tinanggal, nilagay lang po sa dulo. So validation will still be there. But instead of it being a pre-requisite, it is now post, post na iyon, para lang mapabilis iyong distribution. At napagkasunduan na ito ng DSWD and the LGUs, so okay na iyon, wala nang problema diyan.

From Pia Gutierrez/ABS-CBN: “What is the IATF’s guidance on public solicitations?”

I know where your question ... what your question is. Iyong sa public solicitations, DSWD, etc. Pag-uusapan namin iyan today and we’ll come up with the guidelines.

Follow up from Joseph Morong: “Regarding DOLE CAMP. So, stop na siya?”

Na-maximize na siya, so ang next is iyong ano na... iyong programa ng DOF. So, yes, nag-max-out na siya and papasok na iyong programa ng Department of Finance.

Sorry huh, minamadali ko lang kasi pinapa-cut na daw ako eh, so...

From Maricel Halili/TV5: The same question. “Kung tinanggal iyong validation stage as a prerequisite, ano mangyayari if later on hindi pala qualified?”

Refund. Nandoon iyon sa MOA at nandoon iyon sa guidelines. So kung hindi siya ano, refund siya. They have to refund kung hindi siya qualified.

Cut na tayo sa TV but we're still going on in Facebook.

From Julie Aurelio: “What are your thoughts on the recent trend of COVID-19 cases which recoveries outnumbered deaths?”

That's what we are—that's what we hope to be able to sustain, that trend. More recoveries, less deaths, more recoveries, less deaths. Test, test, test; isolate, isolate, isolate; treat; treat, treat; recover more, less deaths.

From Bella Cariaso of Bandera: Last na ito. In case magkaroon ng selective lifting ng ECQ after April 30, may assurance na po ba na may available face masks iyong mga drugstores to protect?

Yes, yes. We're getting a lot of donations for face masks, we're getting more of our producers of face masks to produce more and we will have sufficient number of face masks. Pero, as with all other countries, ito ang common – common trend is we try to encourage those na wala namang symptoms, iyong those na walang sintomas, walang travel history, walang contact, whatsoever whether first degree or second degree contact with COVID-19 patients or positives.

Iyong wala, walang ganiyang history: We try to encourage na huwag magsuot ng surgical masks and N95 masks lalo na because we try to reserve that for our healthcare frontliners. Kaya puwede na iyong handkerchief or puwede na iyong cloth masks na marami rin namang gumagawa, may mga do-it-yourself face masks also.

That's what all the other countries are even trying to do na para ma-reserve iyong stockpile ng surgical masks at N95 for our medical frontliners. So, that's a common practice being done by even the ASEAN countries, even the Plus Three Countries and even other countries abroad. So, that's also what we are trying to do.

With that being said, we in government are still producing as many surgical masks as we can; procuring as many N95 masks as we can because that's part of our stockpiling strategy.

Okay. I think that's the last question.

So maraming, maraming salamat. Pasensya na kayo that I went overtime, I had to answer all of the questions as extensively as I can. We got cut off from TV but nasa ano pa naman tayo, nasa FB pa naman tayo.

So again, sa ating mga kababayan, maraming salamat po sa inyong pakikipagtulungan sa inyong pamahalaan. Kayo po ang first line of defense sa giyerang ito. Bahay muna, buhay muna.

So sa ating mga kasama sa pagpapalaganap ng tama at napapanahong impormasyon sa iba't ibang media outlet – sa TV, radyo, diyaryo at sa online – na naka-hook-up po sa atin ngayon, maraming, maraming salamat po.

At muli, dahil overtime na tayo... magandang umaga po at God bless and protect each and every one of us.

Maayong buntag. Amping kanunay. Daghang salamat. Ang atong pag-ampo kanunay sab.

By God's grace, we will beat COVID-19.

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