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PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON HARRY ROQUE
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SEC. ROQUE: Magandang tanghali, Pilipinas. Naku, mainit pa pong balita ‘no: Sa pulong po ng IATF na nagpapatuloy hanggang ngayon, sinabi po ni DOTr Secretary Tugade na samantalang isususpinde po iyong implementasyon ng .75 distancing sa pampublikong mga transportasyon at ibabalik po ito sa one meter.

Uulitin ko po: Kakaanunsiyo lang po ni Secretary Tugade sa nagaganap na IATF meeting na balik one-meter distancing muna po tayo sa pampublikong transportasyon habang wala pa pong desisyon ang Presidente kung ito nga po ay pupuwedeng maibaba sa .75.

Kaugnay rito, maaalala ninyo po na sinabi ko na baka today po ang decision ni Presidente – baka hindi po mangyari iyan dahil ang report po na pag-aaralan ni Presidente ay isusumite pa lamang ngayong araw po. At inaasahan natin na siguro po ay magkakaroon ng desisyon ang Presidente sa Lunes sa kaniyang susunod na talumpati sa taumbayan.

So, suspindido po ang .75, balik one meter habang wala pang desisyon ang ating Presidente sa bagay na ito.

Now, nagpulong po kagabi naman ang mga leaders ng ating Kongreso kasama po ang ating Presidente at kasama rin po si Senator Bong Go, Chairman ng Committee on Health. Ang napag-usapan po kahapon ng ating Presidente, ni Senate Presidente Sotto, ni Senator Bong Go, ni Speaker Alan Cayetano at Majority Floor Leader Romualdez ay tungkol po sa pagbubukas ng ekonomiya. Ang concern ng mga namumuhunan at negosyante na lubhang naapektuhan ng pandemya ay paano masugpo ang red tape at korapsiyon at mapaikli ang mga proseso sa government transactions.

Hiningi po ng Presidente sa mga congressional leaders na magpasa pa ng mga karagdagang lehislyasyon o mga polisiya para mapabilis po ang proseso nang matulungan ang mga negosyante sa panahon ng pandemya dahil wika nga ng Presidente, “Takot na nga sila sa panahon ng pandemya, eh mabagal pa ang mga proseso sa panig ng gobyerno.”

Nangako naman po ang mga leaders ng ating Kongreso na pag-aaralan ito at bibigyan po ng katugunan ang kahilingan ng ating Presidente.

Balitang IATF naman po: Maalala ninyo po na noong huling meeting ng IATF, naaprubahan po ang Resolution Number 71. Ito po ay ang lifting ng pansamantalang suspension ng inbound travel ng returning residents ng Region VI – ito ang Iloilo City at mga probinsiya ng Guimaras, Iloilo, Negros Occidental at Antique. Ano ang ibig sabihin po nito - ang mga locally-stranded individuals ay puwede nang umuwi sa kanilang mga lugar na nabanggit. Siguraduhin lamang na malusog ang katawan at kasama ang pagka-quarantine ng labing-apat na araw sa mga probinsiya sa minimum public health standards.

Napagkasunduan din po na anumang request para sa imposition, extension at lifting ng moratorium ng lokal na pamahalaan ay kinakailangang desisyon na ng Regional Inter-Agency Task Force at ipapatupad ng National Task Force – ito po ang process flow na susundin.

Pumunta naman tayo sa Bayanihan II, at ito na po iyong pangatlong installment sa aming pagsa-summarize po ng Bayanihan II Law. Sa nakaraang dalawang press briefing, pinag-usapan na natin po ang COVID-19 responses at intervention ng nasabing batas para sa ating mga health workers at iba pang sektor na naapektuhan ng pandemya, mga tulong para muling pasiglahin ang ekonomiya at ilan sa mga special powers ng Presidente.

Sa huling bahagi ng diskusyon po natin ukol RA 11494, pag-usapan naman po natin ang ilan sa mga probisyon na walang direktang may kinalaman sa coronavirus. Ito ang ilan sa mga mahahalagang punto:

Mauurong ang deadlines at timelines ng pagpa-file at pagsusumite ng mga dokumento, pagbabayad ng buwis at iba para mabawasan ang bigat na dinadala ng mga indibidwal na under community quarantine.

Lahat ng mga bangko, financing and lending companies, real estate developer, insurance and pre-need companies, financial institutions kasama ang GSIS, SSS at Pag-IBIG ay inatang magbigay ng one-time 60 days grace period para sa pagbabayad ng loans na pumapatak ang due or on before December 31, 2020.

Kasama na rito ang personal, housing, commercial at motor vehicle loans, amortization, financial lease payments and premium payments sa credit card payments.

Lahat ng loans ay maaaring ma-settle on a staggered basis without interest hanggang December 31, 2020 or sa napagkasunduan ng dalawang partido.

Ganoon din sa mga institusyon na magbibigay ng ilaw, tubig at telekomunikasyon at iba pang utilities. May tatlung araw na grace period na ibibigay ang mga utilities na ito sa panahon ng ECQ at MECQ na walang pinapataw na interes o penalty.

Pagkaraan ng grace period, ang unpaid bills ay maaaring ma-settle on a staggered basis, payable in no less than three monthly installments.

Binibigyan naman ng 30-day grace period ang residential rents at community rents or lessees na hindi pinayagang magtrabaho at MSMEs at mga kooperatiba na pansamantalang itinigil ang operasyon kung ang kanilang due ay papatak sa panahon ng community quarantine na walang interes, penalties, fees or other charges.

Lahat ng due sa panahon ng community quarantine ay kailangang ma-amortize in equal monthly installments hanggang December 31, 2020.

Samantala, patuloy ang pagbibigay ng libre at masustansiyang pagkain sa mga bata alinsunod sa RA 11037 or Ang Masustansiyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act regardless kung anong modality of learning.

Ang retirement benefits na natanggap ng mga opisyal na mga empleyado na nasa private firms mula June 5, 2020 hanggang December 31, 2020 ay hindi makakasama sa gross income at exempted sa income taxation.

COVID-19 updates naman po tayo. Ito po ang global updates ayon sa Johns Hopkins University: Mahigit dalawampu't siyam na milyon or 29,743,406 kaso na po ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo. Mayroong mahigit sa siyam na raang libo naman o 938,820 ang binawian ng buhay dahil dito.

Nangunguna pa rin po ang Estados Unidos, pangalawa ang India, Brazil, Russia at Peru. Ang Estados Unidos po ngayon ay mayroong 6,627,278 cases and 196,6921 deaths; ang India – 5,020,359 cases, 82,066 deaths; ang Brazil – 4,419,083 cases, 134,108 deaths; ang Russia po ay 1,075,485 cases, 18,853 deaths; at ang Peru po ay 738,020 cases, 30,927 deaths.

Sa Pilipinas po, mayroon po tayong 272,934 cases. Ang deaths na po natin ay nasa 4,732. Ang ating case fatality rate po ay nasa 1.7%.

Mayroon na po tayong 3,008,239 na individuals na na-testing sa pamamagitan po ng PCR tests. At ito po ay ginawa sa 97 licensed RT-PCR laboratories at sa 29 licensed GeneXpert laboratories.

Sa mga taong na-test na po, 60,344 ang active cases. At dito po sa mga active cases, ang asymptomatic ay 8.4%, ang mild ay 87.7%, ang severe ay 1.2%, ang kritikal ay 2.7%.

Mataas po ang ating recoveries, 207,858; ang deaths nga po ay 4,732.

Pagdating naman po sa critical care capacity, mayroon pa po tayong 50% available sa ICU beds. Mayroon pa po tayong 55% available sa isolation beds; 53% available sa ward beds. At 73% available sa ventilators. So nasa medium risk lang po tayo pagdating sa critical care capacity.

Sa mga ibang bagay naman po.

The Duterte Administration is ready to work with Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga in further strengthening the strategic bilateral cooperation building on the special relationship established with former Prime Minister Abe Shinzō. The Philippines considers Japan as a close friend, a friend closer than a brother. We are committed to do everything to make these ties move from strength to the greater strength. Congratulations po sa bagong Prime Minister po ng Japan!

Isa pong point of clarification bago ko ipakilala ang ating mga panauhin. Ito ay tungkol po sa travel sa Tagaytay sa Cavite dahil dinagsa po ang Tagaytay ng mga bakasyonista galing po sa iba't-ibang lugar kasama na po ang Metro Manila. Kasama po natin ngayon si General Guillermo Eleazar ng Task Force COVID Shield. Sir?

Joining us by Zoom... General Eleazar, are you in the house?

GENERAL ELEAZAR: Yes. Magandang hapon sa iyo, Secretary Harry!

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat po at pinaunlakan ninyo kami. Alam ko mayroon kayong 12:30 affair. So, ano po iyong anunsiyo natin pagdating po doon sa pagbibiyaha sa Cavite lalong-lalo na sa Tagaytay? Go ahead, General.

GENERAL ELEAZAR: Kinaklaro lang po natin na base po doon sa prevailing protocol ibinigay ng National Task Force, the remaining travel restriction that we have is that kapag magko-cross tayo ng mga boundary ng mga probinsiya, unless ikaw ay APOR at work-related ang lakad mo ay dapat ay may travel authority. Pero kung tayo po ay nasa MGCQ na, binibigyan na po, ipinaubaya na sa local government unit kung hahayaan ninyo po na bukas na rin kayo doon sa karatig lugar ninyo provided na ikaw ay MGCQ at iyong katabi mo o panggagalingan nitong mga magta-travel ay nasa MGCQ pa rin.

So, alam ninyo po, itong travel authority eh iyon po ang naging basehan ng ating mga LGUs para may control tayo pagpasok nila. Dahil kapag nag-apply po tayo ng travel authority, hindi lamang ang kailangan ay medical clearance certificate kung hindi iyong coordination na napakahalaga from the sending LGU to the receiving LGU, na kapag iyan po ay ipinagbigay-alam sa kanila, they have the control whether they will allow them outright or puwedeng ma-delay iyong pagpasok doon.

Subalit kagaya nga po sa sitwasyon natin dito po sa Cavite dahil po siya ay MGCQ na puwede na niya pong ibukas ang kaniyang border sa iba as long as ang katabi niya dapat ay nasa MGCQ pa rin. Meaning, in the case po ng Cavite na sinasabi nga natin na within the province, hindi naman po kailangan ng travel authority pero dahil ang katabi niya ay Metro Manila at saka pati po iyong Batangas at nasa GCQ pa rin iyon eh kailangan pa rin po ng travel authority kung dadaan sila or manggagaling sa Metro Manila or doon po sa Batangas.

Ngayon, kung galing naman po ng Laguna since pareho silang MGCQ ay puwede na pong wala pong travel authority at iyan po ay desisyon ng local government executive.

Subalit para po sa ibang mga probinsiya na nasa MGCQ, kung gusto ninyo pa rin po na kayo ay may travel authority ang mga papasok sa inyo which I believe ay iyon po ay pina-practice dahil nandoon ang control natin dahil kung tatanggalin natin ang travel authority, talaga pong you can expect that napakarami ng pupunta sa inyong mga border at papasok sa inyo.

So, malinaw po iyong sinasabi natin ngayon na in the case of Cavite, dahil nga sa Tagaytay, puwede pong pumasok doon dahil MGCQ pero kung ang panggagalingan ay Metro Manila, boundary ng Metro Manila and Batangas, kailangan pa rin ng travel authority dahil nasa GCQ ang Metro—

SEC. ROQUE: Okay... Nawala ang audio. General, nawala ang audio but thank you very much.

To summarize, MGCQ to MGCQ travel hindi kinakailangan ng travel pass but the local government unit may still impose it; GCQ to MGCQ, kinakailangan ng travel pass.

Mga taga-Metro Manila na nais pumunta ng Tagaytay kinakailangan ninyo pong kumuha ng travel pass at bago kayo mabigyan ng travel pass ng PNP, kinakailangan magprisinta po kayo ng medical certificate.

Okay... dito po nagtatapos ang ating presentasyon ngayong tanghali. Bago po tayo pumunta sa mga tanong ng MPC, mayroon po tayong dalawang panauhin ngayon. Ang una po ay walang iba

kung hindi the man of the hour, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra na nanguna po sa PhilHealth Task Force; at kasama rin po natin Doctor Manuel Dayrit, siya po ay dating Kalihim ng Department of Health at ngayon po ay—dating dean ng Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health, via Zoom.

Unahin po muna natin si Secretary Meynard. Sir, thank you very much for joining us. This is your one of the rare public appearances that you've had so far to discuss your report on Task Force PhilHealth.

The floor is yours, Secretary Guevarra.

SEC. GUEVARRA: Magandang tanghali, Sec. Harry. I was asked kung mayroon akong presentation na gagawin ano bago mag Q and A, bago magtanong ang ating mga media and reporters who are present here, but sabi ko sa kanila hindi na ako gumawa ng any power point presentation. Ang intention ko na lang ay basahin iyong highlights noong memorandum for the President na sinubmit ko ano.

Ito iyong binasa niya noong nakaraang Monday night if I'm not mistaken kaya lang nahihirapan siya na basahin iyon dahil sa wala siyang reading glasses yata na dala at the time and this was supposed to be a confidential memorandum but because he already publicly read it then I guess hindi na siya confidential kaya I can proudly quote or repeat iyong mga parts na binasa niya na hindi masyadong malinaw sa taumbayan and maybe ito na ang magiging basis later on ng mga questions coming from the media.

So, Sec. Harry, if you don't mind I'll just go to some parts of this confidential memo for the President so that this could form the basis of questions later on. Will that be okay?

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, sir! Please, go ahead. Thank you very much!

SEC. GUEVARRA: All right. So, let me just go very briefly to the salient parts of our confidential memo for the President.

Summary of findings:

From a general perspective, we find that the persons who are supposed to set the policies and operational guidelines for the management of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation namely the board of directors and the executive committee have not shown the due diligence required of them in the discharge of their duties particularly in the disbursement of the national health insurance fund.

Their lack of diligence and due care has been highlighted in among others the following:

a. Their approval and implementation of the Interim Reimbursement Mechanism (IRM) without sufficient standards;

- b. Their approval of PhilHealth's information and communications technology or ICT budget upon a mere representation by the SVP in charge that the whole management information system of PhilHealth would collapse unless said budget was approved and;
- c. Their adoption of corporate policies and practices that fail to check, investigate, prosecute, and penalize the wrongdoing of PhilHealth personnel as well as healthcare institutions and professionals.

On the IRM, the executive committee showed lack of due care if not outright negligence in approving and implementing the IRM as manifested by the following:

- a. IRM fund releases were rushed even when the circular implementing the scheme was not yet effective. On 31 March 2020, the executive committee presented for the board's approval the allocation of P27 billion as IRM funds for the COVID-19 pandemic and asked the board to ratify IRM releases already made despite the fact that the circular has not yet been deposited with the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR) as required by law. The board approved both requests.
- b. The IRM was implemented without sufficient standards and guidelines making fund releases susceptible to abuse. In converting the IRM in the special privilege, the circular removed the need for prior board approval for IRM fund releases whenever a fortuitous event occurs and for the issuance of new guidelines for its implementation. It likewise removed a number of requirements previously imposed upon HCIs such as the survey and post survey requirements, and centralized the evaluation of IRM fund beneficiaries at the office of the PCEO.
- c. IRM fund releases were made despite the absence of mechanism to monitor fund utilizations and liquidation and without taxes due thereon being withheld.

On the ICT procurement:

Members of the executive committee lead by President and Chief Executive Officer Ricardo Morales and SVP Jovita Aragona, Chief Information Officer and head of the Information Management Sector submitted to the board a request for budget allocation for the procurement of ICT resource items for fiscal year 2020 worth 734 million pesos more or less. The ICT items were neither included in PhilHealth's Information System Strategic Plan or ISSP nor approved by the Department of Information and Communications Technology as required by law.

An internal Audit report that detailed major discrepancies or inconsistencies in the inventory of PhilHealth's hardware and software was not presented to the board upon the instance of PCDO Morales.

A proposal to procure network switches for the PhilHealth regional office at the National Capital Region was recommended to and approved by the board notwithstanding a Commission on Audit querying memorandum on the non-utilization of 24 similar switches.

Next, the PhilHealth Management adopted questionable policies and weak enforcement practices that failed to check, investigate, prosecute and penalized wrongdoing. The PhilHealth Management has adopted a policy towards airtight settlement of claims without accountability and even the grant of wholesale amnesty in favor of HCIs with claims that appear to be in longer, no longer enforceable against the corporation.

Based on the investigation of the Senate, less than 2/3 of the 7,452 pending cases against HCIs – these are the hospitals and professionals – from 2010 to 2019 have been acted upon by the corporation less than two-thirds (2/3). Meanwhile only a little over 1/3 of the 1,968 cases of the fraudulent claims from the year 2000 to 2019 have been decided.

Finally in his testimony before the task force, SVP Rodolfo Del Rosario of the legal sector admitted that thousands of cases involving HCIs and PhilHealth employees have remained unfiled. So, in our conclusion we said the following.

The negligence exhibited by the certain officers of the PhilHealth Executive Committee gives rise to both administrative and criminal liability under the following laws: RA number 3019 or the anti-graft and corrupt practices act; the Revised Penal Code for malversation of public funds or property, and illegal use of public funds or property and administratively gross misconduct and gross neglect of duty under civil service laws. In addition, the same corporate officers may be held liable for violation of the National Internal Revenue Code in connection with their failure to withhold taxes on IRM releases.

(Garbled) negligence in the service to wit: their careless approval of ICT procurement, their ratification of IRM fund releases in 2020 and consent for modification of judgment in court adjudicated cases such negligence is somehow mitigated by the active concealment of vital documents and information and the apparent misrepresentation by those who had sought the board's approval.

The foregoing notwithstanding the task force recommends that the President strongly admonished and remind the chairman and members of the board of their grave consequences of their action or inaction.

After that, we went to the specific recommendations for the President's consideration specific charges against particular persons and I guess by now, alam na ng media what these charges are and who the respondents would be when complaints are filed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

But let me just emphasize that further investigation on possible complaints against other officials and employees of PhilHealth and this is contained in part 6 of our 177-page report is also recommended.

So, marami pa kaming other areas na titingnan, iyong legal sector that is right for many possibly actions but we have not included that in the report as shared. Dahil we need further supporting evidence to back up the charges that we intend to file. Kaya hindi sila nasama dito sa report na ito. But this report, we submitted, only because we were required by the President to submit it within 30 days and we submitted it within the period given to us. But it doesn't mean that iyong

mga investigations that we have already commence and those that are already pending will not be continued. SO we are assuring the people that investigations on other anomalies or irregularities are being conducted and will continue until we have brought to justice, people who are responsible for these anomalies. Thank you Sec. Harry for the time.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much Secretary Guevarra. I'm sure the media will have many, many questions for you. Pero for now po, we will proceed po with our next guest, si Dr. Manuel Dayrit. Ang susunod po nating panauhin ay isang doctor na naging dekanong po ng Ateneo School of Medicine, ang pananaw po niya ay pupuwedeng mabawasan iyong social distancing sa pampublikong transportasyon hanggang .75. Pero bago po natin mapakinggan si Secretary Dayrit, ipi-playback muna po natin ang posisyon ng DOH at ng DILG na nagsasabi na dapat manatili ang one-meter social distancing.

(NEWS CLIP)

SEC. ROQUE: Dr. Dayrit, thank you very much for accepting our invitation to appear in the press briefing, the floor is yours po.

DR. DAYRIT: Yes, thank you very much, Secretary Roque. Alam mo mayroon akong presentation, it's a five slides. Ang gagawin ko dito is to explain iyong science behind all of these discussions. Ang first point ko dito, well, firstly, ang personality ko dito, I am speaking as a member of Task Force T3, which is a public private collaboration. And it's a public- private collaboration that supports government's efforts to control COVID.

One of our, you might say big initiative was to help government ramp up the number of laboratories in the country from 1 in February to over a hundred now. Okay, so ganoon kami tumutulong, pero very low profile kami. So, dito this was an issue of a public transport. So, pinag-aaralan rin ng grupo ng Task Force T3, may mga kasamang doctor diyan and then [garbled], so we are looking at all of the evidence.

And therefore, ito iyong first point. The first point is, ang recommendation namin, is that we can reduced transmission by having a package of interventions. Kasama na diyan ang face mask, ang face shield, ang no eating in the public transport system, good ventilation, kasama na rin diyan ang physical distancing.

Ngayon, ang physical distancing of one meter, sinasabi ng—you know, and I will respectfully beg to disagree, ang sinasabi nila dapat iyan ano, hindi puwedeng i-compromise – kasi iyan ang sinabi ng WHO.

Ngayon ganito po iyong katotohanan diyan: WHO makes certain norms and standards. And you remember, they're trying to do this for all countries. But when they do these norms and standards, hindi po iyan dogma; that is not gospel truth. In fact, WHO asked the countries to deal with this according to their own context. And therefore, it is not correct to say na hindi iyan puwedeng babaan, okay. Of course, it protects but what we're saying is you have to combine it with other interventions.

Ngayon, this picture shows you a situation in Japan where iyong social distancing of one meter ay nagagawa nila doon sa pag-buy ng tickets. Pero kapag nakasakay na sa tren, they are actually closer less than one meter. And many other countries do this kasi ganiyan ang situation eh. But, you have to apply other measures to ensure that if you are below one meter, you are compensating for any loss of protection.

Ngayon, I will explain now two studies. Ito importante and I used to do this a lot to [garbled]. And this is the evidence, okay.

Now, look at this slide – this is a study from Duke University. This is an experiment na ginawa nila, and I'll describe the experiment, okay, simple lang: Pumunta sila sa laboratoryo, ang ginawa nila ay mineasure [measured] nila iyong droplet output from the mouth of a person using laser, laser technology. And kung titingnan ninyo on the right side [garbled], nakikita ba ninyo iyong “none”? Kapag sinabing none, no mask, okay. Walang mask na suot. And at none, ang pinaka-extreme case diyan ay one. Ang ibig sabihin niyan, iyong droplet output mo at no mask is one.

Ngayon, ginawa [no audio] over the mouth and nose as the person was speaking, okay. And according to their studies, makikita ninyo, they put in a mask, a bandana mask for example, iyang number 12. Naglagay sila ng cotton mask, naglagay sila ng iba't ibang mask. Nakikita mo diyan iyong drop in the droplets spread. And ibig sabihin, ang lumalabas na droplet o laway o tilamsik sa bibig ng isang taong nagsasalita, mineasure [measured] nila by laser. And nakita ninyo dito, sa pinaka-effective, N95 mask, halos 100% walang lumalabas na droplets; at ang surgical mask naman, almost a hundred percent, 99%. So ibig sabihin niyan, kung gumamit ka ng mask, walang droplet. Iyan nagsasalita na iyong tao doon sa experiment nila, ano pa kung hindi ka magsasalita, okay.

So itong isang study that the mask is very effective, and you have to wear it properly – over your nose and your mouth.

Ngayon iyong next study, ito medyo mas ano ito, kumplikado. Next slide – ayan, ito iyong Lancet's study. Ito ang kinu-quote ng lahat ng mga tao. And ang gagawin ko for the media, ie-explain ko sa inyo step by step. Go to the right hand corner. Ang study came from Lancet which is a topnotch medical journal. Ang ginawa nilang study na ito, hinanap nila lahat ng mga studies in the world on protection against COVID. And they found a hundred seventy-two studies. From those studies, and we go now to the left column, the first two columns. Tiningnan nila iyong studies that have anything to say about physical distancing, wearing of facemasks and wearing of eye protection, in this case, face shields. And you can see there, for the first... for physical distancing, they had nine studies; for facemasks, they had ten studies; and for eye protection, they had 13 studies.

Ngayon, ano ang ginawa nila diyan? Simple ang ginawa nila diyan, tingnan nila ngayon lahat ng mga studies. Pumunta tayo sa gitna ng slide. Nakikita ba ninyo iyang intervention group at saka iyong comparison group? Ang ginawa ngayon nila, sinabi nila, o iyong intervention group, iyan ang grupo na gumamit ng [no audio] at hindi gumamit ng physical distancing. Iyan ang grupo na

gumamit ng facemask versus not using facemask, and so on and so forth; iyong gumamit ng eye protection at hindi gumamit, okay.

Ngayon, you have to understand na they did these studies independently of all of these interventions. So ano an0 iyan, isa-isa lang iyan. Pero tingnan mo iyong findings nila, masi-simplify natin. Tingnan ninyo iyong percentages dito. Ang sinasabi nila dito, these are the chance of viral infection, okay. If you are not wearing a facemask, okay, look at the comparison group, your chance of infection is 12.9% -- I mean, for physical distancing. If you are not practicing physical distancing, your chance of infection is 12.9%. So it's not even a hundred percent. But if you are doing physical distancing of one meter or greater, your chance of infection goes down by almost five times, at in this case, 2.6%, okay.

Now, if you look at facemasks, if you're not wearing a facemask, your chance of infection is 17.4%. But, if you use a facemask, it goes down to 3.1%. And then, if you use a face shield and eye protection, your chance of infection is 16% but it goes down to 5.5%. So ang ibig sabihin niyan, using all these interventions, you will reduce your risk of infection.

Ngayon, tingnan natin how this is—look at this, this are percentages.

Look at the third column, pinag-aralan din nila iyan in terms of iyong tinatawag nilang “risk”. Alam ba ninyo iyong risk? Sabihin natin, kung ang risk ng comparison group at intervention group is equal, okay – walang diperensiya, equal iyan – ang ratio ng risk mo, your risk ratio or your odds ratio, in this case iyong tinatawag nilang OR, should be one, okay. However, kung walang protection, ibig sabihin your intervention did not help and in fact worsened the risk of infection, your odds ratio (OR) would be two.

But if your risk of infection is less than one, for example half the risk, your odds ratio would be .5. Now, tingnan ngayon ninyo iyong mga odds ratios, OR, OR. Okay? For physical distancing greater than 1 - .18. Ibig sabihin, five times less ang risk ng infection when you do physical distancing; when you use facemask, it's six times less; and when you use eye protection, it's three times less.

So ang sinasabi ngayon natin, all of these will help protect.

Ngayon, ang isyu: Babaan natin iyong physical distancing by less than one meter to .75, to .5, even to .3. Magkakaroon ka ng less protection pero ang sinasabi namin, kung ginagamit mo ang facemask, ginagamit mo ang face shield and you're not talking, you're doing ventilation, disinfection, lahat ito ay makakatulong to decrease the infection and the risk of infection in public transport. Iyan ang mensahe.

So, you have to take this as a full package, okay. Hindi lang physical distancing ang isyu dito. If you just argue by physical distancing, that is not the appropriate, I mean, you are missing out on other interventions that we could use. And also, we are doing this only in public transport so that our people can move, so that the economy can open. And this is really our position, okay. Use the seven commandments, enforce it strictly, and monitor independently. And konti-konti lang so that people get used to it. And this also important to communicate to the public na dapat walang

pasaway, okay. Because if we do this, we will all protect ourselves from the risk of COVID infection and open up our economy.

Thank you very much, Secretary Roque.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Dr. Dayrit. I hope you can join us for the open forum. Mainit I'm sure ang ating open forum ngayon. Let's begin with Usec. Rocky. Go ahead, Usec. Rocky.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Good afternoon, Secretary Roque and Secretary Menardo Guevarra. And Dr. Dayrit, good afternoon po. From Evelyn Quiroz of Pilipino Mirror, for Secretary Guevarra po. Secretary Guevarra, ito po iyong una ninyong tanong: Iyon po bang evidence on hand is limited to administrative case only?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: No, Evelyn. The evidence available to us will be enough to support both an administrative and a criminal complaint. Kaya lamang, we're beefing it up 'no, we are trying to beef it up dahil mayroong mga documents na kailangan pang makuha namin talaga. We know that they are there but we still have to get them.

So your question, hanggang administrative lang ba? No, we have enough evidence also but we have to secure them physically para ma-build up iyong case at nang makapag-file ng maayos iyong complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman. Pati sa criminal mayroon din.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question niya, Secretary: Magkakaiba ba ang set of evidence submitted sa Senate, House, Ombudsman at PhilHealth Task Force kasi parang iba-iba ang recommendation nila?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Hindi ko masasagot iyon, Evelyn ano, kasi hindi ko naman alam exactly kung ano iyong mga ebidensiya na iniharap sa House of Representatives or before the Office of the Ombudsman 'no. Baka medyo may variance din iyan, iyong set ng mga ebidensiya na na-present. Kaya iyong sa Task Force which was led by the DOJ, ang aming conclusions ay nakasalalay lamang doon sa mga ebidensiya na mismong sa amin iniharap.

Ngayon, we also made use of certain evidence presented before the Senate, for example, but we can't really say kung exactly the same set of evidence iyong naharap sa Senate at iyong sa amin. Kaya magkakaroon ng variations sa appreciation iyong evidence kasi hindi naman exactly the same iyong na-present.

USEC. IGNACIO: Iyong third question niya, Secretary: Can Secretary Duque, as well as PhilHealth President Morales, be held liable under the doctrine of willful blindness used by DOJ prosecutors in filing anti-money laundering charges against the executives of RCBC in connection with the 81-million-dollar cyber heist at the Bank of Bangladesh?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Alam mo, Evelyn, it may be too early to answer that question kasi sabi ko nga sa iyo kinukumpleto pa ang ebidensiya na maaring ihain sa Office of the Ombudsman. Although we have an idea already what it is 'no, but there is a possibility. But right

now ang hawak namin, ang nakikita namin ay hindi pa talaga sufficient para masabi natin na may gross inexcusable negligence on the part of Secretary Duque and members of the board.

USEC. IGNACIO: Salamat, Secretary Guevarra.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Sec. Thank you, Usec. Joyce Balancio of DZMM, please.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Yes. Good afternoon, Secretary Roque and to our guests. Doon lang po sa naging meeting ni Pangulong Duterte with Congress leaders kagabi, Secretary Roque. Si Senate President Tito Sotto said that the President gave PhilHealth Chief Dante Gierran a deadline up to December this year to fix the corruption issues in PhilHealth. Can you give us more details on this? And also, ibig sabihin po ba nito ay posibleng maikli lang ang term ni PhilHealth Chief Dante Gierran? We thought that he was given an assignment for the next two years until the term of the President ends but it appears na iyong termino niya ay nakadepende sa performance niya as chief ng PhilHealth.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, let's put it this way 'no, the President wants to clean up PhilHealth, and that is why the deadline given to Attorney Gierran is to enable him—or a deadline to clean up the organization. File all the cases that need to be filed, suspend, terminate, whatever you need to do in order to cleanse the ranks of PhilHealth. Hindi naman po ibig sabihin na ang termino niya ay hanggang doon lamang. But since I was not physically present during the meeting, I can only rely on the statement made by Tito Sotto which was corroborated to me by Majority Floor Leader Martin Romualdez.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: How about, sir—Can you give us more details dito sa sinasabi na pabor si President Duterte either i-privatize or i-abolish ang PhilHealth if in case Dante Gierran fails to fix the corruption problems within the agency? And also I think, dagdag ko na rin po, napag-usapan iyong bill ni Senator Sotto about transferring the chairmanship of PhilHealth to Secretary of Finance.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Ang pagkakaintindi ko, talagang ang paninindigan ni Presidente either i-abolish or i-privatize iyan at sinabi naman po niya iyan sa pagpupulong niya sa ilang miyembro ng IATF 'no. At ganiyan din po iyong original bill ko na hinain sa 17th Congress, i-abolish iyong PhilHealth, palitan ng National Health Service.

Pero ang pagkakaintindi ko po, sabi ni Senate President Tito Sotto huwag muna, tingnan muna natin kung malilinis ang PhilHealth at tingnan natin kung mariremedyuhan dito sa kaniyang proposed bill na gawing chairman nga ng Board of Directors ng PhilHealth ang Secretary of Finance at hindi ang Secretary of Health dahil ang primary function naman ng PhilHealth is that of an insurance business and therefore it should be the Secretary of Finance and not the Secretary of Health chairing the Board.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: All right. Secretary, sa ibang topic lang po. Recent survey conducted by the Asian Development Bank or ADB show that the Philippine households were among the worst affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. 84% daw po of households in the country said that their income has declined at ito daw po ay worst in the region. Any reaction to this?

And sabi din po doon, iyong ating micro, small and medium enterprises are the most affected business. They have the potential to grow in the digital platform or digital arena but it is hampered by internet connectivity issues.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, on your first point, malungkot po talaga iyan 'no na talagang napakadami pong naghirap dahil sa pandemya. Hindi naman po natin ninais ito, talaga naman pong kung hindi naman tayo nag-ECQ eh baka mas marami talaga sa atin ang nagkasakit 'no so malungkot na katotohanan po iyan. Pero lahat naman po ay ginagawa natin para makaahon ang lahat. Ito po ang dahilan kung bakit ang kampanya natin ngayon ay ingat buhay para sa hanapbuhay dahil makakabangon lang tayo kung tayo po ay babalik sa ating mga hanapbuhay.

Pagdating po doon sa digital business, ini-encourage din po natin iyan at sabi nga po ng ADB it is hampered by poor internet infrastructure. Pero kanina po narinig ko naman po si dating Usec. Rio sa radyo na nagsasabi na mas mataas pa talaga actually ang speed ng internet natin kaysa doon sa sinabi ni Secretary Gringo Honasan sa Kamara de Representante. Ang sabi kasi ni Senator Gringo, mga 7 to 8 mpbs lang tayo pero ang sabi ni Usec. Rio ay nasa 20 na tayo 'no.

But we can do better and we will do better. When I was in Congress isa po sa sinulong natin iyong libreng internet and we will make sure po that now that we're in the Executive, na iyong libreng internet talaga ay ma-implement on a nationwide basis. Thank you very much.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Last na lang po for me, Secretary. The Office of the Ombudsman po Secretary Roque has limited the access of public to the SALNs of different public officials including the President. In its memorandum it released recently, it only allows the release of SALN for official investigations, court order or those approved by the subject of the SALN itself. Some are saying it is in violation of the Constitution, Secretary Roque. Is it not going against our policy of transparency and accountability?

SEC. ROQUE: Alam ninyo po mayroon tayong talagang Office of the Ombudsman which is the constitutional body 'no in the '87 Constitution to promote accountability for public officers. Kung mayroon pong ganiyang rule ang Ombudsman as the specialized constitutional agency to promote accountability, kinakailangan respetuhin po.

Thank you very much, Joyce. Back again to Usec. Rocky.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Secretary, question from Arianne Merez of ABS-CBN. Iyong question niya halos katulad din noong kay Joyce pero may dagdag siya dito: With the Ombudsman's latest policy on SALN, is President Duterte open to making public his own SALN for 2018 and 2019 for transparency and why?

SEC. ROQUE: We respect po the constitutional prerogative of a constitutional body such as the Ombudsman. We will leave the matter to the Ombudsman. We respect his prerogatives.

USEC. IGNACIO: Iyong second question po niya natanong na rin ni Joyce. Iyong third question niya: LTFRB Chair Martin Delgra said they hope to resume provincial bus operations in Metro Manila this month. Has this been discussed by the IATF and what is the decision?

SEC. ROQUE: Sinisimulan na po ang diskusyon niyan. It's ongoing.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Usec. Punta tayo kay Trish Terada of CNN Philippines, please.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Good afternoon po, Secretary, at sa mga guests po natin.

Sir, before I go to the issue of reduced physical distancing, I will go first about iyong internet po natin dito sa Philippines. Because yesterday, DICT Secretary Gringo Honasan said in a House hearing that internet in the Philippines is not bad.

Baka lang, sir, may update po tayo sa—your reaction to this, sir? And baka lang po may update tayo about telcos compliance doon sa SONA statement ng Pangulo na they should improve their services by December, otherwise they might be closed?

SEC. ROQUE: Number one, Secretary Gringo Honasan was absolutely correct – it's not bad compared to our neighbors. As in fact, it is better than what was stated by Secretary Honasan as mentioned by former Usec. Rio 'no, it's higher, a lot higher than what was mentioned by Secretary Honasan.

Number two, alam na po natin kung ano ang ginagawa ng Presidente, bukod doon sa ultimatum na binigay sa mga telco providers natin, eh gumawa na rin ng hakbang ang Presidente para masigurado na iyong mga pangangailangan ng telcos lalung-lalo na iyong mas mabilisang approval pagdating doon sa mga lokal na pamahalaan sa pagtatayo ng mga towers at other infrastructure ay mawala ang red tape diyan.

Ibig sabihin, wala na pong dahilan ang mga telcos sa mga darating na panahon para hindi magbigay nang mas mabuting serbisyo sa panahon na talagang pati sa edukasyon ay nangangailangan tayo ng internet. Inaasahan po ng Presidente na dahil ginawa naman niya ang kaniyang obligasyon na sabihan ang mga lokal na pamahalaan dahil sila ang sinisisi ng telcos to shape up eh hindi na po tatanggap ng kahit anong alibi ang Presidente in the future kung hindi po mapabuti ang ating telecom sa bansa.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Secretary, doon naman po sa reduced distancing. Is the IATF at least considering to increase iyong vehicles and open more routes if the goal is to accommodate more passengers and increase transport capacity? And at the same time, we read the statement of Senator Bong Go earlier, he is recommending na pag-aralan iyong pagbibigay ng subsidy for affected drivers. Kaya pa po ba ito, sir, ng ating budget?

SEC. ROQUE: Number one, the subsidy for the drivers is in Bayanihan II. And kaya nga bibigyan po ng subsidy diyan kasi kinakailangan iyong social distancing. Kapag lumarga po sila ng one meter social distancing, effectively po iyan hindi po iyan 50%; effectively mga 20% lang po iyan. Kaya kinakailangan ng subsidy dahil hindi sila mabubuhay, they will not break even 'no. So iyong subsidy na ibibigay natin sa Bayanihan II is enough to make it break even for them plus a little profit of about 20%, I think.

Number two, sagad na nga po iyong ating transportasyon na pinalalabas ngayon. At ang solusyon nga po is damihan iyong mga pasahero na pupuwedeng isakay ng ating mga pampublikong transportasyon, pero lahat po iyan ay kinunsidera ng DOTr at ng IATF.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Secretary, this question may be answered by you or Dr. Dayrit because I was listening to Dr. Dayrit's presentation earlier and nabanggit nga po iyong effectivity ng mask and all these efforts combined 'no.

Sir, when we recommended this reduced physical distancing was, kumbaga, iyong culture or compliance also taken into consideration because nabanggit ninyo nga po iba-iba iyong klase ng mask na ginagamit? And iyong pag-comply din po, are we confident that everybody can comply to this, na everyone is capable of really properly wearing mask, when really suggested this? Isn't it better, sir, if we go on the more conservative measure na ipapanatili po itong one-meter distance considering nga po other factors that may affect our compliance to the health standards?

SEC. ROQUE: Doctor Dayrit.

DR. DAYRIT: Thank you for that question ano. Well, compliance is very important and, therefore, we are saying you need to enforce it and you need to monitor it.

Okay, but the reason we are doing this is because we are trying to balance it with the needs of the economy opening up. And therefore, there's your tradeoff there. But really the tradeoff doesn't leave us defenseless, that is what we are saying. As long as you use these seven commandments, you can reduce the risk of infection. Okay? And anywhere in the world, that's the same thing, you have to comply with whatever you can use in order for your own context, in order to succeed.

SEC. ROQUE: On my part, ibabalik ko po iyong ating kampanya ngayon: Ingat buhay para sa hanapbuhay. Kasama po sa pag-iingat buhay sa public transportation - mask, shield, walang magsasalita, walang kakain, kinakailangan mag-disinfect at pati po iyong mga pampublikong transportasyon ay dapat i-disinfect.

Kahapon po mga around 7 in the evening, dumaan po ako diyan sa EDSA, sa harap ng Megamall, nakita ko po ang pila sa MRT – isang kilometro. Kung gaano kahaba po ang Megamall, ganoon kahaba po ang pila, at iyan po ay dahil nga kakaunti lamang ang isinasakay natin. So pagdating po sa compliance, pagdating po sa MRT/LRT, sila na po ang nagdi-determine how many can actually ride per coach 'no. And dahil nga po diyan, napakahaba ng pilang nakita ko kagabi.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS: Sir, isingit ko lang po. Iyong national state of calamity, will it be extended?

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, definitely! It's in the desk of the President, probably signed by now, on its way down to the Office of the Executive Secretary.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, tanong ni MJ Blancaflor of Daily Tribune: Senator Sotto said, President Duterte favored his proposal that the Finance Secretary should serve as ex-officio chair of PhilHealth instead of the DOH Secretary. Does it mean that the President agrees that the DOH Secretary has been wearing too many hats?

SEC. ROQUE: You know, I was not physically present. I take of course the statement of Senator Sotto as gospel truth, and of course it makes sense because it should be run as an insurance company. Although, there is a huge of a difference also between an ordinary insurance company and PhilHealth, because as author of the Universal Healthcare Law, hindi dependent ang PhilHealth sa contributions ng members, kapag magkukulang ay talagang tutustusan ng gobyerno. And that's the difference between a purely insurance company and Universal Healthcare.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question po niya: May we get the Palace reaction on the remarks made by retired Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio that the administration has no coherent foreign policy? He observed the President's changing tones on our relationship with China and the US.

SEC. ROQUE: On the contrary, the President has been consistent in espousing an independent foreign policy. We will promote the national interest first and foremost, and we will be friends to everyone and enemies to no one.

USEC. IGNACIO: Senior Associate Justice Carpio also said that President Duterte relied on knee jerk reactions in terminating VFA and granting absolute pardon to Pemberton. How will the Palace respond to that?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, I have given my personal opinion on the basis of everything that I have heard from the President - it is for a higher national interest.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Mr. Secretary, good afternoon. Will you confirm the report that the President is seriously considering the transfer of the chairmanship of PhilHealth to Secretary Sonny Dominguez of the Department of Finance?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, I will confirm that the President had favorable reaction to it, but it really is the call of the legislative branch of government. Because PhilHealth was created pursuant to law, amended by the Universal Healthcare Law and it depends on the wisdom of Congress, if they feel that the legislative basis for the existence of PhilHealth should be amended, so be it, the President will respect that.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Will you not run contrary to the charter of the PhilHealth which says that the Secretary of Health is the ex-officio chairperson and the President and the CEO of the corporation shall be the vice chairperson of the board?

SEC. ROQUE: That is according to law, because the charter is a law which can always be amended by Congress.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Do you think we have the luxury of time to amend the law to respond to the crisis that is perceived and experienced by PhilHealth members?

SEC. ROQUE: I think Congress, this particular Congress has proven track record of passing the relevant and urgent legislation at the soonest time possible.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Yeah. For Secretary Menardo Guevarra with your indulgence, Mr. Secretary. Ano na po ang effort ng Department of Justice to decongest and make sure that our jails under your supervision will be safe? Sapagka't may mga nabalita na nagka-COVID-19 sa Piitang Pambansa ng Pilipinas. Ano na po ang inyong efforts to reduce the concern of the relatives on the inmates inside the jails?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Melo, let me just make a differentiation ha. Iyong mga city jails where persons are being detained while awaiting trial 'no, iyan ay under the jurisdiction of the BJMP and that is under the DILG; iyong under the DOJ, iyong BuCor, Bureau of Corrections, iyon iyong prison where sentenced persons would be placed.

So ang mga nagawa na ng DOJ diyan, through BuCor—actually it's BuCor, not the DOJ. Kasi ang DOJ is exercising administrative supervision over the BuCor only. Pero iyong operational aspect niyan is really BuCor.

So ang ginagawa ng BuCor to minimize iyang congestion and infection of COVID-19, they have already put the necessary quarantine facilities there and hired more medical personnel to attend to the needs of the PDLs doon sa kanilang NBP hospital inside.

On the part of the DOJ naman, naglabas kami ng interim guidelines para doon sa more expedient and faster processing ng parole at saka ng executive clemency. At ang binibigyan ng priority dito ay iyong mga may edad na, iyong mga matatanda at iyong may mga sakit. So on our part, iyon ang ginawa namin at marami nang na-process ang Board of Pardons and Parole na ma-parole o makapag-submit ng application for pardon sa Office of the President by virtue of this abbreviated and simplified procedure for application.

Mas kakaunti na ang hinihinging requirements at mas maiksi na ang panahon na ginugugol para sa processing ng ganitong mga applications.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Opo. Nadagdagan po ba iyong budget ng BuCor para sa health services sapagka't mukhang ito yata ang isang problema eh?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Melo, sad to say ano, doon sa in-approve ng DBM ay nabawasan ang budget ng BuCor. Kaya I'm hoping na during the budget deliberations, I don't know if it's still possible, na sana at least on the medical facilities inside BuCor ay magkaroon ng some additional allocations para hindi na kailangan pa na ilabas ang ating mga inmates na may medical needs, na doon na lang mismo sa loob iyong mga basic medical treatment ay doon na lang gawin at hindi na ilabas. Kasi iyon talagang medyo complicated na nang konti, lalabas pa iyan so may security problem pa, mayroon pang, you know, stuff like that.

Kaya tama iyong punto mo na mas maganda sana kung magkaroon nang more appropriations para sa medical facilities inside BuCor.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Keep us posted ano po dahilan sa siguro kung mayroong big name na mahahatulan, mapapasok sa loob, baka gumanda iyong budget, ano po kaya?

SEC. GUEVARRA: [Laughs] Hindi lang naman para doon sa may kaya lang ito eh, kung hindi para doon sa mas kawawa.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Opo. Salamat po. Thank you, Secretary Harry.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much po. Back to Usec. Rocky.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes, Secretary. Question for Secretary Roque and Secretary Guevarra from Kris Jose of Remate/Remate Online: May panawagan daw po si ACT-CIS Partylist Representative Jocelyn Tulfo na isailalim sa hospital arrest si dating PhilHealth Chief Ricardo Morales matapos irekomenda ng Task Force ang paghahain ng kaso laban sa kaniya kaugnay sa mga iregularidad sa state insurer. Batid naman ng publiko na nagbitiw na sa puwesto si Morales matapos imungkahi ni Pangulong Duterte dahil sa kaniyang sakit. Sa tingin ninyo kailangan po ba talaga na isailalim sa hospital arrest si Morales? Ano ba dapat ang maging panuntunan bago payagan na ang isang nasangkot sa kontrobersiya na may sakit ay isailalim sa hospital arrest o kaya naman ay sa house arrest?

SEC. ROQUE: Secretary Guevarra?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Sorry, ako ba ang sasagot?

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, Sec., if you care to answer.

SEC. GUEVARRA: If you may. Itong hospital arrest kasi, pinag-uusapan ito kapag iyong kaso ay nasa husgado na 'no, in the case of violators ng anti-graft and corrupt practices law, kapag nasa Sandiganbayan na. Eh sa ngayon ay iyong complaint ay ipa-file pa lang 'no. At pag-file niyan sa Ombudsman, ang Ombudsman ay magku-conduct ng sarili niyang fact-finding and preliminary investigation. At kung mayroong findings sila ng probable cause, saka palang iyan aakyat sa korte 'no, sa Sandiganbayan.

Kaya iyong matter of arrest ay lumilitaw iyon, nalalabas na lang iyon kapag iyong kaso ay nakarating na sa husgado. Kaya sa ngayon ay hindi pa natin pinag-uusapan iyong tungkol sa arrest kasi iyon nga, complaint pa lang; hindi pa nga napa-file, ipa-file pa lang. Kaya too early para pag-usapan iyan.

And besides, ang mayroong discretion or authority to decide on that will be the court itself, depende sa actual circumstances.

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, thank you. Next question, please. Joseph Morong na pala tayo. Thank you, Usec.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Hi sir! Good afternoon, secretaries. Good afternoon. My first question will be to Secretary Guevarra. Hi, sir!

SEC. GUEVARRA: Hi, Joseph!

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Finally! Sir, can you quantify sir, I've asked this question to Secretary before but I'd like to pose the question to you, if you have the figures. Can you quantify the amount that, as either lost from the government or went into the pockets of some corrupt official sa PhilHealth based on your investigation? Or if you don't have the figures, how would you describe sir, the corruption in PhilHealth from what you have discovered in your investigation?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Joseph, it's rather difficult to make an estimate, kasi on the part of the Task Force ay hindi naman lahat ng areas na tingin namin ay may possible irregularity ay natingnan namin 'no. We have only explored certain areas like RIM [garbled] ICT [garbled] and so forth and so on.

But based on what we have seen, and this has been going on for many years 'no, like iyong mga nagpa-file ng fraudulent claims, padding and so forth and so on. We believe that we are talking about hundreds of billions of pesos here 'no over the years. So definitely I cannot give you any parang reasonable figure to go [unclear]. But we are talking about, you know, the magnitude of a hundreds of billions over the years.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: How would you describe sir, the corruption in PhilHealth?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Iyong corruption in PhilHealth, ang tingin ko diyan ay nai-engender because of a culture of tolerance eh. Iyong parang hindi sila naghihigpit among themselves 'no for some reason or another kaya over the years parang na-tolerate and then iyong mga practices, the various complains, legal actions that should be taken against the wrongdoers have not been filed, have not been acted upon really actively kaya parang nagkakaroon ng parang culture na... well, I wouldn't say impunity 'no, but something like a culture of tolerance na hayaan mo na lang, iyong tipong ganoon.

I hope, I'm not doing an unfair statement because I know na marami rin namang mga taong matitino at gumagawa ng kanilang trabaho nang mahusay sa PhilHealth. Pero we have seen it already – the Congress, the Task Force, the many cases already filed before the Ombudsman, before the Civil Service Commission – nakikita na natin kung gaano kalawak at kung gaano na katagal ito.

So bakit nangyari ito na for so many years ay walang pagbabago sa PhilHealth? So iyon nga eh, parang naging culture na, na parang nagbibigayan na lang, nagpapasensiyahan na, they tolerate each other. Kaya kailangan nga na some very definitive action will have to be taken, some

drastic action para mawala iyang ganiyang culture na parang nakakalusot iyang mga ganiyang irregularity. It's time to stop!

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Time to stop, sir, yes. Sir, since you mentioned the very definitive action, given what you have discovered, do you think that PhilHealth as of today or as of ...based on your investigation, it is beyond salvation such that it's better to abolish it? And the related question is: When are you going to file the complaint, sir?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Well, iyong filing of the complaints, we hope to be able to do so within the next 30 days, kasi we have to gather the necessary supporting documentary evidence. As I was mentioning earlier, we know where they are but physically, we have to obtain them para mai-attach namin sa complaint. So that takes some time also 'no.

Now, as to the matter of what to do sa PhilHealth, well, of course there are proposals na i-abolish lang iyan or palitan na lang iyan ng some new institution or what ano. Pero ako ang tingin ko, baka naman mayroon pang pupuwedeng gawin. That's why we recommended to the President to direct the GCG, the Governance Commission for Government-owned and –controlled Corporations, para gumawa ng sarili nilang evaluation for a possible re-organization ng PhilHealth and within the interim, the creation of an interim management committee. Kasi when we go to Congress, Congress can very easily do that but it will take some time also because of the congressional legislative process.

So, in the meantime within the Executive Department that is what I can see. Nandiyan iyong GCG, mayroong siyang power to introduce or to recommend reorganization partial or a total reorganization without really abolishing the entity. So, I guess we could explore that option muna kasi that is less drastic than abolishing or privatizing the corporation.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Sir, thank you for your time. Secretary Roque, my question is for you now.

Sir, kagabi po doon sa thread ng MPC kay SBG, kay Senator Bong Go, it seems like the President is giving PhilHealth President Gierran until December to clean up PhilHealth otherwise he would explore an option of privatizing it or abolishing it. Sir, tama ba iyong interpretation na this is an ultimatum for PhilHealth to shape up otherwise they would have to change?

SEC. ROQUE: It is an ultimatum. You need to clean up PhilHealth by the end of the year.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay. Sir, sa physical distancing, bakit po sinuspend ng DOTr iyong kanilang circular? And is DOTr willing or ready to withdraw it totally in light of a new letter from HPAAC na natanggap ng Palasyo advocating against the reduction and what Senator Go said in a statement that as an alternative you just have to give more PUVs?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, unang-una, mayroon pong rekomendasyon ang IATF 'no. So, the recommendation remains but it's up to the President whether or not to approve the recommendation. Pero kanina po noong nagsalita si Secretary Tugade, ang sabi niya, because I don't want to pressure the President into making his decision as if he is, you know, duty bound to

make it within a period of time. So parang... dahil kung i-implement iyan, parang it becomes urgent the President must act on it right away ano.

So sabi niya, to give the President all the time that he needs to study the matter, balik muna tayo sa one meter and until he says so we will not implement the .75. Iyan po ang sabi niya kanina sa IATF.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Can I go to Secretary—to Doctor Dayrit, please, if there is still have time.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay, go ahead

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Doctor Dayrit, good afternoon! Thank you for the presentation, we appreciate it. But I'd like to focus, sir, lang on the whether... kasi baka isipin ng mga tao na o puwede na pala tayong maglapit-lapit. Parang ang dating sa kanila is that COVID is less deadly. So, just focusing, sir, on the one meter without the interventions that you mentioned like face mask wearing and then the face shield, sir, just one meter, iyong one meter po or anything less than that, is that safe?

DR. DAYRIT: Graduated iyong protection.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay.

DR. DAYRIT: Graduated ang protection. So based on the studies, the protection is highest if it is one meter or greater.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay, okay.

DR. DAYRIT: Okay?

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

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much, Joseph. Thank you, Sec. Guevarra. And thank you, Doctor Dayrit. Back to USec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, from Maricel Halili: Senate President Tito Sotto said President Duterte wants PhilHealth to be abolished or privatized, can you confirm this? What does the President want to happen to PhilHealth?

SEC. ROQUE: Already answered po.

USEC. IGNACIO: What do you think of the bill filed by Senate President Sotto making the Finance Secretary as PhilHealth Chair of Board instead of the Health Secretary? SP Sotto said PRRD agreed to the proposal. Why is this logical?

SEC. ROQUE: Already answered na po.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Gillian Cortez of Business World: Manila's ranking in the Global Smart City Index 2020 went down by ten places this year – 104th out of 109 countries from being 94th last year. Road congestion, corruption, health care, air pollution and unemployment were the top five areas identified as the most urgent by citizens. What is the Palace reaction to this?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi ko pa po nakikita iyang study na iyan, it's the first time I heard about it. Pero siguro po ginawa nila iyang study bago matapos itong mga napakadaming proyekto natin under Build, Build, Build. Noong kailan lang po, parang ako'y—pag-uwi ko sa probinsiya ay napakadali na po ng pag-uwi ko sa probinsiya dahil malapit sa Malacañang, gawa na po iyong Harbor Link. Pagkatapos niyan iyong exit ng TPLEX ay hanggang Rosario na po so napakadali ko ng umuwi ng probinsiya, tatlong oras na lang. Bukod pa diyan, napakarami pa pong mga proyektong na-inaugurate na natin. Iyong sa CALAX at marami pong mga proyekto na magpapatuloy at nagpapatuloy na po ngayon ano.

So, I can assure you po that by the end of the term of the President, pagdating po doon sa sinasabi nilang road congestion, iyan po ay magkakaroon na ng lunas. Sa EDSA po magkakaroon na tayo ng lunas dahil magkakaroon na po tayo ng connector linking sa South Expressway with the North Expressway at patapos na po iyan. In fact, kung manggagaling po ako sa Pasay coming here to Malacañang, I use part of that connector na po at napakadali makarating po sa Malacañang.

Pagdating po sa corruption, number one po iyan sa agenda ng Presidente. Siguro hindi po iyan ang ikinunsidera ng Global Smart City. Sa health care po, dahil nga po sa pandemya napilitan talaga tayo na palakasin ang ating healthcare capacity at ngayon po we are rushing to build 54,000-bed capacities pa to comply with WHO minimum standard na sinabi po kahapon ni Chief Implementer Galvez.

Pagdating po sa air pollution, well, ang naging benefit po talaga ng ating quarantine eh makikita ninyo naman talagang luminis ang Metro Manila ano. At ang unemployment po, well, kaya po kinakailangan pag-ingatan ang kalusugan, pag-ingatan ang buhay para tayo po ay makapaghanapbuhay dahil diyan lang po natin mabibigyan ng lunas ang unemployment.

We go now to Pia Rañada, please.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Hi, sir! Hi, sirs! Can I first go to Secretary Guevarra?

SEC. ROQUE: Go ahead, please.

SEC. GUEVARRA: Hi, Pia!

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: All right. Secretary Guevarra, did the President's statements before you finished your probe on PhilHealth, when he was saying that he fully trusts Secretary Duque, did the affect in any way that the conclusions that the task force made on who to file charges against?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Not at all, Pia. Walang epekto iyon as far as the task force is concerned more particularly the DOJ. As I repeatedly said before, we will only go by the evidence presented before us. So, kung mayroon kaming makita, so be it. Kung wala naman, wala, pero kung mayroon, mayroon. Kung mayroon kaming nakitang [garbled] against him, we'll include him and probably the rest of the board if need be.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Sir, you mentioned in your report that the fact that the people who asked for approval of the board hid certain documents is a mitigating factor in your decision to just give admonishment to the board. So, sir, isn't it though part of due diligence for the board to check if there was duplicity to maybe catch any hiding or any parang efforts to hide certain documents? I mean wouldn't they have caught that if they did their due diligence?

SEC. GUEVARRA: Actually, kung talagang you will exert due diligence you might have probably discover that but considering that... you know, the board is generally a policy making body and really the operational side is being done by the executive committee, chances are pagdating sa board mismo which basically makes decisions on policy directions ay talagang siguro baka in practice baka kulang na rin sila ng time and effort para... kumbaga parang repasuhin na sila mismo ang... mismong magbubusisi niyan so to speak 'no.

Kaya it's really quite of necessity na parang you will have to rely on the inputs being submitted to you by the executive committee which is really the operational side of the whole because this is composed of the senior vice presidents and the president of the company itself or the corporation itself.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Okay. Sir, can I go now to Secretary Roque? Sec., just—you mentioned earlier the Ombudsman's rule on restricting public access to SALNs but precisely the rules of the Ombudsman say that it's now upon... it's now dependent on the official himself to decide whether or not to release the SALN and so actually the ball is on the part of the President and not with the Ombudsman. So, given this, sir, I've asked this for I think three presscons already: When will the President actually release his 2018 and 2019 SALN? Isn't the delay in this actually indicative that you're actually not being transparent to the public?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, on the contrary, the President has filed. The remedy is to go to the Ombudsman for a copy of the SALN, if you you're not able to get it from the agency itself but you have to comply with requirements of the Ombudsman.

PIA RANADA/RAPPLER: So, sir, Malacañang will allow for people—if someone request for the SALN, you will assure that the person will receive the SALN upon request?

SEC. ROQUE: We will comply with the procedure prescribed by the Ombudsman.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Okay. So, sir, no assurance that anyone—if I were to ask for it following all the rules of the Ombudsman, the Palace will really send them in?

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, if you comply with the procedure and the guidelines of the Ombudsman.

Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you, Pia. We go to Usec. Rocky now.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Secretary, question from Virgil Lopez of GMA News: The US Marine Corps said in a report that Joseph Scott Pemberton won't face court martial proceedings, saying they will not try Pemberton a second time for the same crime. However, they said Pemberton will be processed for administrative discharge. Will the Philippine government ask the US Marine Corps to reconsider and hold court martial proceedings?

SEC. ROQUE: That's a decision of the US government. Although I take note that they have said that he will be processed for administrative discharge. Meaning, he will be fired as a marine.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet has called on the Philippine government to revoke the policies that allegedly resulted in human rights violations under the drug war. She also urged Philippine officials to halt the use of rhetoric inciting violence against people who use or sell drugs. Ano daw po ang reaction ng Palace dito?

SEC. ROQUE: With all due respect to Madam Bachelet as a former President of Chile, she knows that we have domestic institutions to promote accountability. We will rely on these domestic institutions and as of now all institutions, whether be it the DOJ, the courts, the CHR and other remedies are available to those who claim to be victims of human rights violations. We are not in default of our obligation to provide victims with an adequate domestic remedy.

USEC. IGNACIO: Third question niya: The DSWD is expecting poor families to increase to 20 million next year due to the effects of the pandemic. Will there be bigger appropriations for cash doles than proposed?

SEC. ROQUE: Ganito na lang po 'no, kaya maraming nagugutom ngayon kasi nga sinara natin ang ekonomiya, kinakailangang buksan natin para mas mapakaunti natin iyong mga numero ng mga nagugutom at ang tingin ko ang solusyon sa kagutuman ay buksan ang ekonomiya at palusugin natin ang ating ekonomiya.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Secretary, marami-rami pa rin po ang tanong dito. Iyong tanong ni Julie Aurelio nasagot ninyo na rin po, about PhilHealth corruption at pati iyong physical distancing kung announcement soon. Ito po iyong tanong ni Julie Aurelio: Can we get details about President Duterte's late night motorcycle ride as posted on Facebook by Senator Go? Does the Palace believe that this should dispel doubts or speculations on the President's state of health?

SEC. ROQUE: Res ipsa loquitur po - the things speaks for itself. So hayaan ninyo na pong makita iyan ng taumbayan and they can make their own conclusions about the President's health.

USEC. IGNACIO: Jinky Baticados ng IBC-13, nasagot ninyo na rin po. Pero aware daw po ba si Secretary Duque doon sa recommendation or iyong Senate President Sotto proposed bill na DOF Secretary ang uupo po as PhilHealth Chair?

SEC. ROQUE: I think by now he should be aware because it's all over the media now.

USEC. IGNACIO: Kay Jinky Baticados pa rin ng IBC-13: Please elaborate din po iyong sa willing daw po si Pangulo na-summon sa congressional hearings that would tackle bills seeking to cut red tape and corruption.

SEC. ROQUE: That's to indicate talaga the urgency by which the President views his problem of red tape 'no. Pero I understand ang sabi naman ni Tito Sen ay, "Hindi naman ho namin kayo isa-summon. Imbitahin if need be." But it shows that the President resolve to work together with Congress to provide the solution to red tape.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Sam Medenilla: Earlier na-cite po ni Health Secretary Duque ang estimate ng HFAC na magkaroon ng additional 20,580 new COVID-19 cases per month kung magri-relax ng physical distancing measures sa PUVs. Kaya po ba itong ma-absorb ng existing critical care capacity sa Metro Manila?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, unang-una, marami pong mga miyembro ng IATF that expressed doubts over that model. To begin with, that model was prepared overnight po literally. Number two po, it has never been validated 'no. But number three in answer to your question, nakita ninyo naman po sa ating COVID report, nasa 50% more or less ang ating health capacity at pinaghahandaan po natin ang pagkakasakit ng mas marami pa – huwag naman sana po 'no – pero dahil nagbubukas nga tayo ng ekonomiya, kinakailangan paghandaan iyong mga magkakasakit na critical at saka severe. At salamat naman po sa Panginoon, kakaunti lang naman po ang nagkakasakit ng severe at ng kritikal.

USEC. IGNACIO: Kung na-publish na po ban ang any Bayanihan II Law?

SEC. ROQUE: Nabasa ko po siya sa [Manila] Bulletin 'no [laughs] kahapon. Hindi ko po nabasa sa ibang peryodiko pa pero nasa National Printing Office po ngayon.

USEC. IGNACIO: Kung nag-decide po si President Duterte regarding daw po sa recommendation ng DOLE to extend the exemption period for medical workers sa temporary deployment ban ng PEOA?

SEC. ROQUE: I promised Secretary Bello I will bring it up to the President in our next meeting and this will be on Monday.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Johnna Villaviray ng Asahi Shimbun: Ano daw po ang reason for the delay in submitting the report about the required minimum distance for commuters in public transport?

SEC. ROQUE: Eh kahapon lang naman po iyong meeting ng IATF, so hindi naman po substantial iyong delay na iyan.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Ace Romero to Secretary Guevarra: Did President Duterte’s remarks that ‘Secretary Duque is not corrupt, that he only thinks there was just negligence’, influenced the findings of the multi-agency task force?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Already answered.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question for Secretary Guevarra pa rin daw po and Secretary Roque: The investigation on PhilHealth has just begun. When will the agencies complete their investigation? What other aspects are being looked into?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Right now, we’re focusing on another sector ‘no na hindi nakasama doon sa report na sinubmit namin to the President. We’re looking at the legal sector, so for those that we have already identified, iyong sa RIM at saka iyong sa ICT or procurement. So possibly within the month ay mapa-file na—in 30 days iyong complaints pertaining to these. Iyong sa legal sector maybe in another two months.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Julie Aurelio: Senator Risa Hontiveros says the government may have lost 1 billion pesos after DBM purchased PPEs from 5 Chinese companies instead of giving contracts to local manufacturers. What is the Palace’ take on the issue and will President Duterte order an investigation?

SEC. ROQUE: Alam ninyo pagdating sa overpricing ng PPE, nilinaw na po iyan ng Presidente doon sa isang ulat niya sa bayan at talagang nagkaroon po ng absolute transparency pagdating sa pag-purchase ng PPE. At isipin po natin, pinurchase natin iyang PPE na iyan sa kasagsagan noong ating ECQ at saka MECQ kung saan kakaunti pa rin ang supply.

Iyong mga panahon na iyon nagsisimula pa lang po iyong mga lokal na kumpanya na mag-produce ng PPE na sa pamamagitan ng pag-angkat ng mga imported materials nga po at dito ginagawa ‘no. So iyong mga panahon na iyon wala naman tayong choice kung hindi bumili rin ng mga imported PPE.

So anyway to Senator Risa Hontiveros, bukas po ang Ombudsman, bukas po ang DOJ. Kung mayroon po kayong ebidensiya, magdemanda po kayo.

USEC. IGNACIO: Sir, mga tatlong question na lang po ito. From Karen Lema ng Reuters: Is the government keen on relaxing further the deployment ban on HCWs? Has that been tabled in IATF meetings and do you think the President will approve it? How long do you expect the travel ban on healthcare workers to remain in place?

SEC. ROQUE: Ang proposal po ni Secretary Bello is to allow the nurses and other health professionals with papers completed as of August 31 to be allowed to depart the country – hanggang doon pa lang po at hindi pa po iyan naaaprubahan ng Presidente.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Ace Romero: How can you agree with DICT that our internet connection in the Philippines is not that bad when the administration even deferred the opening of classes mainly due to connectivity issues?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi ko po alam, that's actually a point for debate 'no. Pero ang sinasabi ko po, hindi lang po iyan ang sole consideration ng Presidente – it was the President that decided, it was primarily an issue of safety 'no and preparedness 'no, not necessarily internet connectivity. Pero lilinawin ko po, there's always room for improvement and bilang naging awtor po noong librenge internet, isa po iyan sa bagay na gusto ko ring i-discuss sa DICT, paano namin mapapatupad na iyong batas na iyan because that's a law – to provide for free internet connectivity.

USEC. IGNACIO: Last question po from Evelyn Quiroz ng Pilipino Mirror for Secretary Guevarra: Do you think you have an airtight case against the PhilHealth officials?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Well, for those na na-identify na namin, I think we have sufficient evidence para ma-consider ito ng Ombudsman for the possible finding of probable cause. But we will not preempt the Ombudsman. From our point of view, I am saying that we have sufficient evidence.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary Guevarra. Thank you, Secretary Roque. Thank you, Dr. Dayrit.

SEC. ROQUE: Yeah. I'd like to exercise the prerogative of the moderator 'no in the open forum. Secretary Guevarra: Attorney Jojo del Rosario, head of legal of PhilHealth posted in his Facebook that he is already celebrating that he was not amongst those charged by Task Force PhilHealth. Should he really be celebrating already, Attorney Jojo del Rosario, former head of legal of PhilHealth?

DOJ SEC. GUEVARRA: Sec. Harry, kasasabi ko lang na ang susunod naming tatargetin ay ang legal sector 'no. Inuna lang namin talaga iyong dalawa, iyong ICT procurement saka IRM kasi iyon lang ang natapos namin within the 30 days. Pero actually nasimulan namin iyang legal sector din, hindi lang na-complete kaya iyan ang target namin for the next maybe one or two months 'no, the legal sector. So, huwag muna siyang pakasiguro.

SEC. ROQUE: Ay, maraming salamat po.

Now, bago po tayo magtapos, I'd like to recognize our guest in the Press Briefing Room, my good friend – Ms. Nadia Montenegro. Thank you, ma'am, for joining us.

Thank you very much. And since wala na po tayong mga questions, unang-una, maraming salamat po kay Secretary Meynard Guevarra. Maraming salamat kay Dean Dayrit. Maraming salamat po kay General Eleazar. Maraming salamat, Usec. Rocky.

Maraming salamat sa ating mga miyembro ng Malacañang Press Corps, at bukas po may briefing tayo. Live po tayo bukas from my City of Baguio dahil mayroon pong testing activity na gagawin si Mayor Magalong at saka si Testing Czar Vince Dizon at mayroon din pong mga iba pang mga proyekto na i-inaugurate tayo including I think a road project in Kennon Road.

So I'll see you tomorrow po for our press briefing. And of course thank you very much, Philippines, for tuning in. At sa ngalan po ng ating Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte, ito po ang

inyong Spox Harry Roque na nagsasabi: Kung ika'y corrupt, magtago ka na. Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

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