

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON HARRY ROQUE
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SEC. ROQUE: Magandang tanghali, Pilipinas. At maraming salamat po doon sa mga bumati sa atin noong kaarawan natin kahapon. Talaga naman pong nakaka-touch iyong mga dami ng bumati, and I hope to spend more years in service of the nation. Thank you very much po for your greetings.

Unang balita po natin: Na-extend po ng Land Transportation Office ang student permit, driver's license, conductor's license ng mga Authorized Persons Outside of Residence or APORs.

Matatandaan na ayon sa IATF Resolution # 79 na inaprubahan noong Oktubre a-kinse na puwede nang lumabas ang nasa edad kinse pataas hanggang 65 anyos. Kaugnay nito, nag-issue ang LTO ng mga rules sa application ng student driver permit or driver's license, conductor's license na na-expire noong mga panahon na hindi sila pinapayagang lumabas:

- Una, walang penalties sa pag-a-apply ng renewal ng driver's license at conductor's license na na-expire noong panahong mayroong restriction.
- Pangalawa, dahil sa inaasahang pagdagsa ng mga aplikante, ang validity ng student permit, driver's license at conductor's license na nag-expire noong panahon na mayroong restriction ay na-extend po hanggang December 31, 2020.
- Pangatlo, ang registration ng mga sasakyan na may plate number na nagtatapos sa 6, 7 at 8 ay extended hanggang 31 October 2020. Samantala, ang mga plate number na nagtatapos ng 9 at 0 ay extended hanggang ika-31 ng Disyembre 2020.
- Pang-apat, ang mga rules na ito ay para lamang sa mga edad 17 hanggang 21 at mga 60 hanggang 65 anyos kung saan nag-expire ang kanilang mga lisensiya noong panahon sila ay dapat na nasa bahay lamang.

Bilang pag-alala sa mga mahal na yumao, sa nalalapit na Undas ay inuulit namin na lahat ng mga sementeryo, memorial parks, columbarium sa buong bansa ay isasara sa mga bisita mula October 29 hanggang November 4, 2020. Kaya kung may pagkakataon kayo ngayon bago mag-a-bente nuebe ay dumalaw na po kayo. Pero papaalalahanan po natin na pagdalaw ninyo sa mga sementeryo at mga crematoriums at columbariums ay kinakailangan magsuot ng facemasks at face shields at mayroong social distancing. Pinapayagan din po ang 30% ng venue capacity.

Magandang balita naman po sa mga miyembro ng Pag-IBIG, mayroong inalok na social housing loan restructuring program ang Pag-IBIG sa kanilang mga miyembro. May anim na buwan na payment relief na ibinigay kung saan ang pagbabayad ng restructured loans ay magri-resume sa March 2021.

Isang paglilinaw mula sa DPWH tungkol sa mga manggagawang Tsino sa Binondo-Intramuros Bridge at Estrella-Pantaleon Bridge na pinondohan ng bansang Tsina. Bagama't tama po iyong sinabi natin na dapat bigyan sila ng flexibility dahil ito po ay donasyon, ang sabi po ng DPWH, unang-una, karamihan daw po ng manggagawa sa mga tulay na ito ay Pilipino pa rin at ang mga Tsinong mga manggagawa ay dahil mayroon pong mga specialized technology [signal cut] ito.

Punta naman po tayo sa COVID updates. Ito po ang global update ayon sa Johns Hopkins: Mayroon na po tayong apatnapu't isang milyon or 41,109,752 na tinamaan ng COVID-19 sa buong mundo. Mayroon na rin po tayong 1,129,185 na mga namatay dahil po sa COVID sa buong mundo.

Nangunguna pa rin po ang Estados Unidos, ito po ay eight million cases; 221,000 deaths. Pumapangalawa ang India – 7.6 million cases; 115,000 deaths. Ang Brazil ay pumapangatlo – 5.2 million; 154,000 deaths. Ang Russia po ay pang-apat – 1.4 million; 24,000 deaths. At Argentina – one million at 27,500 deaths.

Dito naman po sa ating bayan ay humigit apat na milyon po ang na-test na natin sa pamamagitan ng PCR. Mayroon na po tayong mga tested na mga kababayan natin na 4,187,385. Ito po ay ginawa sa 114 licensed RT-PCR laboratories and 35 licensed GeneXpert laboratories.

Mayroon po tayo ngayong 43,990 na aktibong cases. Sa numerong ito ay 11.6% po ang asymptomatic, ang mild po ay 83%, ang severe ay 2% at ang kritikal ay 3.4%.

Naka-flash naman po sa ating mga screen critical care capacity ng ating mga ospital. Makikita ninyo po na ating ICU beds on a national basis, mayroon pa tayong 53% available; isolation beds, 58% available; ang ward beds ay 63%; at ang ventilators ay 78% available.

Hindi naman po ibig sabihin palibhasa marami pa tayong bakante sa ating mga ospital na tayo ay magpapabaya na po 'no. Alalahanin natin ang sinabi mismo ng ating Presidente: Kinakailangan mask, hugas, iwas.

Dito po nagtatapos ating presentasyon. Mayroon po tayong dalawang panauhin. Unang-una, ang aking mabuting kaibigan, si Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado para po sabihin sa atin kung magkano pa ang natitira sa Bayanihan I at magkano na po ang nailabas ng gobyerno sa Bayanihan II.

Maya-maya rin po ay sasamahan tayo ni Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana, siya po ang ating ambahador sa Tsina para malaman natin ang mga updates pagdating po sa mga Chinese vaccines na inaasahan nating magagamit natin dito sa ating bansa.

Unahin po muna natin si Secretary Wendel Avisado. Sec., pakilinaw lang po, ang sabi po ng memorya sa Senado ay marami pa pong pondo ang hindi nagagastos sa Bayanihan I. At ang sabi rin po nila, anim na bilyon lamang out of 140 billion ang nagastos sa Bayanihan II. The floor is yours, Secretary Wendel Avisado.

SEC. AVISADO: Maraming salamat po. Para malinawan tayong lahat po: Wala na pong natirang budget nung Bayanihan I, nagamit na po natin lahat iyan; at dito na nga po tayo ngayon nakatutok sa Bayanihan II.

Sa Bayanihan II naman, ang latest po natin sa ngayon ay nakapag-release na tayo ng 4 billion plus at nakasalang na po, nasa Office of the President na po for approval iyon namang ibang requests for release 'no. At masabi ko lang dito na ang mga naipadala na po natin sa Office of the President for approval ay iyon pong sa—sandali ha. Iyong napadala natin sa ano—on process po ngayon, hinahanap lang iyong sa ano, memorandum for the President.

On process po ngayon iyong DOTr na 9.5 billion assistance for PUV drivers; tapos small business corporation, 10 billion, ito po iyong sa tourism. Wala po kasing direktang budget ang Tourism kung hindi iyan nakapaloob sa small business corporation para capital infusion for COVID-19 assistance to restart enterprises and other lending programs, internet subsidy extended to MSME, cooperatives, hospital, tourism industry and OFWs.

Sa DOLE naman, mayroon tayong AKAP na 2 billion para sa OFWs. DOLE pa rin 3.1 billion cash for work for unemployed and involuntary separated displaced workers or employees in the tourism industry.

So, nandoon po sa Office of the President ngayon ang request ng DSWD na 6 billion at sa Department of Labor and Employment naman na—rather ang sa Department of Labor is 8 billion; Department of Social Welfare and Development, 6 billion; Department of Agriculture, 11.6 out of 24 billion – iyon pa lang po ang pinapadala nila sa amin. At sa Department of Health naman ay 20.5 billion para sa health-related responses. Iyon naman sa Department of Agriculture, iyong Plant, Plant, Plant; iyong 6 billion ng DSWD for Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation; at iyong sa Labor naman ay Tulong Panghanapbuhay, iyong TUPAD program po nila.

So, sa kabuuan po, malaki na po ang nakaatang at nakahandang perang gugugulin po ng ating pamahalaan under Bayanihan II. Kami naman po, ginagawa po namin lahat ang aming magagawa na maaksiyunan kaagad. Lamang, alam naman ng mga Kalihim natin iyan na mayroon namang proseso 'no, magsa-submit sila ng special budget request tapos iyong budget execution document pertaining to the financial plan, another budget execution document pertaining to your monthly disbursement program at saka iyong justification.

So, lahat po ng ito ay ini-evaluate po at hindi naman sila nawawalan ng pondo po. Iyan ay hindang-hindi mangyayari dahil habang pino-process po namin ang request nila, mayroon po silang pera pang nagagastos dahil po binabantayan po namin talaga na kahit na anong oras mayroon po silang pera habang pino-process po iyong additional. Hindi naman ho kasi pupuwedeng ilagak namin lahat iyong pera na alam namin na marami pa po silang hindi nagagasta. Ganoon po, parte po kasi ng mandato namin iyan on budget management. So, sana po maunawaan lang na hindi po dini-delay ng DBM ang pondo ng gobyerno, bagkus iyan po ang trabaho namin na siguruhin na may pondo ang bawat ahensiya ng pamahalaan po.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, Sec. Avisado, I hope you don't mind pero for the record, out of 140 billion po sa Bayanihan 2, magkano na po ang nailabas natin?

SEC. AVISADO: Iyon na nga po, ang nailabas na natin as stated earlier is four billion fifteen million something, tapos on process na po iyong DSWD na nasa Office of the President na nga po, that's about 46.2 billion, tapos there's another 24.6 billion na on process. So, lumalabas na po iyong effort dito. Lamang, nakasaad kasi sa batas mismo that it's only the President who can approve all of these, so, kailangan ipaabot po namin sa kaniya para kapag naaprubahan niya, mag-iisyu na kami ng SARO at saka NCA po.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. So, mahigit kumulang kalahati na po ang na-authorize na naipalabas ng ating DBM. Maraming salamat Secretary Wendel Avisado.

SEC. AVISADO: Salamat din po.

SEC. ROQUE: And I'm sure our friends in the media will have some questions for you later.

Now, si Ambassador Chito po hahabol po siya. Habang wala pa po si Ambassador Chito and he is in Beijing itself para ikuwento sa atin kung ano na ang mga hakbang na ginawa ng Pilipinas para makaangkat po ng mga vaccines na gawa po sa Tsina ay tumuloy na muna tayo sa ating open forum at kapag dumating na sa atin si Ambassador Chito ay ibibigay po natin sa kaniya ang floor.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Thank you, Secretary Roque. And good afternoon, Secretary Avisado. Secretary Roque, belated happy birthday po.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Kris Jose of Remate: Reaksiyon po sa isinagawang kilos-protesta ng iba't ibang progresibong grupo sa Mendiola kahapon. Kinundena nila ang mga umano'y pang-aabuso ng gobyerno partikular na ang dinanas ng political prisoner na si Reina Mae Nasino. Binatikos nila ang kabiguan na umano'y masuportahan ang sektor ng mga magsasaka sa panahon ng pandemya. Ipinababasura nila ang Anti-Terror Law at ipinanawagan ang hustisya para kay Randy Echanis at Baby River, ang anak ni Nasino.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, alam ninyo po ang karapatan ng malayang pananalita ay garantiyado po ng ating Saligang Batas. Gayun pa man, ang aking pakiusap lang po, panahon po ng COVID at kahit kayo po ay lumalaban at kalaban ng gobyerno, pinangangalagaan po namin ang inyong kalusugan. So ang pakiusap po, sundin natin, hanggang sampung tao lang po ang pagtitipun-tipon dahil ayaw po namin kayong magkasakit.

Maski kayo po ay walang ginawa kung hindi labanan ang gobyerno, Pilipino pa rin po kayo at may obligasyon pa rin kaming isalba kayo kung kayo'y magkakasakit. Make it easier for everyone po, huwag pong magtipun-tipon.

USEC. IGNACIO: Ang second question po ni Kris Jose: Pinapayagan na ba ang pagsasagawa ng kilos-protesta sa lansangan?

SEC. ROQUE: Ay, hindi pa po 'no. Ang sabi ko po hanggang sampu nga lang nga po ang pupuwedeng magtipun-tipon.

Ulitin ko po 'no: 91% of the Filipinos approved ang ginagawa ng ating Presidente, 5% ay undecided, 5% do not approve. So iyong 5% po kabahagi ang mga raliyista, Pilipino pa rin po kayo, obligasyon pa rin naming itaguyod ang inyong kalusugan, huwag pong magtipun-tipon. Ayaw namin kayong ma-COVID.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary Roque.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Usec. Punta tayo kay Joyce Balancio, please. Maraming salamat nga pala sa mga greetings, mga video greetings ng mga taga-Malacañang Press Corps, talagang nakakataba po ng puso. Maraming, maraming salamat po. Joyce...

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Yes, sir. Belated happy birthday po sa inyo. I hope na nakapag-enjoy po kayo kahapon kahit na may trabaho po kayo.

SEC. ROQUE: Opo. Kaya wala po tayong boses ngayon. *[laughs]* Dalawang kanta lang iyan...

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Mukhang napa-videoke kayo, sir. Doon lang po sa sinabi na update ni DBM Secretary Wendel Avisado. On the part of the Office of the President, Secretary, mayroon ba tayong timeline doon sa approval na hinihintay pa for fund release ng ibang departments?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, alam ko po that it will be released as soon as possible. Tinitingnan lang—sinisigurado lang po ng Office of the President na kinakailangan talaga iyong mga pondo na iri-release. Iyon lang po iyon.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Opo. And then, nabanggit ninyo rin po sa last interview sa inyo, Secretary Roque, pag-uusapan ng IATF iyong proposal ng metro mayors na iangat iyong venue

capacity 'no ng mga simbahan to 30%. Ito po ba'y napag-usapan na kahapon and may desisyon na po ba?

SEC. ROQUE: Mamayang hapon po ang meeting ng IATF. Kaya po naaantala ang meetings ng IATF dahil sa mga budget hearings po 'no kung saan ang DOH mismo ay humarap po sa Kamara at sa Senado. So mamayang hapon po idi-discuss iyan.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: All right. Secretary Roque, si Senator Nancy Binay is expressing concern dito po sa maraming Chinese nationals 'no na mga bata na pumapasok po sa bansa as retirees. So mayroon po ditong mga 35 years old pero retirees po sila pumapasok sa Pilipinas and data from Philippine Retirement Authority show that more than 27,000 Chinese nationals have retired in the Philippines. At ang sabi po ng Senadora, possibly they are using iyong multiple entry visa nila to illegally work in the Philippines. Now, is the Palace aware of this? Is it a cause of concern po ba para sa atin and what are we planning to do about it?

SEC. ROQUE: Alam ninyo itong special retirees visa, kinakailangan magpasok sila ng kapital. So ang kapalit po niyan kinakailangan magpasok ng foreign exchange at kapital para magkaroon po ng negosyo na mag-iempleyo nang mas marami pang Pilipino. Pero naintindihan ko naman po na iyong Board of Directors ng PRA which has its own charter will meet and consider whether or not to lift the minimum age for the special retirees visa and kami naman po, we will defer to the specialized decision of the Board of the Philippine Retirements Authority.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Can I go quickly lang po kay Secretary Avisado?

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, please.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Secretary Avisado, some senators are expressing dismay for the little budget proposed for the newly created Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development. Nasa 4 billion lang daw po ang proposed budget for that. At si Senator Franklin Drilon is comparing itong budget na 'to sa ilalaang budget para sa intelligence and confidential funds na nasa 9.6 billion. Now the Senator is saying, nasa 6.5 million ang housing backlogs po natin sa Pilipinas. So, how are we going to address this given this very little budget for the newly created department?

DBM SEC. AVISADO: You know, DHSUD has its own mandate 'no. And if we look at the law itself, it says that it will be the sole and main planning and policy making regulatory, program, coordination and performance monitoring of all housing human settlement and urban development concerns. And therefore, housing production is not with DHSUD. Housing production is with National Housing Authority and the National Housing Authority receives minimal subsidy from the national government because it has its own corporate funds. So that's the reason why there's not much funds that we can see at the department itself because its function is not on housing production po.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: All right. Thank you so much, Secretary Roque and Secretary Avisado.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Joyce. Kung puwede lang po akong magdagdag diyan. Iyong mga emergency housing requirements naman natin, kapag tayo po ay may mga kababayang nasalanta ng sakuna eh iyan naman po'y manggagaling po sa budget ng NDRRMC; at mayroon pong 20 billion budget hindi lang po para sa mga nasirang mga bahay, kung hindi sa iba pang mga perwisyo na nadudulot ng mga kalamidad.

Okay. Bago po tayo magpatuloy, we'd like to welcome Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana. Ambassador, thank you for joining us today in our press briefing. Sir, ano na po ang balita? Ano na po ang mga stages ang mga bakuna at ano na pong hakbang na nagawa natin para masiguro na ang ating mga kababayan magkakaroon po ng bakuna 'pag natapos na po ang development into sa Tsina? The floor is yours, Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Thank you very much for having me, Secretary Harry. It's a pleasure to be here.

What we're doing here, what the Philippine embassy in Beijing is doing is really facilitating itong the contacts between DOST and DOH and the Chinese side 'no regarding the vaccine. As you know, the Chinese right now are in the advanced stage 'no, nasa phase 3. They have at least 3 to 4 vaccines that are now being tried in China 'no. They reported yesterday that—or the other day that one vaccine is about to complete the phase 3 trial and so far the results have been fairly good. There has been no report of an adverse reaction.

There is another vaccine that is under phase 3 trial and is also undergoing international experiment in Brazil and UAE. And in the UAE or in the Middle East, as far as I know there are some Filipinos 'no, over a thousand Filipinos that have been involved in the phase 3 trial. This is important because the vaccines being developed in China have been tried among Chinese patients or among Chinese citizens. But it is important to try it also with other citizens of other countries 'no that is why the Chinese have a joint program with Indonesia, Some Indonesian patients are being treated—are undergoing this phase 3 experiment. In Brazil, there is quite a number of Brazilians undergoing it so they're trying it with different nationalities.

In China they are already using the vaccine on an emergency basis for their frontliners. So lahat ng frontliners particularly in the hospitals dealing with COVID are already undergoing or have already been given the vaccine. The same with the airport personnel, those dealing with customs and those dealing with port, sa coastal ports 'no because in China basically, under control na iyong local community transmission. They're problem really is how to deal with iyong what they call imported cases, those coming in from abroad – Chinese or foreigners bringing in the virus and that's why very strict iyong testing and quarantine for international arrivals.

But back to the vaccine. So, they hope to go into mass production soon, and so the question is iyong distribution. As you know, the Philippines is one of the priority countries. This was an agreement during the phone conversation between President Duterte Xi, and this was reiterated when Secretary Locsin was here and had exchange or a conversation with the State Counselor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

However, distribution will be a challenge, even if we are in the priority list. One, because the Chinese companies we have been in contact would have said that we need or the recipient countries should make sure that they have the capability for receiving the vaccine. Kailangan kasi iyong tinatawag na cold chain storage. These vaccines have to be stored in the conditions na freezing conditions. Otherwise if exposed to tropical weather or to normal weather conditions, the vaccine could lose its effectiveness. So, of course, these are matters for the experts to deal with. But, basically to point out, that from our discussions with the Chinese Pharmaceutical companies, they have pointed out that the next challenge really is the distribution and the deployment of the vaccine.

Hopefully, mass production and distribution will happen in the near future, as early as November and December in terms of production. And it will depend on our capability to receive the vaccines in terms of our facilities, in terms of distribution. So, the prospect are bright in terms of a breakthrough in vaccine. As far as I know, in China there's a possibility for one or two vaccines that will be approved here soon. And of course they have to undergo iyong, their own requirements in the Philippines. Because the Philippines you have to clear iyong FDA requirements, DOST, DOH. So this is something, I think that these agencies are already preparing for. So, that is the update I can give you in terms of the vaccine development and the vaccine situation here in China.

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat, Ambassador Chito. So lilinawin ko lang po kasi po dito sa Pilipinas, paulit-ulit sinasabi ni Presidente that Chinese have the vaccine. So parang totoo po, they already have the vaccine na binibigay na nila sa kanilang mga frontliners. Tama po ito 'no?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Yes, as a matter of fact, beyond the frontliners. There have been reports in Chinese media that certain areas in China, some local governments are already distributing it or deploying it for certain citizens. So mayroong nangyayari diyan in a city, near Shanghai in East China na nag-uumpisa na iyan. And certainly, the company executives and employees of the different pharmaceutical companies involved in the vaccine development. They have volunteered to be part of the different phases of the trial at halos lahat iyan na vaccinate na rin.

SEC. ROQUE: Ang second clarification ko po, sinasabi rin talaga ni Presidente na may kasunduan sila ni President Xi na mayroon po tayong prayoridad. Mayroon po talaga tayong prayoridad sa distribution ng vaccine na galing po sa Tsina?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Yes, that is true. This was reiterated during the recent visit of Secretary Locsin, and as if you look at the DFA statement this was mentioned. We are among the priority countries. Of course, ASEAN, in general, is included here but the Philippines in particular. Of course, this means that we have to get ready for the distribution and deployment of the vaccine and that is why these Chinese pharmaceutical companies that have manufactured the vaccines have been telling us that what is required really is the cold chain storage facilities around the country or certain strategic areas around the country kasi the vaccine have to be handled very well before they can be deployed.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay, naku, napakabuting balita po iyan. Maraming, maraming salamat, Ambassador Chito. And please join us because I am sure your colleagues in the Malacañang Press Corps will have some questions for you.

Ituloy na natin ang ating open forum, Usec. Rocky.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes, Secretary Roque. From Ronald Reyes of Manila Standard. Ano daw po ang reaksiyon ng Palasyo sa latest statement in Pope Francis on giving rights for same sex union? Pabor ba ang Palasyo dito?

SEC. ROQUE: The President have said it over and over again, pabor po siya sa isang batas na magri-recognize ng civil union sa mga parehong same sex relationships.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Dreo Calonzo of Bloomberg. Ang question niya: According to the DBM, around 46.2 billion pesos are waiting for approval from the Office of the President. What's causing the delay? And when can we expect the funds to be released?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, as I said earlier, sinisiguro lang po ng Office of the Executive Secretary na talagang kinakailangan pong i-release ang mga pondo na iyan. But the assurance is, the money is there and DBM is able and ready to issue what is known as the SARO.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Good afternoon, sir. Can I go to Ambassador Chito, first please?

SEC. ROQUE: Go ahead, please.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: How are you, Ambassador? Nice to see you again.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Kumusta ka?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay naman, sir. You mentioned that iyong China is already administering not just to the health care workers. But I monitored a report in the BBC that they are also administering particularly iyong Sinovac to the general population, even if it doesn't have a regulatory approval yet. My question, sir, is that, number one, iyon po ba iyong Sinovac iyong tinutukoy ninyo kanina when you said that China is already administering a vaccine? Iyon muna, sir.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Well, I cannot confirm that that's a Sinovac vaccine; I have seen the report. Pero again, this is on a voluntary basis, those who want to try the vaccine. So kasali pa rin ito sa Phase 3 trial. Of course, the citizens know where the status is. But it's very near, it's nearing iyong approval. I was just watching a press conference the other day of the health authorities in China where they reported that 60,000 na iyong na-administer nila as part of the Phase 3, and so far no adverse reaction that they have detected. And so they are preparing their report now and I think we will see some announcement in the near future.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, iyong 60,000 po iyan po iyong—ano pong vaccine iyan, sir? kasi dalawa yata iyan isang Sinopharm, isang Sinovac.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Yes, iyong dalawa, Sinopharm and Sinovac. I am not competent in terms of the—I just know what I understand from the press conference, and so those are the two leading candidates by the way.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, kung halimbawa or is there any offer from China to use their vaccine on an emergency basis sa atin, wala naman?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Well, wala pa diyan iyong vaccine, so I think you have the—kasi mayroon tayong our own domestic requirements eh so you have to go through that. Now, people who may want a Sinovac, I think has applied to conduct iyong Phase 3 trial. That is being evaluated by the health authorities. So the moment ma-approve iyan then, of course on an emergency basis, should be possible.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Sir, dalawa kasi iyong—sorry, sir, for lingering on this topic. Dalawa iyon, sir, kasi iyong ina-apply yata sabi ni FDA Director Domingo kanina is for the clinical trial. Now, puwede rin nating gamitin for emergency use if ever iyong—

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: I'll leave that to the health authorities. I'm at the diplomatic side, I facilitate—

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: I understand, sir.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: —contact, and the flow of information.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Just one last on this, sir.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: You have to ask the right person, not me.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay, sir. Sir, just one last on this topic. Sir, sabi ninyo po na sabi ng China na priority iyong Pilipinas na bibigyan, pero mayroon po bang pledges in terms of the number of vaccines that we are ready to give and is this going to be for free?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: This is subject now to discussion 'no. This is a matter that will entail more changes and discussion. So, I cannot give you a definitive answer right now but definitely in terms of number, you know, how they will do it kasi it depends on the—they're talking of hundreds of millions in terms of production dito sa China. So, the question is iyong distribution and deployment. Of course, the Chinese have also joined the WHO initiative, the COVAX system so that—they're doing it on different tracks – bilateral and multilateral.

So, a lot of it in terms of numbers will depend on their production and I know the Chinese from all reports have now been preparing. They're preparing their manufacturing facilities for the mass production of vaccines the moment approval is announced.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Yes, sir. So, sir, November ang production ang kung kailan siya makakarating sa atin—

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: (Garbled) optimistically November. Near future, in the near future is the term they're using.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: All right, sir. Thank you for your time. Nice to see you again, sir.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Joseph. We go back to USec. Rocky, please.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Ay! Sir, mayroon pa! Kaunti pa.

SEC. ROQUE: Round two na lang, round two. May oras naman tayo mag-round two.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA 7: Okay. Sige, sir.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Secretary Roque, question from Leila Salaverria, follow-up po doon sa question ni Joyce: *Is the administration saying the four billion for DHSUD is enough and there is no need to touch the nine billion in intel funds?*

SEC. ROQUE: Well, gaya po ng sinabi ni Secretary Avisado, ang pondo po talaga sa paggagawa ng mga bahay ay nasa National Housing Authority at dagdag ko rin, na bago tayo umere kinausap ko po si Secretary del Rosario para sa mga emergency, iyong paggagawa ng mga bahay na nasira ng national calamities, mayroon din pong 20 billion budget na nasa NDRRMC.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Jam Punzalan of ABS-CBN for Secretary Avisado: *May we get your comment and the basis for the four billion funding for housing which senators see as meager compared to the 9.6 billion intel and confidential funds?*

SEC. ROQUE: Secretary Avisado? Sec.?

SEC. AVISADO: Opo, opo, opo.

SEC. ROQUE: Yes po.

SEC. AVISADO: Alam ninyo po hindi puwedeng i-compare iyan apple to apple kasi iba naman iyong purpose ng housing, iba naman din po iyong confidential fund. At saka kapag ganiyan po na masiselan na klaseng isyu ay ipinapaubaya po namin iyan particular sa Office of the President kapag ganiyan pong issue. Kasi kami po, hanggang sa allocation ng pondo kung saan po talaga iyong pupuwede pang lagakan base po sa budget ceiling, ginagawa po naman talaga namin iyan. Hindi lang po ako makakapag-komento kung ano ba talaga bakit mas malaki pa dahil wala po sa kapangyarihan po namin iyan.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary Avisado.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much po. Melo Acuña, please.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Good afternoon, Secretary. Good afternoon and belated happy birthday!

SEC. ROQUE: Good afternoon. Thank you very much.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: I hope you had a wonderful day yesterday. Anyway, I was instructed by my colleagues from FOCAP when they heard that the President will face the Malacañang Press Corps by Zoom, they would just want me to remind you of the standing invitation of the FOCAP for the good President to address the foreign correspondents as well.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, sa tingin ko naman po kung pumayag naman ang Presidente sa Malacañang Press Corps I see no reason why he will not also agree to FOCAP pero our practice is FOCAP actually is represented in the Malacañang Press Corps and I understand you are also form part of the FOCAP. So, siguro po when it happens maybe we could include some members of FOCAP also to ask questions to the President.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Yeah. But anyway, (garbled) arrangement from them (garbled). Let me ask the good Secretary Avisado.

Secretary, Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana mentioned the need for cold chain storage facility (garbled) the vaccines. Will we have the funds for that should the vaccines be delivered to us?

SEC. AVISADO: Surely, as the sun rises in the east, there will be funds for that because the President will never allow that we will run short of the requirements to make sure that we have the storage facilities for all of these vaccines po.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Okay. Thank you. Now, I would like to go to Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana.

Mr. Ambassador, Your Excellency, good afternoon from Manila. Nice to see you.

The spokesman of the Minister of Foreign Affairs was quoted last week that there are mechanisms, agreements on the joint exploration, there will be consultations as well. Would you know if there are scheduled consultations to push through with the joint exploration of resources within the South China Sea or West Philippine Sea? What have you heard?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Well, you know it's been a year, almost a year since the first intergovernmental committee that discussed the oil and gas cooperation met and there was a scheduled meeting or a plan to have a meeting in the first quarter of this year, it got affected by the pandemic and the committee has not been able to meet.

So, there are discussions, diplomatic discussions going on when it can resume safely. You see, the problem is still how to... where to meet and who will go and how the travel, the travel plans so unless it's done virtually. Virtually, there are limitations to virtual meeting particular on sensitive issues.

So, those are the issues being discussed right now. So, I think—you know, its two levels – the intergovernmental meetings and there is also the inter entrepreneurial meeting, so, the two—the companies involved they can meet if they have the capability to do so and from what I understand offhand it's just that meetings have been going on despite the pandemic.

Exactly when and where and how, I have no specific information. So, the only obstacle I think right now is really time and place and pandemic; when the conditions can move forward. We hope that the necessary meetings can happen soon but there is no specific time period and there are diplomatic consultations going on.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Yes. Mr. Ambassador, was there any adverse reaction from the Chinese government when Secretary Al Cusi mentioned that the President agreed to lift the moratorium for the exploration of our resources in the West Philippine Sea?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: Well, the foreign Ministry spokesman of China gave a fairly positive reaction. They said that they look forward to the cooperation between the two sides in line with the MOU of 2018. So, I think there would be more discussion on this but that's what I know.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Thank you very much, Melo. We go back to USec. Rocky now.

MELO ACUÑA/ASIA PACIFIC DAILY: Thank you, thank you.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Secretary, question from Trish Terada of CNN Philippines for Secretary Avisado: *Sir, may we know your thoughts about the leaked draft report of the House Committee investigating PhilHealth na kasama raw kayo sa pinakakasuhan for alleged corruption in the agency?*

SEC. AVISADO: I'm sorry po, I cannot comment on something that I have no knowledge of. Sorry po. We will wait for that report to come out po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Virgil Lopez of GMA News Online: Commission on Audit data show that 949 billion worth of government funds was unused in 2018, 1.233 trillion in 2017 and 1.074 trillion in 2016. How will the government address the under spending of the national budget?

SEC. AVISADO: Probably, the ones who can be more competent to answer that are the departments concerned. Kasi po once we have released the funds to the respective departments, it is their duty and responsibility to manage and spend it in accordance with the purpose intended. So I will defer to the secretaries concerned of these departments po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Question for Secretary Roque: Several lawmakers lamented the 2.5 billion allocation for COVID-19 vaccines under the 2021 budget saying it will not be enough to cover the population. Will the Palace support initiative in Congress to increase the funds for vaccine purchase?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, the power of purse is vested in Congress. We will bow to the wisdom of Congress should they deem it fit to increase the budget for the vaccine, and of course, may pagkukuhanan po iyan 'no. So we hope that Congress will at least confer with the Executive kung saan nila kukunin iyong pondo para itaas ang budget for the vaccine.

But we join Congress in our desire that we should have sufficient funds to pay for the vaccine, which according po to Ambassador Chito is really forthcoming in the near future.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you. Punta tayo kay Pia Rañada, please.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Hi, sirs. Good afternoon. Sir, just a quick clarification po sana with Ambassador Chito, if it's okay.

SEC. ROQUE: Yes, please.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Ambassador, can I just clarify what you said earlier when you said China would give us priority access to the vaccine but we need to have cold storage facility ready and distribution facilities ready. Can I just clarify: Is this a condition of China on the Philippines that if we don't ensure these things, we don't get the access?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: No, I don't think so. It's not a condition. It's just a reminder that if you get the vaccine and you don't have cold chain storage, then it's useless. So you have to prepare.

Basically it calls, it calls our attention on the need for the preparatory work to receiving the vaccine on a priority basis and the requirement for it to be effective, and that is really the storage is a major issue. Because I don't know the situation in the Philippines, that's why in our reports also to our headquarters we have conveyed this and to relay to the health authorities. And I think the health experts are very much aware of this, I just don't know the condition of cold storage in the Philippines that's why I want to reiterate this necessary condition for effective deployment and effective distribution of the vaccine.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: All right. So, sir, for the record, there has been no condition imposed by China on the Philippines?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: No, not at all. Actually, we're the ones, our condition is that it should pass our local requirements.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Okay. Thank you. Moving on to Spokesman Harry Roque. Sir, just on the issue of Baby River Nasino. Sir, according to court documents on Reina Mae Nasino's case, her Baby River had to be separated from her less than two months after birth because the Manila City Jail she was at, said that they had no facilities for the baby. And activists do say, as well as, you know, most scientific journal said that babies cry best when they are with their mother right after birth.

So, sir, is this lack of facilities that affected Baby River's well-being acceptable to Malacañang?

SEC. ROQUE: We don't know the circumstance po 'no. Again, it's very difficult to comment on something that we have no information on. But we will look into the matter. And of course, we realize that unless convicted, you are presumed innocent and that we will see what reforms can come about because of this experience with this particular incident.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Sir, will Malacañang do something, like maybe give instructions or find the way to ensure that babies born in jail get to stay with their mothers and have access to the facilities they need?

SEC. ROQUE: I will personally take steps to inquire into this, knowing that there are some petty obligations that will probably have to be complied with. But as it stands, I do not know if Manila City Jail has that facility in fact. And we will inquire from the DILG because it is the DILG that manages the jail for detainees, those who have not been convicted by the courts.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Okay. And, sir, last question. This can be answered by either you, sir, or DBM Secretary Avisado. Sir, can we just know the specific reasons why President Duterte is taking so long to approve the 46 billion that Sec. Avisado says is pending? I mean, what were the specific concerns that the OES is working on or is it the President himself who is taking time studying these fund requests?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, as I said 'no, sinisiguro lang ng OES na the funds are indeed needed and that it will go to its intended beneficiaries.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: Sir, any specific aspect of the request? Kasi this came from ... the bill was also something that Malacañang looked at, right? So, is there any problem, sir, with the allocations or specific issues?

SEC. ROQUE: Ask again on Monday because I will personally talk to Executive Secretary about this matter.

PIA RAÑADA/RAPPLER: All right. Thank you, sir.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you. We go back to Usec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Question from Sam Medenilla of Business Mirror for Secretary Avisado po: What is the reason for the bottleneck in the release of the Bayanihan II budget? And what are the measures being implemented by DBM and other government agencies to resolve this? Magkano po ang magiging allocation for the purchase of COVID-19 vaccine?

SEC. AVISADO: Wala pong bottlenecks po. Proseso lang po ang sinusunod natin. Kapag po kumpleto lahat ng dokumento, inaakyat po kaagad natin iyan sa Office of the President for the corresponding approval.

So kapag sinabi po bottleneck, eh may problema na – is delaying. Pero wala naman po. Hindi naman din po sabay-sabay silang nagsa-submit ng requirements kaya po as they come, we evaluate and then we elevate to the Office of the President who has the final say. But we have the funds. The Bureau of Treasury has certified that funds are available.

So ang importante po, hindi rin po naman nauubusan ng pera pa iyong mga departments natin. Kaya nga po ang aming sinasabi sa kanila, kapag hindi pa nalabas kaagad iyong approval, use whatever available funds you have para po punan. Kapag dumating na iyon, idadagdag na naman uli – ganoon lang po iyon. Kaysa po ilalagak namin kaagad lahat. Ina-analyze po namin kasi ini-study po namin iyong utilization rate ng mga departments para po alam nila na dapat i-move iyong pera dahil nga ang batas ay mag-i-expire December 19. Plus of course, the other regular programs and requirements that funds released to them must have to be used-up on the basis of the requirements of the task budgeting system, otherwise magri-revert po iyan.

So hindi po dini-delay; may proseso lang po kasi at iyon lang po ang sinusunod natin.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Secretary, ang second question po niya para sa inyo: What is the expected timeline of DBM for President Rodrigo Duterte to finally sign the 2021 national budget?

SEC. AVISADO: Iyon po, nasa Office of the President po iyan. Si Sec. Harry can address that.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, inaasahan po natin na mapipirmahan ng Presidente at least on the second week of December kasi ipa-publish pa po iyan sa diyaryo at saka sa Official Gazette para maging epektibo at nang sa ganoon ay hindi po tayo magkaroon ng re-enacted budget pagdating ng Enero. So on or before the second week of December.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary Roque, ang third question po niya: Ano na po ang status ng pending approval of the Office of the President on the budget to be released for DOLE, DSWD, Department of Agriculture and DOH under the Bayanihan II act?

SEC. ROQUE: Tinitingnan lang naman po na itong mga budget na ito is really justified. But as I said, ask again on Monday, I will have a personal talk with the Executive Secretary po.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Hi, sir! Good morning po and belated happy birthday, sir.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: About lang po sa PhilHealth-Red Cross issue pa rin. Follow up lang po sana, sir, kung—dahil nga nasabi na rin ni President na may pondo naman pero ang question: Saan nga po kaya ito huhugutin? At moving forward, ano po kaya ang mga puwedeng hakbang ng gobyerno para maiwasan na iyong mga ganitong problema?

SEC. ROQUE: Gaya ng aking sinabi ‘no, siguro reconciliation lang ang nagiging problema kasi iba-iba nga po iyong bayad sa PCR test, depende kung donated ang machines at ang mga test kits ‘no.

So sa pondo po, walang problema. So I assure the Philippine National Red Cross, the funds are there. It’s, I believe, a reconciliation issue. And the President has already spoken, so PhilHealth has to comply and pay at least half at the soonest time possible.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Opo. Sir, on proposed 2021 national budget naman po. Nasabi ninyo sa isang interview kanina na umaasa nga ang Palasyo na by October 28 ay maipasa na ng House sa Senate iyong budget bill.

Pero sa side naman po ng Palace – follow up lang po, Secretary Roque – kailan ninyo po tina-target na makarating sa inyo from Congress iyong budget bill? Can you give us a picture, ano po ba iyong pinagdadaanang proseso diyan sa Malacañang kapag nasa inyo na, hawak ninyo na iyong budget bill?

SEC. ROQUE: Alam ninyo po kasi, hindi rin ganoon kabilis ang pag-review ng budget kasi sa budget lang po may kapangyarihan ang Presidente na gumawa ng tinatawag na “line veto”. So actually, maybe I should reschedule the time frame, kinakailangan pala mas maaga because the process of reviewing it entails a line by line analysis ‘no. So I take it back, I think it has to be earlier than the second week of December to give the Executive time to review the budget and to see if it will make specific line item vetoes.

So I think—I’m sorry, I will rectify and amend my answer: The sooner the better in December so that we would have ample time to go through it.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Do you think next month po, sir, by November po ba?

SEC. ROQUE: That would be ideal, but I think December would be fine.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Opo. Sir, may third question lang po. Follow up lang po doon sa statement ni Pope Francis, I understand kanina nasagot ninyo na rin po. Pero under the Duterte administration, do you think may chance po ba na maisabatas o kilalanin ito ngang same-sex union?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, what we’re—yes, it’s not same-sex union but the civil union ‘no. Recognition of civil union has always been supported by the President. Depende na lang iyan sa prayoridad ng ating Kongreso. Pero with no less than the Pope supporting it, I think even the most conservative of all Catholics in Congress should no longer have a basis for objecting.

MELA LESMORAS/PTV4: Okay. Thank you so much, Secretary Roque and belated Happy Birthday.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you. Thank you very much. Usec. Rocky.

USEC. IGNACIO: Secretary, question from Dreo Calonzo for Secretary Avisado: How much does the government plan to borrow from the Bangko Sentral in 2021 po?

DBM SEC. AVISADO: Sorry po but I will defer to the Department of Finance kasi sila po ang pinagmumulan ng pondo po at sila po ang nangangalap kung saan nila kukunin iyong pondo natin.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. For Secretary Roque, question from Maricel Halili of TV-5: Ano na po ang update tungkol sa pagbabayad ng utang ng PhilHealth sa Red Cross? Kailan ito mababayaran? Do we have a timeline?

SEC. ROQUE: Well I was calling Attorney Gierran earlier for an update. If he’s listening, please return my call because that’s also a question that I want him to answer. Maybe we will feature him on Monday para po siya na magsabi kung kailan nila mababayaran.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question po ni Maricel: Halos isang linggo na pong tumigil ang Red Cross sa pagkuha ng swab test. Gaano kalaki ang epekto nito sa pagpapababa ng kaso ng COVID-19?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, as I said po ‘no, malaki ang kontribusyon ng PNRC testing, it’s 25%; but we have 114 RT-PCR laboratories and 35 licensed GeneXpert laboratories. Gone are the days po na we are only dependent on one testing facility ‘no. So we are still able—we have already done 4,187,385 at hindi naman po bumababa iyong average testing natin. It’s still stable at 30,000 plus daily.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question from Aileen Taliping of Abante Tonite: Wala po bang regulasyon ang IATF sa pricing ng PCR testing kasi iba-iba po ang presyo sa swab testing? Ang Philippine Airports Diagnostic Laboratories, they are charging P4,500 for each swab test and not honoring senior citizen discount. Sila po iyong mga senior citizen na gustong magpunta sa Boracay.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, iyan naman po ‘ata ang tsina-charge din ng PNRC, P4,500 din kung kinakailangan ng certificate and of course kung manghihingi ka ng certificate for Boracay, sumatotal na babayaran din ng PNRC is P4,500 but I enjoin everyone to please observe the discounts which is mandated by law.

USEC. IGNACIO: Question for Ambassador Sta. Romana. Question from Trish Terada of CNN Philippines: When will the distribution most likely begin, Ambassador, and maybe a rough timeline daw po?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: That’s difficult to say. I can only say that wait for the—the Chinese will make an announcement in the near future and then they’ll start their mass production. And once there is the mass production, then I think there will be distribution. Hopefully, before the end of the year; but surely by the first quarter of next year.

USEC. IGNACIO: Ambassador, question from Celerina Monte of Manila Shimbun: After the Philippine announcement regarding the lifting of the suspension of exploration in West Philippine Sea, was he summoned by the Chinese government to clear on the matter? What was China’s reaction over the Philippine decision?

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: No, I wasn’t summoned. *[laughs]* The spokesman, the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman gave his reaction in a regular briefing last Friday and the reaction was that the China looks forward to cooperation with the Philippines on oil and gas in accordance with the MOU on oil and gas cooperation. I think we have to let the process proceed and see what will happen. But so far, the prospects are quite good.

USEC. IGNACIO: Ambassador, question from Alvin Baltazar of PBS-Radyo Pilipinas: Ano po iyong timeline kung kailan magiging available sa market ng China ang date kung kailan po makakapag-distribute sa Pilipinas?

SEC. ROQUE: I think that's already answered 'no. Already answered, yes.

AMBASSADOR STA. ROMANA: I answered that already. Pero ulitin natin, sa China nag-uumpisa na in the sense that it's being done on an emergency basis to frontliners, the military, port and airport workers. And I think they are preparing to make an announcement soon on the formal approval of the vaccine and the mass production. So the moment there is mass production, then it is a question of you know, how much will be ready for distribution and deployment. So as I said earlier, hopefully before the end of the year and certainly in the new year or the first quarter of the new year.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Ambassador. Secretary Roque, question from Bella Cariaso of Daily Tribune: Iyon daw pong statement ng AFP kina Liza Soberano and Catriona Gray. Warning ba ito sa kanila for being left-supporters?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, tingin ko naman sa statement mismo ng AFP, sinabi naman niya walang ganoon. Pinag-iingatan lang nila sila na baka mamaya magamit sila ng left. Pero naintindihan naman po ng Hukbong Sandatahan na sila po'y nag-a-advocate lang ng karapatan ng kababaihan. Pero siyempre ingat din po kasi ang talagang—at alam 'to ni Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana, iyong mga Maoists po sa Pilipinas eh talagang kung mayroong puwedeng pagsamantalahan ay pagsasamantalahan nila.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Secretary, mukhang last question na po ito. Mula kay Genalyn Kabling ng Manila Bulletin: Please elaborate daw po on the President's comments about the logistics preparation for vaccine importation and storage. How many and how soon cold storage facilities will the government build for the potential COVID vaccine and which government agency will supervise this matter?

SEC. ROQUE: Huwag po kayong mag-alala 'no, noong inimbitahan po namin si Ambassador Chito, mayroon na po kaming programa talaga 'no, scheduled programa kung kailan namin isasapubliko itong mga hakbang na ginagawa ng gobyerno na masiguro na lahat po ng Pilipino ay magkaroon ng bakuna laban sa COVID-19.

Sa susunod na linggo po mayroon na po tayong inisyal na impormasyon na iri-release pero antayin muna po natin iyong mga ahensiya ng gobyerno na isapinal iyong kanilang mga plano.

USEC. IGNACIO: Okay. Iyong second question niya Secretary basahin ko na lang po although nasagot ninyo na: Does the Palace support a military official's alleged red tagging and mansplaining of actress Liza Soberano and beauty queen Catriona Gray?

SEC. ROQUE: Ang issue po, iyong posibleng pagsasamantala ng mga komunista sa mga adbokasiya ng mga personalidad gaya ni Liza at ni Catriona. Pero wala po kaming problema doon sa mga sinasabi nila Liza at ni Catriona dahil ang ating Presidente sinusulong din po ang

karapatan ng kababaihan at malinaw po ang track record niya lalung-lalo na noong siya po ay Mayor ng Davao City.

USEC. IGNACIO: Thank you, Secretary Roque.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay, last question na iyon. So mga kababayan, unang-una, maraming salamat po doon sa ating mga naging panauhin – si Secretary Wendel Avisado and Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana.

Napakagandang balita po ang binigay ninyo, Ambassador Sta. Romana, unfortunately we don't have a second round because it's 1:15 already.

Maraming salamat din sa ating mga kasama sa Malacañang Press Corps.

Maraming salamat sa iyo Usec. Rocky at maraming salamat muli po sa mga bumati sa aking kaarawan kahapon.

Ang aking birthday wish, sana nga po magkaroon na ng bakuna sa COVID, at ngayon po kinumpirma ng ating Ambahador sa Tsina na malapit na po iyan. Huwag ninyo naman pong isipin na palibhasa malapit na ang COVID [vaccine] magpapabaya na kayo 'no. Ang nais po ng Presidente lahat ng Pilipino abutan ang bakuna at importante po habang tayo'y nag-aantay ng bakuna at ilang tulog na lang po iyan, sundin natin ang sinabi ng ating Presidente – mask, hugas at iwas. Ingat buhay para sa hanapbuhay!

Magandang hapon, Pilipinas.

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