

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON HARRY ROQUE
October 11, 2021 (12:06 P.M. –12:46 P.M.)

SEC. ROQUE: Magandang tanghali, Pilipinas.

Balitang IATF muna po tayo ha. Kung inyong matatandaan, nag-isyu ang inyong IATF ng isang resolusyon tungkol sa bagong testing at quarantine protocols sa mga galing sa green at yellow list countries.

Kung maalala ninyo, iyong mga bakunado na, ang protocol po ngayon ay facility quarantine and on the fifth day, kukuha ng PCR; kung negatibo ay magho-home quarantine hanggang 10th day. Kung hindi bakunado, facility quarantine hanggang seventh day tapos kukuha ng PCR pagkatapos ay another seven-day home quarantine; walang tanong, ito po kasi ay epektibo October 8.

Anong mangyayari doon sa mga nagka-quarantine na po 'no bago mag-October 8? Mabuting balita po, naglabas po ng bagong resolusyon ang inyong IATF na ginagawang retroactive po ang applicability ng bagong protocols sa mga dumarating galing sa green at yellow lists. So kung kayo po ay pang-anim nang araw sa facility quarantine, magpa-PCR na po kayo kasi kapag negative ay pupuwede na po kayong mag-home quarantine.

Inatasan din po ng inyong IATF sa concerned agencies na tiyakin ang maayos na pagpapatupad ng pagtanggap sa national digital certificate of foreign government na tumatanggap ng VaxCertPH sa ilalim ng reciprocal agreement or WHO-issued ICV. Ito ay kaugnay ng pagkumpirma ng vaccination status ng non-OFWs at dayuhan sa fully vaccinated abroad.

Sa usaping bakuna po ha: Dumating kahapon, Linggo, October 10, ang halos isang milyon or 918,450,000 doses ng Pfizer vaccine. Kasama ang shipment na ito sa 1.8 million total doses na donasyon ng Estados Unidos sa Pilipinas sa pamamagitan ng COVAX Facility. Mamaya naman po ay inaasahang darating ang natitirang doses na nasa halos isang milyon din – 924,300,000. Mayroon din pong dumating na 1.3 million or 1,363,300 doses na Moderna vaccine noong Sabado, October 9 – 885,700 doses naman po ang binili ng gobyerno habang 477,600 ang binili ng pribadong sektor.

Bago nito, dumating po noong Biyernes, October 8, ang mahigit dalawang milyon or 2,132,140 doses ng Moderna vaccine. Sa bilang na ito po ha, 1,384,280 doses ay binili ng pamahalaan habang 747,860 naman pong doses ay binili ng pribadong sektor. May dumating din po na 661,100 doses na AstraZeneca vaccine noong Biyernes, October 8, na binili ng pribadong sektor.

Sa ngayon, steady ang dating ng bakuna kaya naman po wala na pong problema sa ating supply. On-track pa rin po tayo sa target na 100 million doses para sa buwan ng Oktubre kaya paghusayan natin ang pagbabakuna. Habang dumadami po ang bakuna dahil steady ang supply natin, mas makapagbukas po tayo ng ekonomiya. 'Pag nagbukas ng ekonomiya, mas maraming hanapbuhay, iyan lang naman po ang gusto natin para sa ating mga kababayan 'no – ingat-buhay para sa hanapbuhay.

Okay, now dahil steady nga po ang supply ng ating mga bakuna, magsisimula na sa Biyernes, October 15, ang initial rollout para sa may mga comorbidities na may edad dose hanggang disisiyete sa NCR. Simula na po tayo ng ating juvenile vaccination.

Start na rin po ang bakunahan ng general population ha. So lahat na po ay pupuwedeng magpabakuna. Ito ay pagsunod sa kautusan ng Pangulo na nakasaad po sa IATF Resolution # 141.

Samantala, ito naman po ang mabuting balita ha: Halos 50 million na or 49,673,491 doses ang total vaccines administered ayon sa October 10, 2021 National COVID-19 Dashboard. Sa bilang na ito, lampas 23 million or 23,186,969 or 30.06% na po ang fully vaccinated sa buong Pilipinas. Sa Metro Manila po ha, nasa mahigit 16 million or 16,500,247 ang total doses administered. Ang magandang balita po, halos nine million or 8,921,027 ang nakatanggap na ng first degree, ibig sabihin, 91.25% na po ang mayroong first dose. Habang nasa mahigit 7.5 million or 7,579,220 or 77.53% na po ang fully vaccinated sa Metro Manila. Good job!

Tara na po at magpabakuna 'no, ligtas at epektibo lahat ng brand na pumasa sa ating FDA at sa WHO.

Ayon sa Center for Disease and Control o CDC ng Amerika, ito ang mga bakunang kanilang tinatanggap for intended travel sa Estados Unidos simula Nobyembre: Ito po ang Pfizer, Moderna, J&J Janssen at kasama rin iyong mga aprubado ng WHO kagaya ng AstraZeneca, COVISHIELD at siyempre iyong nagagamit natin sa Pilipinas, Sinopharm at Sinovac.

Sa Europa na man po ay ito rin ang mga bakunang kinikilala: Pfizer, AstraZeneca – iba-ibang brand po iyan ng AstraZeneca 'no, iyong Vaxzervria iyong SK Bioscience at saka iyong COVISHIELD – Janssen, iyong Moderna at iyong ginagamit natin, Sinopharm at Sinovac. Mabuting balita po iyan.

Sa COVID-19 update naman po: Nasa 12,159 ang nai-report na mga bagong kaso ayon sa October 10, 2021. Now, bumaba po talaga ang ating R0 'no, nasa .61% na po 'no, ibig sabihin ay we are now within the recommended level of one percent. Ang inaantay na lang po natin ay bumaba iyong ating positivity rate kasi ang positivity rate natin ay nasa 13 pa rin, ang kinakailangan po natin ay mapababa iyan sa five. At ang ating mga kaso ay bumababa po ng 29% bumaba, lowest since August 6 to 12. Okay, so good job again, Philippines.

Patuloy ang pagtaas ng ating recovery rate po, nasa 95.1% na po ito. Ang mga bagong kaso po ngayon ay ... ang bagong kaso po ng COVID ay—well, ang active cases po natin ngayon ay 90,927. Ang nadagdag na kaso po ay—teka po, nawawala po iyong data ng nabanggit na kaso—12,159 ang nai-report na mga bagong kaso ayon sa October 10, 2021 datos ng DOH. Lampas dalawa't kalahating milyon or 2,536,011 ang mga gumaling. Patuloy ang pagtaas ng ating recovery rate, nasa 95.12% na po ito. Patuloy naman po ang ating positivity rate na nasa 15.9%. I will stand corrected 'no, kasi mayroon po isang finding na bumaba po siya ng 13 but I stand corrected, the positivity rate has gone down to 15.9%. Pero malaking bagay po iyan kasi noong kailan lang 'no ay parang 25% po iyan. Pero we still have to aim na pababain po iyan hanggang 5%.

Huwag nating kalimutan po mag-mask, hugas, iwas; maging ligtas sa COVID-19 at huwag pumunta sa 3Cs – closed, crowded, close contact. Samantala, nasa 39,624 ang binawian ng buhay dahil po sa coronavirus – nakikiramay po kami. Nasa 1.49 po ang ating case fatality rate.

Ito naman po ang kalagayan ng ating mga ospital: Mabuting balita po ha, sa Metro Manila ay nasa moderate-risk na po ang ICU beds natin at 69% bagama't sa buong Pilipinas ay nasa 70% pa rin po kaya high-risk ang buong Pilipinas. Pero ang Metro Manila, moderate-risk na po ang ICU beds at wala na pong banta sa lahat ng mga kama natin. Sa isolation beds, 54% na lang po ang nagagamit; sa Metro Manila, 44% na lamang. Sa ward beds, 56% na lang po ang nagagamit; sa Metro Manila, 50% na lang. Ang mga ventilators ay 50% na lang po ang nagagamit sa buong Pilipinas, at 51% lang po sa Metro Manila.

Sa ibang mga bagay, binabati natin si Maria Ressa bilang kauna-unahang Pilipino na nagwagi sa Nobel Peace Prize. At siyempre po, nakikiramay rin po kami sa pagyao ni Commission on Human Rights Chairman Jose Luis Martin "Chito" Gascon. We offer our prayers as tributes pour in to honor the life and service of Chairman Gascon. May he rest in peace.

Dito po nagtatapos ang ating presentasyon. Makakasama po natin ngayon si CHED Chair Prospero "Popoy" Devera. Chair, ang naririnig namin palagi ay ang tinig ni Secretary Liling Briones tungkol sa face-to-face pilot ng ating mga chikiting. Ano naman po ang ating prospects na face-to-face para sa ating mga colleges and university?

CHED CHAIR DE VERA: Thank you, Spox Harry.

Actually, nauna tayong nagsimula. Noong January pa tayo noong pinayagan ni Pangulo ang limited face-to-face sa medicine and allied health sciences. So, eleven-degree programs mula noong January ay nagsimula nang mag-limited face-to-face at 181 ang mga pamantasan na na-inspect jointly by CHED, by DOH, by the local government at pinayagang magbukas ng limited face-to-face.

Iyong 181 schools na iyan, ang total number of degree programs na pinayagan nang mag-limited face-to-face ay 301 as of last of couple of weeks. Kaya ang number of students na pinayagan nang mag-limited face-to-face ay 21,000 students and more than 1,000 faculty members.

So, ang magandang balita ay itong mga nakaraang buwan napakababa ng infection rate, less than 1% para sa mga estudyante at 1.41% lamang sa mga faculty na nagpi-face-to-face ang na-infect ng COVID. Lahat sila ay asymptomatic, walang namatay, walang na-ospital sa kanila. So, ang ibig sabihin, iyong guidelines na inisyu ng CHED at DOH ay mahigpit at protektado ang kalagayan ng ating mga estudyante at faculty members.

Kaya't nagpapasalamat ang Komisyon dahil pinayagan na ni Pangulong Duterte na i-expand iyong limited face-to-face mula doon sa original na medicine at allied health sciences, pinayagan na sa engineering and technology courses; sa hospitality, hotel and restaurant management; tourism, travel management; and marine engineering; at marine transportation.

Itong next batch, Spox Harry ang pinakamalaki kasi maraming eskuwelahan ang mayroong engineering and technology courses. So, ang tantiya namin diyan lampas 20-degree programs ang papayagang mag-limited face-to-face. Na-issue ko na iyong guidelines para sa mga eskuwelahan. Sila ngayon ay nagsisimula nang mag-apply para ma-inspect at matingnan at mapayagang magbukas, kaya all systems go na as far as higher education is concerned dito sa mga limited face-to-face. So, all in all, more than 30-degree programs are now allowed to do limited face-to-face all over the country.

Ang isa pang magandang balita na aming nalaman doon sa aming pag-monitor sa ground level ay marami sa ating mga universities ang mataas ang vaccination rate. Dahil doon sa unang batch ng mga pinayagang mag-face-to-face, pumayag ang Department of Health na i-classify ang mga estudyante at mga guro doon sa limited face-to-face for medicine and allied health sciences bilang frontline workers kaya sila ay na-classify as A1.

At ang IATF naman noong Abril ay pumayag na itaas ang classification ng education frontliners from B1 to A4. So, iyong mga pamantasan na maganda ang kanilang pakikipag-ugnayan sa kanilang local governments ay mataas ang kanilang vaccination rate. Halimbawa, ang Mariano Marcos State University sa Ilocos Norte, dahil mayroon silang medical and allied health programs, mayroon pa silang malakas na koneksiyon sa ospital, 91% ng kanilang faculty; 97% ng mga estudyanteng nagpi-face-to-face ay bakunado na. Kaya't mayroon tayong naidagdag na another layer of protection para sa ating mga estudyante.

Itong mga nakaraang linggo, nagsimula nang mag-report ang mga pamantasan sa kanilang vaccination program dahil nga paparating na ang mas maraming bakuna kaya sila ay tututukan natin. Ang napansin natin, iyong mga lugar na medyo malayo sa Metro Manila at medyo kapos ang mga vaccines, medyo mababa pa ang percentage ng nabakunahan na mga empleyado at mga estudyante 'no.

Halimbawa, sa Aklan State University, 79% ang hindi pa nabakunahan; sa Palawan State University, 66% ng mga estudyante; University of Eastern Philippines sa Samar ay between 50-72% ang vaccination nila across campuses; at sa Davao de Oro State College ay 26% pa lang ang mga nabakunahan.

So, medyo mababa kasi siguro kulang pa ang supplies sa mga lugar na iyan pero dahil alam na natin kung ano ang vaccination rate nila at inutusan natin ang mga pamantasan na makipag-ugnayan sa kanilang mga local governments, pagdating ng mas maraming bakuna ay tataas na ang vaccination [rate] sa mga lugar na iyan.

Dito sa Metro Manila, ang ilang eskuwelahan tulad ng PhilSCA sa Pasay, 82% ng mga faculty members ang vaccinated na at 78% ang administrative staff. So, sila po ay masipag na tinututukan ang vaccination. Kahit na sa Zamboanga, sa mga pamantasan doon, 66% ng kanilang education faculty and employees are already vaccinated 'no. Sa probinsiya ni Speaker Velasco, sa [unclear], 64% ng mga faculty at employees ng [unclear] ay bakunado na.

So, natututukan natin. Per school ang pagtutok natin ngayon sa mga higher education institutions. At sa report ko on October 6, as far as higher education personnel is concerned – ito ay report galing sa 1,488 universities and colleges in the country – as far as higher education personnel is concerned, 73% of higher education personnel ay vaccinated na. So, malapit na tayo doon sa percentage na kailangan para maging ligtas talaga sila.

So, sa Miyerkules, palagay ko kasama yata kita dito, Spox Harry, ang ginagawa ng CHED ngayon ay gumawa na ng vaccination caravan sa iba't-ibang lugar ng Pilipinas. Sa October 13, Wednesday, kami ay pupunta sa Mabalacat City College at Our Lady of Fatima University sa San

Fernando, Pampanga para magbakuna ng mga estudyante nila. About 1,500 students will be vaccinated during that day. At sa susunod na araw, October 14, ako ay pupunta sa University of Southeastern Philippines sa Davao para obserbahan iyong pagbabakuna ng 100 higher education personnel at 100 students. At sa susunod na linggo, sana masamahan mo din kami dito, Spox Harry, magbabakuna naman tayo ng mga 300 student-athletes sa UP College of Human Kinetics. Ito ay mga student-athlete sa NCAA at UAAP sa iba't-ibang lugar sa Manila - gagawa tayo.

This is to highlight the urgency of vaccination and encourage all education personnel, faculty, administrators and students to immediately get vaccinated dahil marami ng bakunang papadating at nag-utos na ang Pangulong Duterte na simula October 15 talagang puspusan na ang ating pagbabakuna ng ating mga mamamayan.

Iyan ang aking report, Sec. Harry, as far as the limited face-to-face at saka iyong vaccination program sa higher education sector.

Thank you.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you, Chair de Vera. Isang tanong ko lang po 'no. Dahil ang mga college students ngayon dahil may K to 12 karamihan po iyan 18 years old na 'no at dahil sa Metro Manila po halos 80% na ang ating nabakunahan, mayroon ba kayong fearless prediction kung kailan aasahan na magpi-face-to-face? Although this is non-binding, estimate lang po dahil siyempre it is dependent on the decision of the President 'no. Estimate lang.

CHED CHAIR DE VERA: Spox Harry, doon sa naunang sector, iyong medical and allied health sciences, noong tumaas ang infection rate sa Metro Manila, humingi ang mga pamantasan ng awtorisasyon na payagan pa rin silang mag-limited face-to-face kahit na sila ay nasa restricted area at pinayagan naman ng Pangulo ito. Ito'y dahil sa implementasyon napansin natin na very careful ang mga eskuwelahan, very safe ang mga estudyante at hindi sila nai-infect kaya pinayagan ng Pangulo na kahit na ECQ or MECQ basta nasa medicine and allied health sciences, humingi lang sila ng pahintulot sa CHed at IATF at papayagan na sila.

So 'yung ating mga limited face-to-face sa Metro Manila sa medicine and allied health sciences, tuluy-tuloy na ang kanilang face-to-face dahil mataas ang kanilang vaccination rate noong mga eskuwelahan.

So ang basis natin kung papayagan sila ay kung iyong protocols ay nasusunod, kung iyong guidelines ang nasusunod at kung iyong vaccination level ay mataas na; so iyan 'yung sa Metro Manila situation natin.

Titingnan natin doon sa next batch na mga degree programs kung ligtas pa rin ang mga estudyante at mga guro at baka papayagan din sila kahit na medyo restricted area pa 'yung kanilang mga lugar.

SEC. ROQUE: So malapit-lapit na po, Chair De Vera.

CHED CHAIR DE VERA: Oo. Ang susunod naming pinag-aaralan na, Spox Harry, ay in addition to limited face-to-face by degree program, pinag-aaralan na namin kung puwedeng payagan ang

mga eskuwelahan na mag-limited face-to-face in all degree programs in areas that have very low COVID prevalence and also very high vaccination rate.

So tinitingnan na namin kasi may mga lugar sa Pilipinas kagaya nga doon sa Mariano Marcos State University sa Ilocos Norte ay napakataas ang kanilang vaccination rate.

Kung papayag ang local government, kung mataas na ang vaccination rate doon sa area, mababa naman ang classification nila as far as COVID is concerned, baka papayagan na natin pagdating sa mga susunod na buwan ang mga eskuwelahan na magli-limited face-to-face in all their degree programs as long as they abide by the guidelines and they are inspected. So magiging dalawa 'yung ating limited face-to-face – by degree program and possibly by geographic area. Iyon ang ating pinag-aaralan ngayon.

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Salamat, Chair. So mga college students, buwan na lang po ang bibilangin.

Punta na tayo sa ating open forum. Usec. Rocky, go ahead please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Good afternoon, Secretary Roque at sa atin pong bisita.

Ang una pong tanong mula kay Kris Jose ng Remate/Remate Online: Sinabi po ng OCTA Research Group na posible nang isailalim sa low-risk classification ng COVID-19 ang buong Metro Manila sa katapusan daw pong buwan dahil sa patuloy na pagbaba ng kaso ng COVID-19. Kayo daw po sa IATF, nakikita ninyo rin po ba ang ganitong posibilidad o maaring pagluwag sa quarantine classification sa Metro Manila? Similar question po 'yan with Cresilyn Catarong ng SMNI.

SEC. ROQUE: Alam ninyo po, datos ang nagsasabi kung bababa ang quarantine classification. Ang mabuting balita po ay pagdating po sa ICU capacity eh for the first time po in many, many months ang Metro Manila po ay nasa moderate risk and that is also a factor to consider in lowering quarantine classification. Pero mayroon pa rin po tayong tinitingnan, ito po ang two-week—ang growth in cases na iyong two-week at saka 'yung daily at makikita po natin na sa NCR negative din po ito, okay.

And 'tong tinitingnan ko pong datos ay hindi ko lang alam kung anong date pero ang nakikita ko pong datos sa NCR—October 10 datos po is -13% at -46% ang previous 3 to 4 versus 5 to 6 weeks at saka recent 1 to 2 versus previous 3 to 4 weeks. So mukhang pareho po on the basis of two-week growth rate, average daily attack rate at health care utilization rate and mayroon pong datos na nagpapakita that we can lower the quarantine classification.

Pero kasi nga po, ang eksperimento natin dito sa Metro Manila is a pilot, kinakailangan pag-aralan muna ang resulta ng pilot. Pero kung ang gagamitin ninyo ay 'yung GCQ, MGCQ ganiyan... eh tayo naman po ay on GCQ with alert level system.

So I would say po that the data supports a reduction of the alert level but that's ultimately the decision of the IATF. Abangan na lang po natin, magpupulong naman po 'yan on Thursday.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Sunod po niyang tanong: Batid naman ng publiko na hindi po tatakbo sa pagkapangulo si Mayor Sara Duterte na naging basehan ninyo ng inyong pagtakbo sa pagkasenador. Hindi ba sumama ang loob ninyo sa kaniya dahil sa kaniyang naging desisyon? Mananatili pa rin ba kayong tagapagsalita ng Pangulo? Mensahe po kay Mayor Sara na nagpositibo po sa COVID-19.

SEC. ROQUE: Well, gaya ng aking sinabi noong ating last press briefing, narito pa rin po tayo as spox so we are still spokesperson 'no. Ako po, hindi sumama ang loob ko. Bakit po? Sinabi talaga sa akin ni Mayor Sara noong ako'y nakipag-usap sa kaniya na mayor ang kaniyang takbo. That was when my heart was broken dahil I wanted her to run for president pero siyempre umaasa tayo na baka magbago ang isip pero hindi na nagbago.

So sa akin po alam ko na po ang desisyon, I was still praying and hoping na magbabago pero wala pong dahilan para sumakit ang aking loob.

Ang aming huling pag-uusap po ni Mayor Sara was last Friday at ang sabi ko na lang in due course kailangan po nating pag-usapan kung anong gagawin sa mga supporters ni Mayor Sara na siyempre po umasa na siya'y tatakbo. Pero wala pong samaan ng loob 'no, talagang desisyon naman po 'yan ng kandidato 'no.

Now... so 'yun po 'no. Ang mensahe po natin kay Mayor Sara at saka sa kaniyang pamilya – please keep safe and get well soon.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Mula naman po kay Kyle Atienza ng Business World: Has the President already signed the proposed LPG regulation law?

SEC. ROQUE: Wala pa po. Wala pa pong dumarating sa Palasyo.

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

SEC. ROQUE: Okay. Punta na tayo kay Trish Terada, please.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Hi. Good afternoon, Spox Harry. Sir, narinig ko po kanina binati ninyo po si Ms. Maria Ressa for her win in the Nobel Peace Prize 'no. But, sir, can we have a bit of an elaboration because usually Malacañang would release statement congratulating Filipinos who achieved something, whether in the country or abroad? But, what can you say about the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Ms. Ressa? What does that mean for the government?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, it's a victory for a Filipina and we're very happy for that kasi wala naman pong utak talangka dito sa Malacañang. But of course, it is true that there are individuals who feel that Maria Ressa still has to clear her name before our courts as in fact she's convicted felon for libel, cyber libel in the Philippines and she faces other cases in the Philippines 'no – that's for the courts to decide.

Now of course we are also mindful of a very articulate article written by National Artist F. Sionil Jose and perhaps we should quote F. Sionil Jose because it does not help if this comes from Malacañang. So this comes from a National Artist, *"I have criticized Duterte but not on press freedom. The Philippine press is alive and well not because of Maria Ressa. No writer is in jail. There is no censorship. Duterte hasn't closed a single newspaper or radio station. The closure of ABS-CBN was made by Congress which did not renew the ABS-CBN franchise. Sure, he has influenced Congress but the real issue against ABS-CBN, as I have pointed out, is not press freedom but money, politics, power and its abuse by the Lopezes who own the TV network. Sure, journalists have been killed in the Duterte regime but just as it were in the past administrations; but those killings cannot be laid at Duterte's door. Usually, they are made by minor politicians or*

officials attacked by journalists. The real test for journalists was made during the Marcos dictatorship when he imposed censorship, closed all media and jailed journalists.”

Let's say Malacañang agrees with our national artist.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: But, sir, what about the sentiments because right now in this modern times oppression or 'yun 'yung pag—'yung attack sa journalists doesn't just come in the form of, you know, killing or you know complete censorship but in a way the actions? Some would say would create—have created a chilling effect among other journalists, among media institutions and may mga nagsasabi po na itong pagkapanalo ni Ms. Ressa highlight the importance of press freedom and freedom of expression in a way shows na 'yung efforts—there are really efforts to silence the media and truth during this administration. Do you agree also to sentiments na this could be a slap to Malacañang's face? It isn't something that the government can be proud of?

SEC. ROQUE: Certainly not. It is not a slap on the government; it was made by private individuals in Norway. We respect their decision but as I said, criminal liability of Maria Ressa remains pending in our courts and we leave it to our courts to decide on her fate. There is no slap there because as everyone knows, no one has ever been censored in the Philippines. You cannot blame Congress for not renewing the franchise of ABS-CBN because that is one of their powers. That is not an order emanating from the Executive nor is it a matter within the jurisdiction of the Executive.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Sir, direct censorship [garbled] censorship but what about iyong sentiments, sir, that the actions that the government took could have created chilling effect on other media institutions on journalists?

SEC. ROQUE: A journalist who claims a chilling effect should not be a journalist.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Sir, just on another topic. Iyong doon po kanina, follow up sir doon sa OCTA Research. Is the IATF now preparing for an Alert Level 3 scenario?

SEC. ROQUE: I do not know kasi I do not want to be accused of prejudging and pre-empting the IATF. All that I said is that the data supports a lowering of the alert level especially the ICU utilization rate and the overall health care utilization rate of Metro Manila.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: Sir, one last 'no. May Talk to the People po ba mamaya?

SEC. ROQUE: Mayroon po, from Davao City.

TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILIPPINES: All right. Thank you very much, Spox Harry.

SEC. ROQUE: Thank you very much, Trish. Usec. Rocky, please.

USEC. IGNACIO: Yes. Secretary, may follow up lang po si Leila Salaverria ng Inquirer: What does he think of the Nobel Prize Committee recognizing her from using freedom of expression to expose abuse of power, use of violence and growing authoritarianism in the Philippines? [garbled] also said Rappler has focused critical attention on the anti-drug campaign which is described as murderous and further said the number of deaths is so high that the campaign resembles a war waged against the country's own population. How does it view this observation?

SEC. ROQUE: Already answered and let me state also that all surveys indicate that the people overwhelmingly support President's war on drugs. So I guess Rappler has to do more writings.

USEC. IGNACIO: Ang second pa rin po niya: The Nobel Prize Committee also said free independent and fact-based journalism serves to protect against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda. How can the government ensure this will thrive when media outlets in the country had been shut down and threatened?

SEC. ROQUE: Excuse me, wala po tayong pinasara. Kinakailangan po ng prangkisa ng ABS-CBN na hindi nila nakuha. Name an outlet, a media outlet that the President has ordered closed, then I answer your question. Pero as of now po, press freedom is alive and the proof is even the Nobel Prize award given to Maria Ressa.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Cresilyn Catarong ng SMNI: May ginawa na bang paghahanda ang pamahalaan para sa darating na Undas? May ilalabas bang possible guidelines para sa Undas sa gitna pa rin po ng nararanasang pandemya?

SEC. ROQUE: Wala pa pong balita from IATF. Pero siguro, I will propose already on Thursday, kasi kinakailangan naman may advance notice ang mga taumbayan.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. From Maricel Halili ng TV5: What's the directive of the President about the Filipino nurse in the United States who died after being assaulted by a mentally disturbed homeless man in New York City? What will the government do?

SEC. ROQUE: All victims of violations of the right to life are entitled to a speedy domestic remedy 'no. So, we appeal of course to the US administration to investigate and prosecute the killer of this Filipino nurse. Assaulted pala, yeah, died, so we call upon the US government to do what is incumbent upon any state where there is a killing.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Maricel Halili ng TV 5: The substitution is until November 15, what are the chances that Mayor Sara will still run for President?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, ayaw ko pong pangunahan si Mayor Sara and she has a spokesperson. So please ask Mayor [Cristina] Garcia Frasco.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Jam Punzalan ng ABS-CBN Online: Senator Binay has hit Comelec for the alleged preferential statement given to President Duterte and his party during last week's filing of COC. Do you disagree, the President and his allies got VIP treatment? How would you like to address Senator Binay's criticism that if Comelec can't be fair and partial towards the administration's bets, then what will the 2022 elections be like?

SEC. ROQUE: I leave that for Mr. Jimenez to comment on. That is something for Comelec to comment.

USEC. IGNACIO: Second question po ni Jam Punzalan: Did the President have any recent contact with COVID stricken Mayor Sara? Is everything okay with the President's health? Similar question with Maricel Halili of TV5.

SEC. ROQUE: I can only surmise that there was no contact because, otherwise, Mayor Sara would probably a candidate by now. Secondly, tuloy po ang Talk to the People and I will be flying

to Davao right after my press briefing, together with the selected members of the IATF. So hindi naman po kami papupuntahin doon kung mayroon pong close contact si Presidente.

USEC. IGNACIO: Any update daw po sa bill seeking to postpone the BARMM elections?

SEC. ROQUE: Well, all I know is that both houses have passed ito. So there is no impediment for it to become law. It becomes law if the President does not sign it within certain number of days. So sa akin po, wala na pong gusot iyan. I think the elections will really be postponed. And the members of the BARMM will be appointed by the President.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Joseph Morong ng GMA News: The Philippine College of Physicians' former [president and former health secretary] and 300 doctors have signed a statement calling on the President to order relevant government officials to appear before the Senate inquiry into alleged anomalies in the spending of DOH funds. Will President retract his ban?

SEC. ROQUE: No po. Siguro iyong statement was drafted way before the 12 hearings were conducted. Siguro po natagalan iyan pirmahan, pero hindi po even pinagbawalan ni Presidente noong mga unang panahon na umapir (appear) ang kaniyang mga kalihim. In fact, they appeared before 12 hearings of the Senate and the House and he only said itigil na iyan, after 12. Kasi wala namang bago pong tinatanong at walang bagong sagot.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. Second question po ni Joseph Morong: They also hope that the Senate will submit the document/evidence and file cases before the DOH and the Ombudsman. Will the President support this?

SEC. ROQUE: You know, that came from the President, kung talagang what they want to do is oversight function and prosecution for crimes committed, leave it to the DOJ and the Ombudsman. So it is not just something that the President supports, it's something that the President proposed: Leave it to the DOJ and the Ombudsman

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo. They also want an independent body put up to gather evidence regarding the alleged anomalies. Will the President support this?

SEC. ROQUE: Proposal na nga po ni Presidente iyan. Ang mga fiscal po, when they conduct preliminary investigation, act independently, because that is quasi-judicial. And the Ombudsman on the other hand is an independent constitutional body.

USEC. IGNACIO: Opo, follow up lang po ni Joseph Morong: Meaning future hearings, will the President allow Cabinet secretaries to attend?

SEC. ROQUE: Hindi na po siguro, dahil na-isyu na iyong memorandum sa mga kalihim.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Ivan Mayrina ng GMA News: Secretary Joey Concepcion says that even at 30% capacity, some business may not be able to pay the 13th month pay and it's calling for more easing of restriction to alert level 3 or even alert level 2. Given the current numbers and still with 5 days left to October 15, does the government think we are ready to further ease restrictions? Are we on our way to actually heading for a Merry Christmas?

SEC. ROQUE: Again, without second guessing the IATF, I agree with Secretary Concepcion, the data do indicate that we are ready for a lower alert level. Kinakailangan po ito para mas marami

sa atin ang makapaghanapbuhay. Alam naman ninyo, paulit-ulit kong sinasabi, wala pong tamad na Pilipino. Kinakailangan lang hayaang magtrabaho at maghanapbuhay.

USEC. IGNACIO: From Llanesca Panti of GMA News online, pareho na rin po sila ng tanong ni Joseph Morong. From Ace Romero: What are the chances daw po of Metro Manila being downgraded from alert level 4 to alert level 3 beginning October 15.

SEC. ROQUE: I would say, it's a high chance of a lowering of alert level.

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

SEC. ROQUE: Maraming salamat po.

Bago po tayo magtapos ay binabati ko pala si Congressman Charlie Cojuangco at si dating Deputy Spokesperson China Jocson sa kanilang pag-iisang palad. I wish them a lifelong of bliss and happiness in their marriage.

So maraming salamat, Chair De Vera. Maraming salamat, Usec. Rocky. Maraming salamat sa lahat ng ating mga kasama sa Malacañang Press Corps.

Sa ngalan po ng inyong Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte, ito po ang inyong Spox Harry Roque na nagsasabi: Tuluy-tuloy po ang bakuna, dahil sigurado ang better Christmas para sa lahat. Magandang hapon po, Pilipinas.

##

--

News and Information Bureau-Data Processing Center