

## **Presidential Communications Operations Office**

### **Presidential News Desk**

# **TALK TO THE PEOPLE OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**

[07 March 2022]

**PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE:** So we begin with --- can you give your report joint presentation of the economic development center? I'll give this to --- first to Secretary Dominguez then to Secretary Chua. Sonny, you have the floor.

**DOF SECRETARY CARLOS "SONNY" DOMINGUEZ III:** President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, distinguished members of the Cabinet, good evening.

I would like to start by saying that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine does not involve us directly. However --- ah because neither Russia nor Ukraine is a major trading partner of ours.

Instead, the Philippine economy will likely be collateral damage. It is as if we are hit by a ricocheting bullet. These indirect shocks are likely to be felt through four major channels. *[Is there a slide?]* Yeah, four major channels.

The commodity market, the financial market, investments, and the impact on our fiscal health. First, oil and food prices are expected to go up as Russia is the largest exporter of natural gas and wheat (trigo); while Ukraine is the fourth largest exporter of corn. As the conflict continues, Ukraine and Russia's main trading partners, predominantly the European Union, will look to trade with other countries such as US and China, where we are buying both wheat and corn, thereby pushing up the prices of commodities in these markets as well.

Second, the conflict will also likely cause a surge in interest rates or cost of borrowing which was already expected to go up even prior to the crisis because of the US Fed's tightening of monetary policies. The conflict will increase the perception of risk in investments.

Third, investments are likely to decline or at least be on hold in the face of uncertainty, which may cause investors from the West to be more conservative or postpone their planned investments. Once sanctions are imposed, it will take a long time for investor and consumer confidence to return to normal.

Lastly, all the aforesaid economic impacts will likely require government support to protect our vulnerable citizens and the critical sectors most affected by the crisis and this will stretch our budget even further.

However, I would like to emphasize that we do not expect this crisis to last very long. However, there may be some lingering effects we have had --- we have seen similar crises in the past such as the Gulf War in 1990, the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the oil price shock of 2008, and also the first Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2014, and we have weathered all of these crises very well.

We have experienced crises whose effects were more severe and direct to the economy such as the Asian financial crisis in 1997 and the global financial crisis in 2008. These crises lasted much longer and yet we were able to get through them. Based on these experiences, we are confident that we have the tools and the preparation necessary to help our people through this crisis.

The following presentation of Secretary Chua will outline the economic development cluster's recommendations to address these potential shocks. This crisis may increase prices across several sectors and thereby cause our inflation rate to breach our target. But with the measures that we discussed at the economic development cluster and which will Secretary Chua will present, we are confident that we will be able to keep the inflation within our target range of 2 to 4 percent and maintain our growth path of 7 to 9 percent this year.

So can I ask Karl to go through the details? Thank you.

**NEDA DIRECTOR GENERAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC PLANNING  
SECRETARY KARL KENDRICK CHUA:** Okay, thank you very much, Secretary Dominguez. Good evening, Mr. President, and members of the Cabinet.

The economic development cluster of Cabinet met this afternoon and we are proposing 14 measures to alleviate the impact of the crisis on the people. So let me go through each of the 14 items.

The first is on the overall economy is to shift to Alert Level 1 at the soonest possible time for the entire country and open all the schools for face-to-face learning to increase our domestic economy and offset the external risks. So while we cannot prevent the risk from coming from the global perspective, we can strengthen our domestic economy to provide the people with more jobs and opportunities.

The second one on gasoline and diesel, as you know the price of gasoline and diesel has went up so much 'no. So we are proposing the following interventions: the first is to increase fuel subsidy program for public utility vehicles from the already announced 2.5 billion to 5 billion. So we will double the subsidy and the first tranche will be given in March and the second tranche in April. Number two is to continue working with the private firms on promotional discount of oil companies up to 1 to 4 pesos per liter discount. So this will help alleviate additional for the jeepneys and the other PUVs. Number three is to increase our buffer stock of petroleum from the current 30 to 45 days. This will require a law that we can work with Congress. The fourth is to provide additional fuel vouchers for agricultural producers and we will increase the budget from 500 million to 1.1 billion. The first tranche we will give in March, the second tranche in April. And by that time, we will have additional revenues to fund these subsidies.

Going further, number five is to promote energy conservation everywhere in the private sector or in government offices. Number six is to suspend or remove the pass-through fees that are being charged by LGUs, industrial parks, or subdivisions for deliveries, for truckings, and so on. Number seven is to fully implement the service contracting, the subsidy that we give to, for instance, buses to operate, and to expand it to all public transport routes. Number eight is to promote e-vehicles and expand access to charging stations. And number nine is to aggressively promote active transport including bicycles.

Now, many people are using LPG or liquefied petroleum gas. What we propose is to increase our buffer stock from the current 7 to 15 days. So when we expand the buffer stock, we can ensure more adequate supply and meet demand in case there is a global shortage and this will require a new law.

The next one is on coal. We use coal to power I think half of our power generation. And we propose to expand supply and reduce price as a result by reducing the most favored nation or MFN tariff rate which is currently 7 percent to zero temporarily until December 2022. So the effect people will

feel is pass through of lower power charges. And to maintain our buffer stock at the current 30 days minimum because we have sufficient inventory.

Let me now go to the fifth recommendation for electricity. We propose, as gasoline and diesel alike, to promote energy conservation, including the use of sensor technology for energy savings. So once we are, for instance, overlighted, we can cut down the use of light. The next is to stagger the increase in generation charge. And I understand the power companies have agreed to this in the report of Secretary Cusi. And then number three and four is to allow foreign ownership in micro-grid, solar, wind, and tidal energy. This will require revision of the IRR. This will allow more players to come in and to offset our need for more coal which is already three or four times more expensive.

And now let me go to the food side. Number six is our support to the overall agriculture sector because one of the transmissions apart from energy, Mr. President, is the food. So we will implement vigorously the Plant, Plant, Plant program part 2, subject to the availability of funds and provide targeted fertilizer vouchers to farmers, and to discuss with our bilateral partners on possible additional supply of fertilizers, which is needed for production in agriculture.

Let me now go to number seven which is rice. The Department of Agriculture has agreed to closely monitor rice inflation and the National Food Authority to closely monitor the buffer stock. We will also help the local government units increase their buffer stock so as to ensure we have adequate supply in each province. And the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) and the Development Bank of the Philippines will provide concessional loans or funding for working capital particularly in the procurement of post-harvest facilities and warehouses.

We will also accelerate the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund implementation and other parts of the national rice program in the budget so that we increase local production.

Now, should the local production not be enough, we will temporarily import to keep prices low and make sure we have adequate rice for all Filipinos. So we propose to facilitate the continuous release of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary import clearances especially for the shipment that will arrive in the lean season of July kasi `yung gitna ng April and August is nag --- October rather is the lean season. While waiting for the harvest, we may

need more import and we propose to expand supply and reduce price by extending the 35 percent tariff rate until December 2022.

Mr. President, you have issued an executive order for this but it will expire in June. So that we maintain a good supply of rice and keep the prices low, we propose it sa extension.

Let me now go to number eight on corn. Corn is important as feed for poultry, for livestock, so we propose to expand supply and reduce the price by lowering the most favored nation tariff rate to five percent in quota and 15 percent out quota and allow a minimum access volume where they can avail of the lower tariff rate of 4 million metric ton until the end of the year. So this is temporary to ensure that we have adequate feed so that we can buy chicken and pork in a cheaper price. And we will import more feed wheat and produce more cassava because these are substitutes for feeds, for chicken and for pigs, for instance.

Number nine on pork, we still have the African Swine Fever but we are slowly recovering. We propose that to ensure a lower price of pork and adequate supply, we extend the lower tariff rate of 15 percent in quota and 25 percent out quota with a MAV or Minimum Access Volume of [200,000] metric ton until December 2022.

Presently, Mr. President, may EO tayo until May but we deem it is necessary to extend this to ensure lower price for the people and adequate supply. We also propose to accelerate the release of imported pork from the cold storage so marami pong na-import na pork, but we have to release it for the people's consumption, especially outside NCR.

We propose also to pass the livestock and daily bill now pending in the Senate kasi ito `yung tutulong talaga sa hog raisers and to increase our daily production. And finally, to remove all the non-tariff barriers that prevent the smooth or proper importation of pork.

Number 10 is on fish. We have a big shortage of fish so we propose the issuance of a CNI or a Certificate for the Necessity to Import small pelagic

fish from the ocean tulad ng galunggong from the second quarter to the fourth quarter.

Our estimate is we need it to fill an additional 140,000 metric ton because we have a supply gap of 200,000 metric ton. So `yung na-release na import allocation is 60,000 so we need to increase this. So the end result is adequate supply so that the people can have lower price for fish and also to remove all other non-tariff barriers.

Let me now go to number 11 on chicken. We propose we --- bilisan natin, accelerate the release of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary clearances from the National Meat Inspection Service cold storage warehouses so that we can increase `yung inventory and supply kasi hindi pa tayo umaabot sa pre-COVID-19 pandemic level. So mayroon pa tayong shortage sa chicken and the people who eat chicken, for instance chicken joy, nafe-feel nila `tong crunch in the higher price.

Number 12 po sa sugar, we have to address a court temporary restraining order that prevent us from pursuing `yung sugar import natin. And the Economic team has proposed that we allow direct importation by the industrial users, `yung mga food manufacturers, beverage manufacturer on a 1:1 ratio. So they will buy 50 percent from the domestic to help our farmers pero kulang po `yan so we have to import the extra that is needed so that we can help our food producers also.

Number 13 on wheat `no --- this is needed for bread production, for pasta, spaghetti --- is to expand our sources of wheat and India is offering to provide, for instance, an additional supply of wheat. We have a project, `yung Pinoy Tasty Project so that we promote and buy local bread na masarap naman, and we promote non-wheat flour substitute such as `yung Sagip-nutri flour na gawa sa cassava, sweet potato, monggo, and banana flour. All of these are meant to ensure that we have adequate bread at affordable prices.

And finally, Mr. President, since itong renewable energy and agriculture napakahalaga sa atin, we propose that we include it in the Strategic Investment Priority Plan under the Board of Investment para mabigyan nang

sapat na attention, may investors na pumasok para i-increase `yung supply ng ating pagkain at `yung energy.

So, Mr. President, this is the recommendation of the economic development cluster to alleviate the impact of the Russia-Ukraine crisis on the people, notably `yung pagtaas ng presyo ng pagkain, kuryente, gasolina, at diesel. Iyan lang po, maraming salamat.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Karl, given the time that we are here for the time being, I'd like to know if we could come up immediately with the enabling law sa recommendations mo?

**SEC. CHUA:** Mr. President, in terms of the subsidies `no, we have it already in the budget so we will implement it immediately.

In terms of the tariff reduction po, since Congress is not in session, we will submit request for the issuance of an executive order. And there are dalawa lang po na kailangan ng batas, we will prepare it immediately so that Congress can consider it immediately when they return in May for a session. We will work hard on this, thank you.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** We have a long haul sa walang trabaho, days that Congress is not functioning. I wonder if we can have that --- the laws that you would want to be enacted to support your recommendations.

Iyon lang ang ano ko doon given the time that we are --- that we stay here, that we can act on it on our own, baka lalagpas na `yan sa kabila. And I just hope that they would, you know, read your study very carefully.

**SEC. CHUA:** Mr. President, if the situation escalates, we could recommend a special session if mag-escalate po.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Mas mabuti pa siguro kaya pag-isipan na lang natin `yan. Bingbong siguro will... Tingnan mo daw, Bong, para mapasa --- para... Alam mo, so there's gonna be an election, at after, there will be euphoria.

Then nobody's really focusing on anything except 'yung pagpalit ng tao, kung ano, reorganization dito, changing of the guards. So that would eat a lot of time.

And itong recommendations ng NEDA is really vital to the --- to keep the economy humming for --- for a few months. More so that there is, I think, maski na mahinto ito the fractured economy is already in Europe would affect us more or less by next year, nandiyan na 'yan, hindi nga eh, towards the end of the... So...

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY SALVADOR MEDIALDEA:** We will just coordinate with Karl.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Prangka-prangkahan na lang natin 'yung Congress. This is intended really for the welfare of the people. If you have the time, sit with us and we can discuss it.

Otherwise, you're on your own. Kung hindi niyo --- ibalewala ninyo itong pinag-aralan na ng --- ng outgoing administration.

So salamat. Is that all?

**SEC. CHUA:** That would be all, Mr. President.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Salamat.

**SEC. CHUA:** If you approve, Mr. President, we can --- we can...

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Secretary Cusi? Ah Chua? Cusi, yeah.

**DOE SECRETARY ALFONSO CUSI:** Nasama na, Mayor, 'yung report namin sa economic cluster.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Ah, sabay-sabay na 'yun?

**SEC. CUSI:** Sabay-sabay na po pati agriculture and transportation.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Then we have the critical contribution of Secretary Duque.

**DOH SECRETARY FRANCISCO DUQUE III:** Good evening, Mr. President; and ES Medialdea; Senator Bong Go; and fellow members of the Cabinet; at



higit po sa lahat ang atin pong mga minamahal na kababayan, magandang gabi po.

At muli ako po ay mag-uulat ukol sa pinakabagong updates sa atin pong COVID response. At `yan po ang first slide natin para sa atin pong usual COVID updates. Gaya ng aming naiulat, tayo po ay magbibigay ng --- mula ngayong araw ng weekly updates na lamang po, Mr. President, hindi na po daily reporting of case counts.

At para po sa linggo ng Marso --- ng March 1 to 7 ngayong taon, may naidagdag na 6,207 na bagong kaso o katumbas po nito ay 899 daily average cases at mas mababa po ito ng 31 percent kumpara sa naitalang kaso para sa February 22 to 28 na 9,148 cases at mayroon pong 1,306 ang daily average cases. At sa 6,297 na karagdagang kaso sa linggong ito, `yun pong 1,479 ay mula sa NCR; 836 sa Region IV-A; at 775 sa Region VI.

Tatlo naman po ang naidagdag na severe and critical cases sa talaan, habang 615 ang bilang ng mga karagdagang verified deaths para sa linggong ito. Ang current cumulative case fatality rate ay nasa 1.56 percent, mababa po kumpara sa global fatality rate na 2.04 percent. Ang atin pong recoveries ay umabot naman sa 9,954 para sa linggong ito at sa kabuuan, 98.7 percent ang cumulative recovery rate ng bansa.

Patuloy po na bumababa ang ating national utilization rates na nasa 18 percent para sa non-ICU bed utilization rate at 26 percent naman para sa ICU beds. Out of the 6,572 total admissions at the national level, 16.1 percent lamang ng mga ito ay severe at critical admissions.

At panghuli, ang atin pong national 7-day moving average positivity rate ay bumaba at ito po'y kasalukuyang 4.2 percent nitong February 28 to March 6. Habang ang atin pong daily RT-PCR testing output ay kasalukuyang nasa 24,219 tests kada araw.

Lahat po itong mga metrics na ito ay patuloy na bumababa, Mr. President. And *[next slide]* ito lamang po ang ating national epi curve na kung saan muli magpapakita ng pagbaba ng atin pong mga kaso. Kung saan gaya ng naunang nabanggit, mayroon po tayong 900 more or less average daily cases ayon sa onset ng symptoms ang ating naitala noong March 1 to 7, at mas mababa po ito ng mga 30 porsiyento sa ating average 1,306 cases noon pong February 22 to 28.

Sa NCR naman, mayroong 211 average daily cases ayon sa onset ng symptoms at mas mababa po ng 26 na porsiyento kumpara sa ating average

nung 286 noong February 22 to 28. Ang mababang trend ng mga kaso ay makikita rin po sa the rest of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Itong next slide, maganda po ito, maipakita kung ano po ang ating estado kumpara naman sa mga ibang bansa ng Southeast Asia. *[Next slide.]* Ito, Mr. President, makikita rito 'yung Philippines, tayo po ang mayroon ng pinakamababa ng pagdating po sa daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people nasa 8.82 na lang po tayo.

Samantalang, tingnan niyo po nagliparan, ang Singapore ay 3,000 plus per million population; ang Vietnam naman, 1,300 thereabouts; Malaysia, 845. Tayo na po ang pinakamababa dito sa slide na ito makikita. At siyempre naman po, Mr. President, ipinagdadasal din natin na 'yung mga kaso ng mga bansang ito ay bumaba rin for regional security natin, health security.

At 'yan po ang --- makikita natin, Mr. President, na maayos po 'yung ating pangangasiwa. Nagpapasalamat po tayo sa lahat po ng mga tumulong sa inyo pong leadership at ng inyo pong IATF ay maganda po ang ating mga numero at patuloy na bumababa. At ganunpaman, tayo po ay mas handa na na tumugon kung saka-sakaling --- knock on the wood, Mr. President, huwag na sanang tumaas pa ulit ang ating mga kaso.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Sir ---

**SEC. DUQUE:** Yes, Mr. President?

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** May itanong lang, I'd like to --- I'd like to know what brought the numbers down for us?

**SEC. DUQUE:** There are two sources of protection, Mr. President, 'yung ating vaccination was the game changer above all.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Well, the vaccination, no doubt, these countries can well afford to have it.

**SEC. DUQUE:** Bababa din naman 'yung kanilang kaso kasi nauna lang naman tayo na nag-spike noong January and then our cases started to go down until today. In fact, our reported cases for today nasa 700 plus na lang.

This is the fifth straight day that we have reported below 1,000 cases per day. So the next reason, Mr. President, is the protection from natural infection, 'yung natural immunity.

Tandaan ninyo, Mr. President, we have had about five surges already, including the most recent which is Omicron and this means marami na rin pong na-infect na atin pong mga kababayan. But luckily, karamihan naman po ng infection natin mild, 'yung iba nga asymptomatic, and both, in fact, account for about 92 to 94 percent of all our cases.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Kasi in terms of resources, money, we cannot even half of what Singapore has. Pero makita mo disiplinado rin 'yung --- they are a disciplined society. I mean, more or less better than the others, including the Philippines, everybody knows that. Malaysia never mind pati Vietnam because wala masyado tayong grasp sa ano nila. Nagtatataka ako bakit ang Pilipinas pinakababa?

**SEC. DUQUE:** Sir, ang isa hong differentiator natin compared to many of these countries, I should like to believe, is our very good compliance to minimum public health standards, 'yung masking ng mga Pilipino.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Yes.

**SEC. DUQUE:** Sumusunod talaga, Mr. President. Hindi katulad ng mga iba ay medyo talagang --- lalo na noong mataas na 'yung mga vaccination rates nila, they just threw caution to the wind. [*President Duterte: Wind.*] Oho. And so I think that is one distinct difference that we have manifested compared to other countries in Southeast Asia.

In fact, kung sa Amerika nga titingnan ninyo, sir, grabe ang death nila 1 million compared naman... Eh 'yun pinakamayaman na, the most powerful militarily, and in terms of science, research and development, they're superior, by and large, wala po tayong kalaban-laban.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Kaya nga.

**SEC. DUQUE:** But tayo naman, awa ng Diyos, ang ating mortality rate ay mababa, nasa 1.5 percent which is much lower than the global average of about 2.04 percent.

And not only that, Mr. President, 'yung atin pong mga kaso ay sa --- kumpara sa Amerika at even the western Europe 'no, ang taas ng kanilang caseload, ang taas ng kanilang ---

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Until now.

**SEC. DUQUE:** --- deaths. Oho, hanggang ngayon mataas pa rin, Mr. President. And so far, tayo naman tingin ko maganda po `yung inyong leadership, iyon pong weekly reminders to the public, and they have seen consistency in your reminders and they are appreciative by way of a more disciplined compliance with our minimum public health standards.

So ito po `yung masking, `yung lagi niyo pong paulit-ulit na sinasabi `yung atin pong physical distancing, hand hygiene, and all other non-pharmaceutical interventions, Mr. President.

So I think this really makes a huge difference compared to the other countries. But confidently, the other countries in Southeast Asia kahit na nagpe-peak silang ganoon, bababa din po `yan. And I think para po sa lahat, ang concept of "new normal" will be the realization that the virus will be here to stay and we must live with the virus. That's the philosophical underpinning that we will have to realize when we usher in the new normal.

Ngayon po, nasa Alert Level 1 na tayo. Hopefully, once the IATF defines more definitively the Alert Level 0, what does it consist of. By and large, iyon pa rin po ang ating overarching consideration, the virus will be here to stay but we will manage. And we have already tested, mayroon na tayong acid test o litmus test in the past surges `no, Delta being the most --- the most serious of all surges, Mr. President. This happened sometime in August and September.

Sa Omicron naman, talagang nakita naman natin mabilis lang tumaas, mabilis din bumaba at karamihan mild. And in fact, our severe, critical cases are much, much lower or fewer compared to the Delta, Alpha, and Beta surges.

So pati `yung ICU natin makikita natin, sir, ang baba, low utilization --- low risk utilization rate for our ICU beds and all other bed capacities mababa din po, Mr. President.

So iyan lang po --- but can I have the other few more slides just to very briefly go over them para po sa kapakanan ng atin pong mga kababayan, Mr. President?

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Sige.

**SEC. DUQUE:** *[Next slide.]* Tapusin ko lang. Ito naman, para lang ipakita 'yung pruwera na 'yung atin pong mga metrics na ginagamit 'yung growth in cases nasa -69 for the Philippines; and then our average daily attack rate is one per 100,000 population. For a minimal risk classification, pagka binangga po natin ang average daily attack rate or ADAR and the two-week growth rate, iyan po minimal. And the rest of the country, lahat all the regions 'no, minimal na po. Ang ating case --- ang atin pong health systems capacity ganoon din po low risk, minimal to low risk, 19.23 percent for our total beds utilization while ICU utilization is at about 27 percent thereabouts.

Noon pong Biyernes, Mr. President, March 4, ginanap naman ang kauna-unahang Healthy Pilipinas Awards for Healthy Communities. Kasama ng ating mga advocacy partners, kinilala natin ang mga proyekto ng mga local government units sa pitong larangan ng health promotion.

Ito po ay ang nutrition and physical activity, environmental health, immunization, substance abuse prevention, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, at violence and injury prevention.

At para sa taong ito, dinagdagan po natin ang pangwalong kategorya, ito 'yung ating COVID-19 response. Sa kabuuan, mayroon po tayong 120 na mga entry mula sa iba't ibang LGU sa buong bansa para sa awards at 40 na inisyatiba ng mga ito ang binigyan natin ng parangal. At taos-puso kaming nagpapasalamat sa mga lokal na pamahalaan na patuloy na sumusuporta sa atin pong Healthy Pilipinas campaign.

Sa inyong dedikasyon, atin pong napapangalagaan ang kalusugan ng bawat mamamayang Pilipino sa pamamagitan ng pagtataguyod ng healthy communities.

And finally, Mr. President, gusto ko lang pong ibahagi sa inyo --- *[next slide]* --- sa kabilang dako naman, ang ating Resbakuna: Kasangga ng Bida campaign nakatanggap po ng Anvil award mula po sa Public Relations Society of the Philippines. At nagpapasalamat din po tayo sa lahat ng ating

mga healthcare workers, ang mga non-governmental --- ang national government agencies, LGUs, civil society organizations and development partners, ang mga katuwang sa pribadong sektor, sa mga volunteers, sa atin pong mga kaibigan sa media, ang atin pong mga tagasuporta sa kanilang tulong para maisakatuparan ang COVID-19 National Deployment and Vaccination Program. Bahagi po silang lahat sa natamong parangal ng DOH sa nagdaang 57<sup>th</sup> Anvil Awards.

Ang parangal na ito po ay hindi lamang para sa DOH kung `di para sa pagsisikap at dedikasyon ng lahat ng atin pong mga partners para mabakunahan ang lahat araw o gabi, Sabado o Linggo at mabigyang proteksiyon ang bawat pamilyang Pilipino.

Marami man ang hinarap at haharapin pa nating balakid at pagsubok, ang isang taong bakunahan kontra COVID-19 ay patunay sa lakas ng pagkakaisa ng sambayanang Pilipino. Ang tunay na tagumpay ay ang atin pong sama-samang pag-abot ng atin pong target population na mabakunahan. And ika nga, we are only safe and protected if we are all vaccinated.

So muli, sa ngalan po ng Department of Health, we deeply express our thanks to everyone who has trusted and are continuously trusting the vaccines.

So maraming salamat po, Mr. President. Handa na po akong sumagot sa inyo pong katanungan.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Salamat, Secretary Duque. *[applause]* Sonny, you have something to say?

**SEC. DOMINGUEZ:** Yes, Mr. President. The figures are very impressive but also very impressive is the number of deaths per 100,000. I think the Philippines is only around 55 deaths per 100,000, while western Europe and the US is over almost 300 deaths per 100,000 people. So we have managed the death rate very, very well.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Well, nagtatanong kasi ako kanina because there is no telling that one of these days another vicious virus will visit the country or the cou --- the world, all over, at panibagong --- panibagong ano ito, far different from what we have now. Gusto ko lang malaman na what caused, I said, the numbers to go down because it would come in handy? It would be very important to remember now the days --- the days that we allotted the vaccinating program para for the next... Just put it at the back of our minds para malaman --- we will not be facing the problem anymore.

I mean, it would not be us who would face that problem anymore but the incoming or whoever wins, dapat malaman nila ito na the good practices of the Philippines. Kaya it's quite impressive that given the population, compared to the others, and knowing how, for example, Malaysia and Singapore, they are quite strict, Vietnam, in the observance of the law and regulations. Kaya nga nagtatanong because in the matter of just wearing the mask, you cannot just ignore it in Singapore nor in Malaysia because you'd really get arrested. Parang `pag batas doon, batas talaga. Dito, we...

Well, I appreciate the --- the decorum adopted by our law enforcement. Parang tinatapik lang na "*huwag mo na lang ulitin,*" parang ganoon. Not --- it's not really important.

It is important for complying --- for the compliance of the law. But it's in the mind na minsan ayaw talaga ng iba. Pero hindi naman kailangan sending him to the police station and detaining him. Medyo --- just for a simple violation like that, I think hindi masyado maganda.

So we have Secretary Galvez now to the updates sa vaccination.

**NTF COVID-19 CHIEF IMPLEMENTER AND VACCINE CZAR**

**CARLITO GALVEZ JR.:** Mr. President; Senator Bong Go; ES Bingbong Medialdea; fellow Cabinet members; mga kababayan, magandang gabi po.

*[Next slide, please.]*

As of today, 232.6 million na po ang na-deliver ng various vaccines sa Pilipinas at mayroon na po tayo na 136.8 million na po ang ating naiturok sa ating mga kababayan; 63.69 million na Pilipino ang ating fully vaccinated with the primary series. Pero, Mr. President, mababa pa rin po ang total ng boosters po natin na naibigay na humigit-kumulang po na 10.5 million.

At sa atin pong pediatric vaccination, mayroon na po tayong almost 8.6 million doses ang nakatanggap ng primary series sa edad na 12 to 17 taong gulang; at ang ating 5 to 11 taong gulang na sektor, mayroon na po tayong almost 1 million na nabakunahan. At mayroon po tayo na 3.9 na million doses na dumating at may parating pa po na 6.3 million ngayong buwan.

*[Next slide, please.]*

Sir, dito po, I will show to you 'yung masyadong dramatic decline ng ating vaccination and we would like to ano to encourage everybody talagang medyo bumaba po na talaga.

Since November po, nakita po natin sa November, mayroon po tayong more or less 27 million na bak --- na-administer na doses. But this ano, this February, ang atin nga po --- ang atin pong nabakunahan lang po is 8.7 million. So napakababa po, talagang lubhang bumaba po ang ating output noong February.

With the declaration of Alert Level 1, we have been experiencing saturation point in our vaccination centers with only the pediatric sector that dominates our vaccination sites. So iyong ating mga vaccination site po talagang karamihan po bakante po. So we will be needing other strategies to gather more vaccinees.

*[Next slide, please.]*

Dahil po dito, magsasagawa po ulit tayo ng isang malawakang vaccination days sa this coming March 10 to 12. Ang target po natin dito ay mapalawak ang pagbo-booster sa ating eligible sectors from 18 and above.

Ito po ay hihikayatin na bumalik sa mga dapat maka-receive ng second dose ay atin pong palalawakin din dahil kasi karamihan po sa mga second dosers natin ay hindi po nakabalik. At ang mga remaining senior citizens and 12 to 17 years old and above ay kailangan na po nating makuha po at ang target po natin na 1.8 million to 2 million ang ating mababakunahan po sa ating gaganapin na three days na vaccination days.

So ang ano po natin -- ang atin pong inclusive population is 12 years and above, and ang kailangan po natin talaga 'yung booster doses at saka 'yung



individual with due second doses. Iyong remaining priority group na ito nga po ito ang pinupursige namin nila Sec. Vince at saka ni Sec. Duque na makuha pa po natin 'yung more or less 3 million at another 3 million sa remaining 12 to 17.

Ito po ay gaganapin po natin sa buong region --- 16 regions and also the BARMM region, and it will be simultaneously undertaken nationwide.

*[Next slide, please.]*

Para po ma-achieve natin ang ating target sa ating National Vaccination Day No. 4, tayo po ay muling nakipag-ugnayan sa Philippine Medical Association and other medical professionals para makilahok at mag-mobilize this coming March 12.

We will also involve the pharmacies and clinics and we will expand more the numbers of those who are volunteering. We will also direct all government agencies and private sector to vaccinate their government employees and economic frontliners. Para po ito sa boosters at saka po 'yung ating mga tinatawag na mga hindi pa po nababakunahan.

We will also launch with the DOLE 'yung tinatawag po na JAB Fair in the JOB sites; and also, all the LGUs and DOH regional offices and local health centers to do the house-to-house vaccination. At nagkaroon na po tayo ng series of meetings at saka mga trainings para po ibababa po natin from the LGU vaccination site to the different barangay health centers and other --- tinatawag nating other --- iyong ating mga tinatawag na mga volunteers na puwede pong magbahay-bahay.

We will also ask DepEd and CHED to continue their aggressive vaccination through Vax To School program. Ito po ay nakita po natin na talagang nire-recommend po ni Secretary Karl Chua na talagang magkaroon na po tayo ng back to school at iyon po ang pinakaano po namin nire-recommend po namin na ang DepEd at saka CHED ay magkaroon po ng tinatawag na Vax To School na program.

And lastly, we requested DTI and other big establishment to give more incentives to those people with boosters. And lastly, we will again encourage our government agencies, our T3 partners, our private sectors, LGUs, itong sa mga ecozones, ang ating AFP and PNP to participate in our massive vaccination day on March 10 to 12. Magpa-booster na po tayo.

That's all, Mr. President, at mabuhay po tayong lahat.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Salamat po, Secretary Galvez.

Now, it's the turn of Secretary Año.

**DILG SECRETARY EDUARDO AÑO:** Magandang gabi po, Mr. President; Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea; Senator Bong Go; fellow public servants; mga kababayan, magandang gabi.

Unang-una po, ang aking iuulat ay ang ating ginagawang granular lockdown nationwide under Alert Level 1 at Alert Level 2.

Sa patuloy po na pagbaba ng kaso at sa pagpapatupad ng Alert Level 1 sa 53 LGUs, nakikita po natin na lalong bumaba din ang mga areas under granular lockdown. Nakikita po na siyam na cities at municipality o binubuo ng 24 na barangays lamang ang nagpatupad ng granular lockdown, at ito po ay 37.

Makikita po natin na ang Metro Manila ang may pinakamarami, 31; at dalawa naman sa NCR --- I mean, dalawa po sa NCR; 31 po sa CAR; at apat sa Region I; all the rest ay wala na po. So ito ay nakakaapekto sa 37 households at 47 na individuals. Ine-expect po natin na lalo pang bababa 'yung mga areas na ito.

At nagkaroon po tayo ng assessment sa pagpapatupad ng Alert Level 1. Unang-una po nagkaroon tayo ng pulong sa mga NCR mayors kagabi at napag-alaman po natin na maganda po ang ating assessment sa first week ng implementation ng ating Alert Level 1.

Patuloy pa rin bumababa ang mga numero ng cases pero ang bunga naman nito ay tumaas ang ating mobility kaya unti-unti namang nararamdaman ang pagiging --- mas nagiging traffic na po sa mga areas na 'to.

At nakita din po namin na binabantayan natin 'yung mga focus crimes. Medyo tumaas ang index crime, particularly physical injuries at saka theft. At ito ay napansin natin sa mga business establishment na malalapit sa malls. Kaya naman mas marami pang mga pulis ang ating ide-deploy bilang pang --- paghahanda at maging deterrent sa mga criminals.

At nagsasagawa na rin po tayo ng paghahanda para sa fourth National Vaccination Days. So pinulong na rin natin ang mga LGUs, ang mga governors, ang mga mayors, at ang barangay captains.

Kaya reading-ready na po tayo rito para mas lalo pang mas madagdagan ang ating mabakunahan lalong-lalo na ang mga natitirang seniors, ang mga kailangang mabigyan ng boosters, at pati po ang mga bata, particularly ang 17 years old and below.

*[Next slide, please.]*

Dito naman po, Mr. President, nakikita natin 'yung pagpapatupad ng mga community health protocols.

Ang ating mga violations sa hindi pagsusuot ng mask ay bumaba ng 25.36 percent. So ibig sabihin po ay talagang sumusunod naman ang ating mga kababayan. Medyo tumaas lang ang conduct ng mass gathering pero bumaba din naman ang no physical distancing ng 29.14 percent.

Patuloy po nating ipapatupad ang minimum public health standard kasama ang LGUs at ang mga law enforcement para siguradong mabantayan natin na wala ng magkakarong spike pa sa susunod na mga araw.

*[Next slide.]*

At ito naman sa aking huling ulat, Mr. President, ito po 'yung ating kino-conduct na mga anti-illegal drug operations during the pandemic. Makikita po natin na nakapagsagawa tayo ng 916 anti-illegal drug operations; nakapag-aresto tayo ng mga 1,307 na violators; mayroon pong 76 na nag-surrender; at isa naman ang nasawi sa ating mga police operations.

Pero ang gusto ko pong ipakita, Mr. President, ay ang biglang paglaki ng ating mga nasamsam na mga illegal drugs. Ito po ay umabot sa P424,747,925, almost kalahating bilyon po. Ikumpara natin po last week na ito ay 159 million lang. So ito po ay maaaring bunga na din ng pagluluwag natin, nagkaroon ng mobility, kumilos ang mga tao at puwedeng samantalain po ng mga illegal drug traders.

Lalo pa natin paiigtingin ang ating mga operation para siguradong hindi mapagsamantalahan ng mga illegal drug operators ang ating pagbaba ng kaso at pagluluwag sa Alert Level 1.

Iyan lamang po, Mr. President, maraming salamat po.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Well, anyway, Art, Secretary Tugade, medyo pa-relax ka diyan. I --- I would like to remind you of the projects that I would like to be also participating para makita ng tao `yung ano mo --- `yung nagawa mo para sa Pilipinas. If you have the time, kindly get me your --- ito `yung schedule mo para makasama ako. I'd be happy to join you sa nagawa mo para sa bayan.

Well, anyway...

**DOTR SECRETARY ARTHUR TUGADE:** Salamat po, Mr. President.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Sige...

**SEC. TUGADE:** Narinig --- naririnig po ba ako?

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Clear.

**SEC. TUGADE:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor-President. Una po, `yung rekomendasyon ng DOTr, kasama po sa report na naihayag ni Secretary Karl kanina. Ito po `yung tatlong bahagi na kung saan sinasabi namin i-release na `yung --- i-release na po `yung fuel subsidy na nagkakahalaga ng 2.5 billion. Ito po ang isang proyektong katuwang at kasama namin ang Department of Energy at Department of Budget.

Nakikiusap din ho kami na `yung service contracting ay i-release na ho `yung pondo na nagkakahalaga sa 7 million na nakakapaloob ho sa budget ng 2022. Ito ho'y provided na sa budget, eh kung mare-release ho ito, ito ho'y magbubunga nung tinatawag natin na "Libreng Sakay".

Sabihin ko lang ho at this time, `yung Libreng Sakay po last year, ang nakinabang ho diyan 100,000 mga drivers at mga --- mga operators. Pero ang mahalaga ho diyan, ang nakinabang na ridership is 7.2 million. Ang ibig sabihin, talagang pangmalawakan ang pakinabang na nito. Ito ho ay napaloob sa ni-report ni Secretary Karl kanina.

Doon ho sa mga project, maraming salamat po, Mr. President, talaga hong inaasahan ng ating mga kababayan ang iyong participation upang sa ganyan malaman at malaman nila `yung mga ginagawa ng iyong administrasyon. Tatlong proyekto ho ang akin ire-remind ho sana kung puwede sumama kayo.

Una po, 'yung MRT-3 inauguration. Ito ho, kung puwede nating gawin ho ito, natapos na ho 'yung rehabilitation --- full rehabilitation ng MRT-3 na kung saan talagang mapapalakas na ho natin 'yung tinatawag na capacity. Puwede na nating abutin from 200,000, puwede nating abutin 400[,000] hanggang 600,000 per day.

Ito ho, dati ho noong nag-umpisa kayo, puro aberya ang inabot natin, katakot-takot na insulto ang inabot ko diyan. Pero nitong mga nakaraan, even sa pandemya, wala hong glitches. Kaya kung makakasama po kayo sa inauguration at acceptance ng MRT-3 full rehabilitation completion mag --- maganda po 'yan.

Pangalawa ho, 'yung sinabi ko noong nakaraang meeting, ito ho 'yung kaakibat ng Bicol Express na kung saan handa na po 'yung tren gumalaw from Lucena to San Pablo. Ito ho matagal na nabinbin ang tren diyan, limang taon. Ito'y puwede na nating gawin ho 'yan. Ito ho kadugtong ito ng Bicol Express.

Imagine, mayroon na ho tayo sa Bicol na Bicol International Airport, mayroon ka pang Bicol Express sa riles, hindi ho masasabi ng ating mga kaibigan, kababayan sa Bicol na sila'y pinabayaan, mas bale, binigyan ho sila ng atensiyon.

Mayroon hong mga puertong kailangan natin inaugurate. Nabanggit ko ho 'yung sa Ilocos Norte na handa nang inaugurate ito, ito ho 'yung cruise vessels. Mayroon din ho 'yung mga puerto sa Samar, sa Eastern Samar. Nakikipag-ugnayan ho ako sa OP nang sa ganoon ma-reconcile ho 'yung mga schedule.

Tama ho kayo, Mr. Mayor, tama lang malaman ng ating mga kababayan 'yung mga ginagawa sa riles, sa kalsada, sa aviation, saka sa maritime. Iyon lang po, Mr. President.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Iyong pag-inaugurate mo doon sa Samar, Art, huwag mong kalimutan imbitahin 'yung mga NPA. T\*\*\*...

**SEC. TUGADE:** Oho. *[laughs]*

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Walang ginawa kung mag-ambush nang mag-ambush sa sundalo ko. Yayain mo na lang para... Ako na ang nagyaya, magkita na lang tayo doon. Walang hulihan, kasali kayo lahat pati sa kainan.

**SEC. TUGADE:** We will comply, Mayor. We will comply.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** One day ano respite from fighting. Wala nang ginawa kung hindi mag... Samar ang rami pa rin.

**SEC. TUGADE:** Alam niyo ho, Mr. President, let's walk memory lane. Iyong sa completion ng Bicol International Airport, dalawang sabotahe inabot ko diyan, dalawang sunog pero natapos naman natin.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Iyon nga, sabagay, well, basta nalaman ng bayan na ginagawa namin lahat ang makakaya naming gawin. Iyon lang.

**SEC. TUGADE:** Opo, opo.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Hindi naman kami sabihin na gagawain namin lahat, basta `yung hanggang kaya lang namin sa mga utak sa mga tao dito na nakikita ninyo.

So wala namang ano --- I cannot invite you, nandiyan sa panel. Wala --- kung wala kayong pagkain, pasensiya na kayo. Dapat nag-sandwich-sandwich na lang kayo kasi kami kakain kami dito. Pochero ang aming...

**SEC. TUGADE:** Kagaya ho ng --- kagaya ng FDA kakain na rin ako.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Sige. Mga kababayan ko, hanggang dito lang muna. Hindi na ako mag-ano. I have many things to really --- to convey to you but pahuli na natin, pati itong giyera ng between Russia and Ukraine.

Hindi namin ito sinasabi kung ano not --- so that hindi maalarma `yung tao. Pero pinakadelikado ito ngayong nangyayari kasi `pag may nagkamali dito, pagka nabitawan `yung mga nuclear warheads, problema talaga, problema na.

At saka maski ngayong --- ngayon, nag-umpisa na tayo. Remember, oil, oil is... Alam mo, ewan ko kung paano ginawa ang Diyos ng --- itong mundo. Kasi `yung mga kapitbahay natin, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, may mga oil sila.

Tayo, mayroon but kakaunti lang, not enough even to serve a region or three, four regions sa ano. Ang mayroon tayo gas, pero `yan ang bantayan natin because there is a potential trouble there regarding how we would handle it.

Pero ang sinasabi ko lang --- at sabihin ko na mabuti pa ---- marami kasing pumapasok diyan na mga kontratista. Hindi ko alam kung sino `yung gustong umagaw, kung sinong gustong papalit. Pero mayroong haka-haka na mayroong bagong kompanya na sila na mag-take over kasi nandiyan na.

Ano alam mo, pinaalaala sa akin --- hindi ko na sabihin kung sino --- from China, sabi niya, "*Di ba may usapan tayo na joint development `yang sa Recto Reed --- sa Recto Bank? Eh may bagong mga istorya na may papalit na, ganoon.*" Alam mo I can only talk for this time that we are here, administrasyon ko. Binulungan ako ng ano na, "*Huwag ganoon, `yung original contracts natin sundin natin.*" Ngayon ang sabi magpadala ng sundalo. Eh sabi ng --- wala --- sabi ko, "*Wala man kaming sinabing magpadala sundalo.*" Sabi niya, "*Just in case magpadala kayo ng sundalo, magpadala rin kami ng sundalo.*"

So alam mo `yan ang iniiwasan ko noon pa eh. Tapos magkagiyera tuloy tayo dito, nandoon sa Ukraine, nandiyan `yung Taiwan gustong agawin uli ng China, tapos dito magka... So many flashpoints, maraming lugar na may putok. We do not need it. Hindi natin kailangan makipag-away diyan.

Sundin lang nila --- sundin lang ninyo kung ano `yung pinag-usapan noon. Sabi ko honor `yan eh, it's a matter of honor. We gave our --- nag-ano consensual talks tapos may written agreement. `Pag iba --- iniba `yan, delikado. So hindi na mangyari sa akin `yan kasi ayaw ko. Ayaw kong ibahin kasi `yun ang pinag-usapan namin sa panahon ko.

Iyon lang, just to remind everybody to just stay cool, chill ka lang. It's not the --- maybe it's not in our generation na maso-solve natin itong problema sa China. I don't know what holds --- what the future holds but I said, at this time, relax lang tayo.

That's my advice para sa lahat irrespective of now or tomorrow. Huwag lang natin na... Do --- `yung ika nga, do not tempt the gods and look for trouble that we cannot maybe handle or mahirapan tayo.

Salamat sa inyong lahat. *[applause]*

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