



Filipinos in countries covered by travel ban can return to PH – Palace

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

Malacañang clarified that Filipinos covered by repatriation efforts in countries included in the travel ban imposed due to the Delta variant of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) are allowed to return to the Philippines subject to quarantine and testing protocols.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque made the statement after the Philippines extended the restrictions imposed on passengers coming from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, United Arab Emirates, and Oman until June 30, 2021.

In his statement, Roque clarified that the ban does not cover Filipino travelers, especially those covered by repatriation programs.

"Let it be clear, however, that Filipinos covered by the repatriation programs of the government and repatriation activities of manning / recruitment agencies cleared by the Bureau of Quarantine are not prohibited from entering the Philippines," he said.

"They can enter the country, subject to testing

and quarantine protocols. We hope this clarifies the matter," he added.

The Philippines imposed a travel ban on travelers from the seven countries to ensure continuous strict border control to prevent the Delta variant from reaching local communities and prevent community transmission.

"The abovementioned variant, first detected in India, is more transmissible as seen in the experience of other countries, thus there is a need for continued vigilance," Roque noted.

This is the second time the government extended travel restrictions on the seven countries due to the Delta variant.

The government first imposed travel restrictions on India from April 29 to May 14. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka were later added to the list from May 7 to May 14. The restrictions were later extended until the end of the month.

Meanwhile, the government halted the entry of travelers coming from Oman and the United Arab Emirates from May 15 to May 31, except for passengers who are part of the government's repatriation efforts.



FOR VACCINATED FILIPINOS

LACSON: STANDARD QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS URGENT

By Nestor Corrales
@NCorralesINQ



The government must fast-track the formulation of uniform quarantine protocols for vaccinated Filipinos, including those working overseas, to help the economy recover more quickly, according to Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Over the weekend, the senator expressed approval after vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. reported that the National Task Force Against COVID-19 was

drafting standard quarantine protocols for returning Filipinos, whether vaccinated here or abroad.

"Please make it sooner, not later. Mind the economy for a change," Lacson said in a Twitter post.

He earlier pushed for the creation of a COVID-19 vaccine passport system that would make traveling to the Philippines easier for vaccinated individuals, including foreign investors.

At the same time, Lacson urged the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of

Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) to fine-tune its COVID-19 guidelines and "make sure the protocols [were] in sync with those of other countries."

He also supported the recommendation of the Department of Health (DOH) to scrap the COVID-19 testing requirement for returning Filipinos who had been fully vaccinated abroad.

"Way to go! This is one sensible adjustment that our 'kabayans' abroad who miss their families here have been wanting to hear from DOH," he said in another tweet.

Beginning June 22, returning Filipinos who were fully vaccinated in the country would undergo quarantine for just seven days. They would undergo a swab test only if they show COVID-19 symptoms during the quarantine period.

Foreign nationals and Filipinos who received their jabs abroad, on the other hand, would still undergo testing and a 10-day facility-based quarantine.

The protocols are based on IATF Resolution No. 119 which was signed on June 3, 2021. —WITH
A REPORT FROM INQUIRER RESEARCH