



BIDEN PLEDGE

UP TO 1M DOSES EXPECTED FROM US DONATION IN JULY, SAYS ENVOY

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The country will receive by next month between 800,000 and 1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses from the United States, the country's top diplomat in Washington said on Tuesday.

The White House on Monday also announced the donation of 55 million vaccine doses worldwide, mentioning the Philippines among the recipients.

Ambassador Jose Manuel Romualdez said either AstraZeneca or Moderna vaccines would be delivered to the country by July, part of the 80 million "excess" vaccines that US President Joe Biden promised to donate to other countries.

'Major commitment'

"Earlier this month, the [Biden] administration announced the plan for the first 25 million doses that we have begun shipping, and today's announcement completes the list for the remaining 55 million doses. For all of these doses, those most at risk, such as health-care workers, should be prioritized, based on national vaccine plans," the White House said in a statement.

"Sharing millions of US vaccines with other countries signals a major commitment by the US government. Just like we have in our domestic response, we will move as expeditiously as possible, while abiding by US and host country regulatory and legal requirements, to facilitate the safe and secure transport of vaccines across international borders," it added.

Of the 55 million vaccine doses, 16 million will be distributed in Asia.

Ongoing negotiations

In Manila, the US Embassy noted that the country's inclusion in the donation is apart from "the Philippines' allocation under ... the first 25 million US vaccine doses to be shared globally, as pledged earlier by President Biden to help end the pandemic."

Regarding another shipment, that of 40 million Pfizer vaccine doses procured by the government and expected in October, Romualdez said "We were able to get that, of course, at a very ... very low price precisely because it is to help countries like the Philippines."

Romualdez said there were also ongoing negotiations with Moderna Inc. for an additional 50 million vaccine doses.

"So we are in good shape as far as our vaccines are concerned," he said. INQ