



Up to 30,000 daily cases seen by month's end

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

The number of new COVID-19 cases in the entire country may reach up to 25,000 to 30,000 daily in the next week, all the way to the end of September.

OCTA Research fellow Guido David said their projections for now do not foresee the 43,000 cases in Metro Manila alone that the Department of Health (DOH) has predicted.

He noted that if Metro Manila does record 43,000 daily cases, it means the ADAR or average daily attack rate would be at 300.

"To put it in perspective, this will be much worse than India, Indonesia, all other countries," David said in Filipino in an interview over ABS-CBN's *Teleradyo* yesterday.

He said that if this happens – noting, however, that such an event does not appear in OCTA's current projections – it would greatly impact the National Capital Region (NCR) and the country.

"Many will die. We have to say it if it's that many," David pointed out.

He said OCTA projects that daily infections may reach up to 30,000 in the entire country, considering that the reproduction number has been going down.

As of yesterday, David noted that the COVID reproduction number nationwide was at 1.32 while it was at 1.41 in Metro Manila, which posted over 6,000 cases – the highest – on Saturday.

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"It's possible for us to reach 30,000 (cases) in the entire country by end of September according to the trajectory, but we do not see the 43,000 in Metro Manila alone," he said.

OCTA Research said high intensive care unit utilization in hospitals is still a problem, as the waiting time in hospitals now takes three to four days.

David said the government needs to improve on mass testing, and needs the cooperation of the business sector to help address the current situation of still rising cases.

At present, he said around 70,000 tests are being done daily, but it would be better if this could be doubled to 150,000 tests daily.

According to David, areas with the highest COVID-19 cases right now include the NCR, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Bulacan; the province of Cebu including Cebu City, Iloilo province including Iloilo City, Davao del Sur including Davao City; Cagayan, Bukidnon, Tarlac, Quezon and Pangasinan.

He said the Philippines now has the highest number of cases in East Asia compared to neighboring countries, as the surges in Indonesia, India, Pakistan and the UAE have eased.