

**OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY**  
**News and Information Bureau**

**PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESS SECRETARY TRIXIE CRUZ-ANGELES**  
**AUGUST 3, 2022 (12:59 P.M. – 1:17 P.M.)**

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Magandang umaga. I was going to announce the new officials who have been appointed. On the developments of filling up of other government positions, President Marcos has appointed five new officials to different government offices.

These are: Dr. Samuel Zacate to the Food and Drug Administration. Dr. Zacate is a known public health advocate with years of expertise in medicine and medical consultancy in other government units and offices including the Public Attorney's Office, the Presidential Security Group Hospital and others. Before his appointment, he was a diplomate of the Philippine Society for Venereology and a fellow of the International College of Surgeons.

The second is retired Brigadier General Roman Felix – Secretary, Office of the Presidential Adviser on Military Affairs. He's a retired Police General who served in various units and offices of the PNP in Regional and National Headquarters, member of PMA Matikas Class of 1983, native of Tuguegarao City in Cagayan Valley, served as Provincial Director of the Ilocos Norte Police Provincial Office and later Regional Director of Ilocos-Pangasinan or Region I. He's also a licensed and trained helicopter pilot.

Major General Ariel Caculitan [unclear], Undersecretary for Military Affairs – Retired Major General Caculitan is top caliber military official who served his years in various units of the Philippine Marine Corps and the Philippine Navy. He's a member of the PMA Class Makatao 1989 and the topnotcher of the AFP Command and General Staff Course Class 45. He was the 33<sup>rd</sup> Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps. Among other military posts, he commanded the Naval Reserve Force, Combat and Service Support Brigade, Marine Corps Force Development Center and the Philippine Peacekeeping Contingent to Haiti from 2009 to 2011. In 2015, he received the Best Flying Award as a Naval Aviator. He's also an awardee of the Ten Outstanding Filipino Soldiers by the Metrobank Foundation.

Undersecretary for Police Affairs, General Isagani Nerez – Retired Police General Nerez is a member of the PMA Maharlika Class of 1984. He's also a lawyer served in various capacities in the units of the Philippine National Police such as the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response and the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations-Eastern Mindanao. He was also part of the PNP Special Action Force; also, of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force and PNP Anti-Kidnapping Group.

Attorney Nesauro Firme to the Judicial and Bar Council representing the academe – Attorney Firme is a law professor and practitioner; Obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree in the Faculty of Civil Law of the University of Santo Tomas; Worked as an Executive Assistant at the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and senior partner of Oliva, Firme and

Associates; Former faculty of the College of Law for the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Jose Rizal University respectively.

Questions?

**MELA LESMORAS/PTV:** Hi! Good afternoon, Secretary Angeles. Secretary, umaani pa rin kasi ng komento iyong panukalang veneto (vetoed) ni Pangulong Marcos na maghahatid sana ng exemption sa honoraria allowances at iba pang financial benefits ng mga taong naglilingkod tuwing eleksiyon at kung matutuloy ay magkakaroon kasi ng election ngayong taon. Can we explain po the reasons behind this? At ano po kaya iyong puwedeng maging tulong ng pamahalaan for election workers?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Okay, lagyan po natin ng konteksto ito. Wala po tayong tinatanggal sa ating mga government employees who will be rendering poll service. May proposal in the bill na gawing tax exempt ang kanilang honoraria at saka travel allowances. Now, iyong pag-veto ng Presidente is a matter of good housekeeping. Ang ating tax system, hindi ba nireporma natin ito. Sa pagrireporma, ginawa nating maayos, tinanggal natin iyong mga benepisyong mga exemptions at kung anu-ano pa na binibigay to various groups.

Sa dami dati ng binibigyan ng ganoon, medyo magulo na iyong sistema, hindi natin alam kung sino iyong mga nagbi-benefit dito at kung makatarungan nga na so many people are exempt or have tax breaks or tax benefits. So, inayos natin iyan under the tax reform laws. So, iyong mga ganitong proposal ay parang binabalik tayo doon sa dating sistema na marami na naman tayong exemptions at benepisyong na binibigay na nakaka-cause ng confusion sa ating sistema.

Imbes na ganito, ang sinasabi ng ating Pangulo, magbigay tayo ng form of ayuda sa ating mga poll workers. Imbes na iyong benepisyong ay gagawin natin sa pamamaraan ng pagtatanggal ng pagbubuwis; in that way, maayos iyong pangungolekta natin, iyong sistema ng pangungolekta ng buwis, pero matutulungan pa rin natin sila. So iyon po iyong konteksto noon.

Bukod pa dito, gusto ko lang linawin 'no. Hindi po nagkaroon ng veto spree ang ating Pangulo. 41 bills lapsed into law and only five were vetoed, hindi kasama doon sa 41. So it's not a spree. Tinutono lang naman ng Pangulo doon sa mga sistema iyong mga batas natin, lalung-lalo na iyong mga batas that involved some kind of tax break or tax benefits, itutono mo doon sa ating polisiya of tax reform.

So, iyon lang po iyon. Hindi po natin po tinatanggalan ng benepisyong ang mga poll workers natin. Ang ginagawa po natin ay inaayos iyong sistema without discounting the possibility na puwede pa rin silang bigyan ng ayuda.

**MELA LESMORAS/PTV:** Ma'am, doon po sa nabanggit ninyo, anu-ano po ba iyong specifically mga veneto?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Iyong lima lang po. If you recall iyong sa San Miguel, what do you call this – iyong Freeport at saka Economic Zone; so itong sa poll workers. We had three others. I'm sorry. I have the list, pinamigay ko iyong list. Ito, nandiyan na po sa inyo. Iyan, binigyan ko kayo ng handouts. Doon sa bottom po iyong lima, iyong 41 nasa umpisa.

**MELA LESMORAS/PTV:** Thank you po, Secretary Trixie.

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Ulitin natin for the benefit of your viewers: Ang mga na-veto po ay iyong Bulacan Airport City Special Economic Zone.

Iyong bagong charter of the Office of the Government Corporate Council. Ang dahilan dito ay dahil excessive iyong ibang benefits among others pati iyong relationship between the OGCC – iyong council – at saka ang Secretary of Justice medyo naiba, parang lumalabas na equal sila when that cannot be the case;

So, vetoed din iyong Davao Light and Power Company na franchise, kasi nag-i-encroach siya doon sa area ng North Davao na franchise;

The Philippine Transportation Safety Board Act;

Tapos itong “Exempting from Income Taxation the Honoraria, Allowance, and Other Financial Benefits of Persons Rendering Services During an Election [Period]”.

So, just five. Doon sa iba, medyo mahaba na iyon, kaya ninyo na iyon; 41 iyan, okay.

So, let's just place it into context. Tandaan din po natin na ang Presidente natin ay bagong pasok so iyong mga batas na ito, noong ginagawa iyan, hindi pa po Presidente si President Marcos and they might have been in sync with the previous administration, so mayroon talagang adjustment period.

Wini-welcome naman po natin ang LEDAC at saka iyong iba-ibang mga paraan para mai-tono nating iyong puntirya, iyong vision ng Pangulo natin, iyong kaniyang legislative agenda with that of the Congress and the Senate!

**PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN:** Hi, ma'am! Good afternoon. Ma'am, tungkol lang po kay FVR. Has the President offered to hold a state funeral for former President FVR and will the President visit the wake po?

**SEC. ANGELES-CRUZ:** We have no confirmation of the President visiting the wake kasi hindi talaga natin ina-announce iyan for security reasons.

The state funeral is a right of the family of a deceased President. So, yes, he would be accorded a state funeral with full military honors.

**DENNIS JAMITO/BOMBO RADYO:** Hi, ma'am! Good afternoon, Dennis from Bombo Radyo. Sa mga nakalipas na araw ay may mga cases po ng mga bagong variant na mas contagious. Wala bang adjustment doon sa mga policy natin, mga protocol? May meeting na ba ang IATF kung sakali man for adjustment or what?

**SEC. ANGELES-CRUZ:** Ang primary agency natin dito ay ang Department of Health (DOH) at ang sinasabi nila is that the variant is more contagious but not deadlier. So, pareho pa rin so far ang ating mga protocols subject of course to continuing study by the DOH.

**DENNIS JAMITO/BOMBO RADYO:** How about po iyong actions natin on monkeypox? May mga pagbabago na ba dahil may mga pag-aaral nang lumalabas sa international, iyong mga scientists. Anu-ano pong development kung mayroon man?

**SEC. ANGELES-CRUZ:** Well, the initial case na nadiskubre natin na may monkeypox dito ay gumaling na po, so there are no further cases. Gayunpaman, ayon sa DOH, sila po ay naghanda na in accordance with Republic Act 11332 or the Mandatory Reporting of Contagious Diseases.

So, dahil may kaunting practice na under COVID-19, they have already set these measures into place

**LETH NARCISO/DZRH:** Good afternoon, Secretary.

Sa second quarter survey ng SWS, may 12.2 million na pamilyang Pilipino ang nagsabing mahirap sila. Ano po ang reaksiyon ng Palasyo dito?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Walang reaction. Pero ang gusto lang natin ipaalala, ayon doon sa SONA ng ating Pangulo, mayroon tayong puntirya that by 2028 ma-reduce natin to single digit ang ating poverty levels, so tuluy-tuloy pa rin iyon. If anything, this makes the matter more urgent at mas malupit nating tututukan ang pagbuwag ng poverty levels dito sa Pilipinas. So, at least ma-diminish natin to single digit levels.

**LETH NARCISO/DZRH:** May specific orders na po ba ang Pangulo tungkol dito or may mga hakbang nang ginagawa ang pamahalaan?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Wala pa akong specific orders but since he is the Secretary of Agriculture, bahagi po iyon, iyong ating pagpapalakas ng agrikultura, pagpapalakas ng ekonomiya natin – lahat po iyon ay makakatulong para mapuntirya natin itong levels ng poverty dito sa Pilipinas.

**LETH NARCISO/DZRH:** On other topic na lang, Ma'am. Kailan po iku-convene ang LEDAC?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Wala pa po tayong specific date. It should be in the next few weeks. Okay. Thank you very much.

**OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA:** Maraming salamat, Malacañang Press Corps.

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Sorry. Okay, digitalization? Hang on.

**EDEN SANTOS/NET25:** Secretary, regarding po doon sa naging pakikipagpulong ni PBBM po sa LGUs doon po sa isinusulong na PPP o iyong Private-Public Partnership for digitalization and other projects, how cooperative ang LGUs po dito sa panukala na ito ng ating Pangulo?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Well, it's been in the initial stages yet, so hihintayin natin iyong reaction ng LGUs. Wala pa po kaming official reaction on their end!

**EDEN SANTOS/NET25:** Pero, so far po iyong pakikipag-meeting ng Pangulo very open naman po iyong LGUs?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Enthusiastic. Yes, ma'am – open and enthusiastic.

**OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA:** Okay. One more question.

**VINCE LOPEZ/MANILA STANDARD:** Ma'am, good afternoon. Vince Lopez from Manila Standard po.

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Yes po.

**VINCE LOPEZ/MANILA STANDARD:** Can we get the Palace's reaction or statement on the following 'One China' Policy of which the Philippines must strictly abide according to the Chinese Ambassador following the visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, and also if the national security of the Philippines will be at risk if the tensions between China and the US will escalate in the Asia-Pacific Region?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Okay. Your first question is if we are reacting to the statement made by the Chinese Ambassador?

**VINCE LOPEZ/MANILA STANDARD:** Yes po, ma'am.

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** There is no reaction. Usually, when its matters of international relations, we take time to study the matter and do not react immediately. Loose words might affect relationships and a very difficult to rebuild.

So, we will take our cue from the Department of Foreign Affairs if such a reaction is even warranted.

**JOB MANAHAN/ABS-CBN:** Hello po. Good afternoon po, Secretary Trixie. Clarification lang po sa appointment ni Dr. Zacate sa FDA. FDA Chief po siya, ma'am?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Yes, sir.

**JOB MANAHAN/ABS-CBN:** Yes po. And Dr. Zacate is also the lead physician po of President Marcos. Nag-factor-in din po ba ito doon sa appointment niya as FDA Chief?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Well, if you will look at his qualifications, he is imminently qualified. As you know, to be the FDA head you have to at least be a doctor or a pharmacist. So, he is qualified plus he has several distinctions. So, we're not sure if his being a personal physician actually factored into this considering he ticks all the boxes. Meaning, lahat ng requirements bilang FDA, he fulfills.

[Indistinct voices]

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Wala po.

**JOB MANAHAN/ABS-CBN:** Last na po, ma'am. Iyong state funeral for late President FVR, kailan po kaya ito, ma'am?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** August 9. It's the 9<sup>th</sup>.

**JOB MANAHAN/ABS-CBN:** Okay po.

**OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA:** Ma'am, do we have room for one last?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Yes, one last.

**VANZ FERNANDEZ:** Follow up regarding Pelosi, ma'am. Is there any growing concern from the DFA over China's intensifying warnings over the visit or is there any growing concern from the DND and AFP over the deployment of four aircraft carriers of the United States Navy in the local/regional waters and the potential Chinese response over it? Any reaction on this, please?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Wait. Your question was, is there any rising concern or if we're going to react to it? Like I said on matters of international relations, reactions are studied. We don't make knee-jerk reactions because they could adversely affect international relations.

Suffice it to say, that our military and our DFA are closely monitoring the situation as they would in any other similar circumstance.

**VANZ FERNANDEZ:** Thank you very much, ma'am.

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** Thank you.

**OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA:** Thank you, Secretary Trixie. Thank you, Malacañang Press Corps.

**Q:** Ma'am, one last question. Iyong Blinken visit ba ay open sa media coverage sa Saturday?

**SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES:** We will have to talk about it.

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