450 OFWs, trike drivers vaccinated in QC

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Around 450 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and tricycle drivers were vaccinated against COVID-19 in Quezon City on Saturday as part of Labor Day celebrations.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III and Mayor Joy Belmonte led the vaccination, which was done simultaneously in different areas as a tribute to workers.

The Department of Labor and Employment earlier said 3,000 OFWs and 2,000 minimum wage earners under the A4 category would be vaccinated.

Since the start of the vaccine rollout in March, only those belonging to the first three priorities – health workers, senior citizens and those with comorbidities – have been inoculated.

Reports said the inoculation of other essential workers in the A4 category would begin later this month or early next month.

Belmonte recognized the importance of vaccinating essential workers to address the pandemic.

"It is also the responsibility of the government to ensure that you are healthy," she said, urging those who were inoculated to encourage others to get vaccinated.

Drive-through vaccination

The city government also launched on Saturday its drive-through vaccination to allow residents to get inoculated inside their vehicles.

The initiative is expected to benefit those belonging to the vulnerable sector who may have difficulties going to vaccination sites, such as senior citizens and those with comorbidities.

At least 130,000 frontline health workers and other Quezon City residents have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccines.

Due to the limited supply of vaccines, only those who pre-registered through the barangay-assisted scheme are being accommodated at vaccination sites.

City hall advised residents to wait for the announcement on the resumption of online booking for vaccination.

Liquor ban lifted

Meanwhile, the Quezon City government lifted the liquor ban under the revised guidelines for the implementation of the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ) approved by Belmonte.

Under the guidelines, stores are now allowed to sell liquor between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Cargo vehicles may deliver liquor to dealers at any time.

Liquor and other alcoholic beverages may be consumed at home or in the premises of the establishments during the window hours. Drinking in public spaces such as sidewalks and streets remain prohibited.

As agreed among Metro Manila mayors, Quezon City eased its public safety hours from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.

Gathering of more than 10 people remains prohibited, except when indispensable for work, government or humanitarian purposes. Religious activities were allowed at 30 percent capacity of the venue.

Restaurants and other food establishments were allowed to provide limited indoor and outdoor dine-in services.

Beauty salons, parlors, barbershops and nail spas were also allowed to operate. Other personal care establishments such as massage spas and derma clinics should remain closed.

Other establishments that are still not allowed to operate include karaoke bars, internet cafes, arcades, amusement parks as well as indoor and outdoor tourist attractions.

Also prohibited are outdoor contact sports as well as operations of leisure centers such as swimming pools and gyms.

The National Capital Region Plus will remain under MECQ until May 14.