

# PRRD PRAISED FOR BANNING USE, IMPORTATION OF VAPES

**MANILA** -- A health practitioner who has been campaigning against the ill effects of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) on Wednesday lauded President Rodrigo Duterte's order to prohibit "the use and importation" of vaping devices or e-cigarettes in the country.

In an interview, Philippine Pediatric Society-Tobacco Control Advocacy Group chairperson Rizalina Raquel Gonzalez thinks President Rodrigo Duterte is "alarmed over the electronic cigarette or vape-associated lung injury (EVALI) case and the increasing prevalence of use of e-cigs by minors".

"Being a smoker and feeling all the bad effects on him, knowing the path of e-cigs as a gateway to smoking, he wants to be pro-health ASAP (as soon as possible)," Gonzales said.

### Gateway to smoking tobacco

The Department of Health (DOH) has noted there are a million Filipino e-cigarette users, with the product easily gaining popularity as it was marketed as a safer alternative to smoking tobacco.

However, using these so-called replacements, Gonzales said, may actually lead to wanting to smoke tobacco in the future.

"E-cigarette use for non-smoking minors is four times at risk to try and engage in tobacco cigarette use. It is a proven gateway to smoking tobacco or they become dual users," Gonzales said.

**E-CIG BAN IS PRO-HEALTH.** Philippine Pediatric Society-Tobacco Control Advocacy Group chairperson Rizalina Raquel Gonzalez on Wednesday (Nov. 20, 2019) lauds President Rodrigo Duterte's move to ban the use and importation of vaping devices in the country. The health department on Nov. 15 announced the first vape-related lung injury case in the

country that involved a minor. (Contributed photo from Probe Media Foundation, Inc.)

Gonzales added that the youth are the "target replacement vapers just like in smoking," saying advertisements "are meant to entice, to attract them and be replacement smokers since they know that nicotine when used by minors, keeps them hooked and will be regularly engaging (in) this bad habit."

### Vaping-related illness

Duterte issued the directive following the first reported case of an illness related to vaping in the country.

On November 15, the DOH confirmed that a 16-year-old girl from Central Visayas who used e-cigarettes for six months suffered from E-cigarette or Vape-Associated Lung Inju-

ry (EVALI).

The girl, who allegedly complained of "sudden-onset severe shortness of breath," met the case criteria of EVALI upon evaluation, based on the guidelines of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In a statement, Health Undersecretary and Food and Drug Administration officer-in-charge Eric Domingo said all e-cigarette users should "seek immediate medical help, and ask their doctors for ways to quit these harmful products."

"No e-cigarette product should be accessible to young children and adolescents, who are uniquely susceptible to the harms of e-cigarettes and nicotine. I urge non-users not to even try e-cigarettes at all," he said.

The President may have also been disappointed over the injunction of the Administrative Order 2019-0007, entitled "Revised Rules and Regulations on Electronic Nicotine and Non-Nicotine Delivery System (ENNDS)," Gonzales said.

The Pasig City Regional Trial Court issued a writ of a preliminary injunction ordering Health Secretary Francisco Duque and Domingo not to implement Administrative Order 2019-0007 which took effect on October 24, 2019.

The injunction allowed manufacturers, distributors, retailers, importers and/or exporters of vaping products to not follow the provisions of the DOH-FDA administrative order unless the writ of a preliminary injunction is lifted by the court. (PNA)

## PRRD orders NFA to buy more palay from farmers

**MANILA** — President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered the National Food Authority (NFA) to increase the country's emergency buffer stock from 15 days to 30 days by buying more palay (unhusked rice) from farmers.

In a press briefing on Thursday, Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary William Dar said the President made the directive during a meeting attended also by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III at the Malacañang Palace Wednesday night.

Dar said Duterte has directed the NFA to accelerate the turnover of its inventory by buying more palay and selling more regular milled rice at an average of 20,000 50-kilogram bags of rice per day.

Duterte, he added, also ordered to extend the uncon-

ditional cash transfer for small farmers affected by low palay prices from one to two years.

A total of PHP3 billion will be allocated for cash transfer extension that will benefit 600,000 farmers tilling one-half to two hectares of rice land every year.

To address the flooding of imported rice into the market to the detriment of Filipino rice farmers, Dar said the DA, through the Bureau of Plant and Industry (BPI), will strictly implement the issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC).

"For instance, the agency will conduct pre-inspection at the point of origin of imported rice stock to ensure rice quality and safety for consumers and at the same time protect the spread of crop pests and diseases," he said.

The DA chief said Duterte fully supports all Filipi-

no farmers and fishers "by empowering them to be more prosperous, as they contribute their share to ensuring food security for all our countrymen."

"The President made it very clear that he strongly supports, in particular, Filipino farmers who are confronted with low palay prices this harvest season," he said.

Dar said the country's rice industry will continue to thrive with the implementation of the programs under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), a component under the Rice Tariffication Law aimed at making Filipino farmers more efficient and productive so they can compete with their counterparts in Southeast Asia.

"The Rice Tariffication Law will be pursued to provide affordable and quality rice to all Filipinos," he said. (PNA)

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### Prayer for Healing

**JESUS**, may Your pure and healthy blood circulate in my ailing organism, and may Your pure and healthy body transform my weak body, and may a healthy and vigorous life throb within me, if it is truly Your holy will. Amen.

O BLOOD AND WATER WHICH FLOWED OUT FROM THE HEART OF JESUS AS A FOUNTAIN OF MERCY FOR US, I TRUST IN YOU!



*Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, Have Mercy on us and on the whole world. Amen.*

### 3 O'CLOCK PRAYER

"You died Jesus, but the source of life flowed out for souls and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fountain of Life immeasurable Divine Mercy, cover the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us."

"O Blood and Water which flowed out from the heart of Jesus as a Fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in you!"

"Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One have mercy on us and on the whole world." (3x) Amen.

Jesus, King of Mercy, I trust in you!

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