

PRESS RELEASE

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International travel restrictions remain under GCQ - BI

MANILA, Philippines - The Bureau of Immigration (BI) said it will continue to implement international flight travel restrictions at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) despite the lifting of the modified enhanced community quarantine in Metro Manila and its being placed under general community quarantine (GCQ).

In a statement, BI Commissioner Jaime Morente said travel restrictions that existed under ECQ and MECQ are still in place unless said restrictions are eased or lifted by the government.

"As a consequence, our operations at the NAIA are still downscaled and our personnel there are still on skeletal and rotational deployment," Morente said.

He added that most international flights remain suspended as a result of the travel restrictions which affected Filipinos and foreigners alike who wished to enter or leave the country.

"Nonetheless, we assure the public that we are always ready to resume full, normal operations in our international airports once the government decides to ease or lift these travel restrictions," the BI chief stated.

According to BI acting port operations chief Grifton Medina, international flights remain limited and few since the start of the lockdown in mid-March.

He further disclosed that BI officers at the NAIA currently serve an average of only 20 to 30 flights a day, a third of which are special flights that ferry medical supplies and other kinds of cargo into the country.

As for the passenger flights, Medina said these are mostly repatriation flights that transport returning overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and chartered sweeper flights that bring foreigners stranded here back to their homelands.

Under existing guidelines approved by the Inter-Agency Task Force Against Infectious Diseases (IATF), only OFWs; Filipino citizens and their spouses and dependents; foreign diplomats; and foreign crew members of airlines are allowed to enter the country.

All foreigners can leave anytime but Filipinos are not allowed to leave unless they are OFWs, permanent residents or holders of student visa in their country of destination.#