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PH sees steady decline in vaccination rate as threat of 'stealth' Omicron resurfaces

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by [Martin Sadongdong](#)

The country is experiencing a continuous decrease in the number of people who are getting vaccinated against Covid-19 despite the high level of willingness of the public to get inoculated.



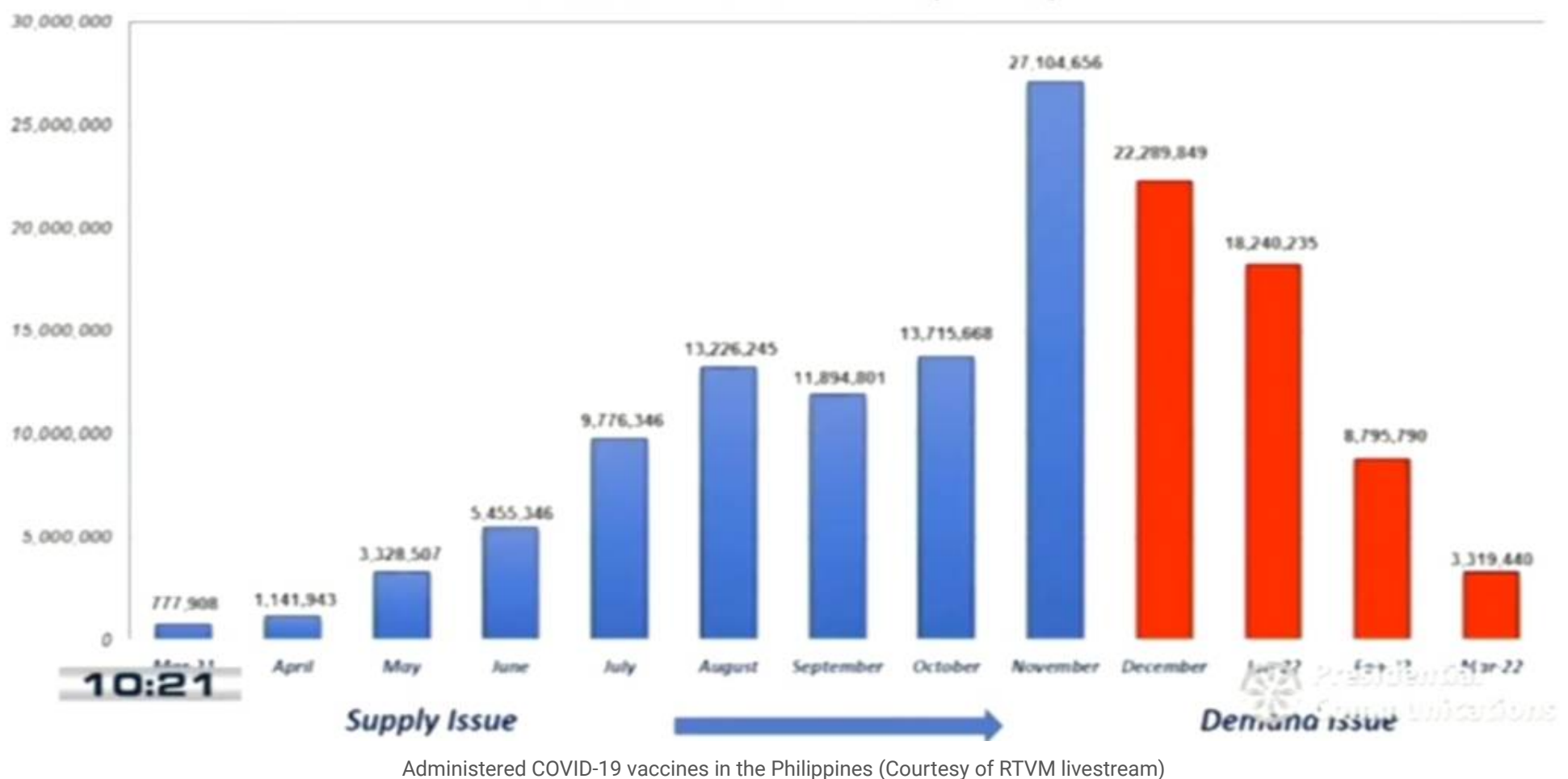
Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr attends the pre-recorded Talk to the People public address of President Duterte aired on March 16, 2022. Behind him is Department of Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi. (Courtesy of Malacanang Palace)

Vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. revealed this observation as he cited two possible reasons for the puzzling situation: complacency and improving Covid-19 situation in the country.

“Continuous pa rin po ang pagdecline ng pagbabakuna lalo na sa pag-a-administer ng booster kahit mataas ang willingness na 80 percent (There is a continuous decline in the vaccination program especially in the administration of booster shots despite the high vaccine willingness at 80 percent),” Galvez said during the pre-recorded Talk to the People public address of President Duterte aired on Wednesday, March 16.

This complacency could spell disaster as the threat of the highly contagious and super stealthy Omicron variant resurfaces in other countries such as China, Hong Kong, United States, and some European countries that are now dealing with multiple outbreaks and re-imposing strict lockdowns.

“Noong unang mga panahon, mayroon tayong supply issue. Sa ngayon nakita po natin nagsisimula po tayong magkaroon ng demand issue dahil gumaganda na po ang kalagayan ng Pilipinas. Meaning, nagiging complacent na po ang mga kasamahan natin sa pagbabakuna (Before, we had a supply issue. But now we are starting to have a demand issue because the situation in the Philippines is improving. Meaning, the people are getting too complacent in getting the vaccines),” Galvez said.



In the first half of March, a total of 3,319,440 vaccine doses were administered nationwide, according to Galvez.

If the vaccination program does not pick up its usual pace, it will fail to match January’s output of 18,240,235 doses and February’s 8,795,790 doses.

Data from the National Vaccination Operations Center (NVOC) showed that there are about two million senior citizens and around 250,000 individuals with co-morbidities who have not yet been vaccinated.

The steady decline was evident during the fourth National Vaccination Days (NVD) where only 1,400,889 doses were administered nationwide.

Of the number, a total of 345,751 vaccines were for first dose; 594,712 vaccines were for second dose; and 460,426 vaccines were for booster shots.

Seven regions have already reached its vaccination target of fully vaccinating at least 70 percent of their population namely National Capital Region (NCR), Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Regions 1, 2, 3, Calabarzon (Region 4A), and Region 6.

Further, eight regions have also fully vaccinated at least 60 percent of their target population including Mimaropa (Region 4B), Regions 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and Caraga.

Only two regions have yet to hit their goal and both are in Mindanao: Soccsksargen (Region 12) which has fully vaccinated 56.06 percent of its target population; and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) with 25.95 percent vaccination rate.

In total, the country has already administered 139.06 million doses nationwide, including 64,660,228 individuals who were fully vaccinated or 71.84 percent of the target 90 million Filipinos.

There were also 11,224,502 individuals who had their booster shots, representing 15.56 percent of the target population.

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