

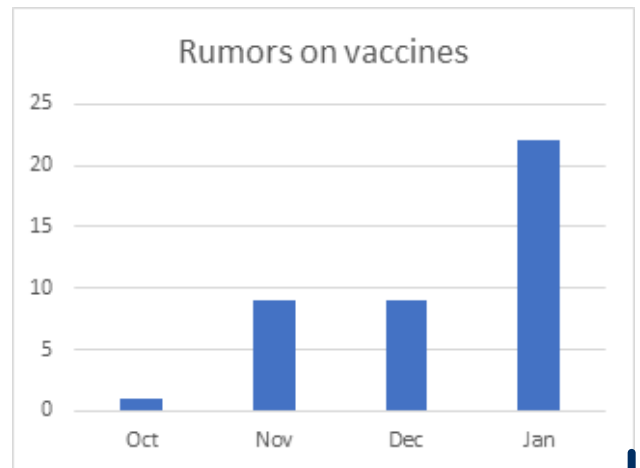
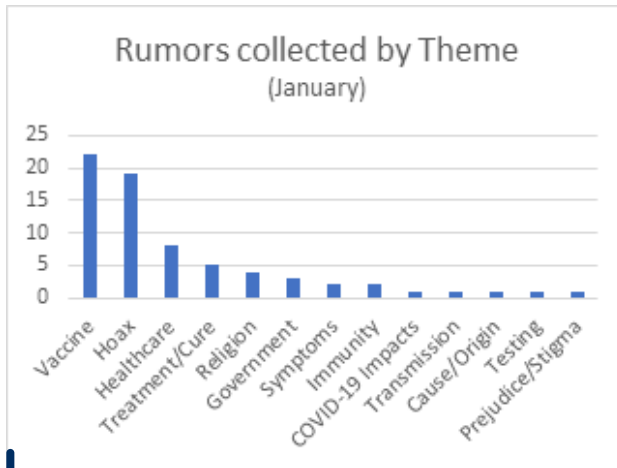


(Trust Bangsamoro) is Rooted in Trust Philippines' biweekly rumor bulletin. Rooted in Trust is a global and local humanitarian response run by Internews to fight the spread of rumors on COVID-19. In the Philippines, the focus is on the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).



What are the trending rumors in BARMM?

Rumors on vaccines rose in January by 144% from December and the highest in the month alone among other topics. It ranked fourth among the other topics since September, comprising 8% of the total rumors. Almost a third of these rumors say that vaccines are deadly and will decrease the population. 8% are related to the vaccine campaign and/or about vaccines not being safe to children. Other rumors are saying vaccines have microchips; vaccines are not real; and declaring that they will not get any vaccine due to false information. Unique rumors say vaccine can cause infertility and are mixed with pork.



Data as of January 26 and based on collected data online and offline.

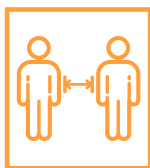
Practice minimum health standards



WASH HANDS



WEAR MASK



MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING



AVOID CROWDED PLACES

For more information, you may watch and tune in to:



SINDAW RANAW
The Coalition of Moro Youth Movement
FB: [CMYM Online News](#)



S'BANG KA MARAWI
FB live: Monday to Friday
6:30 – 7:30 PM



SALIG BANGSARADIO
[Soundcloud](#)
[Spotify](#)

This week's bulletin answers three rumors related to community concerns on the new COVID-19 variants, vaccine safety, and vaccine components.

SALIG BANGSAMORO
COMMUNITY BULLETIN | FEBRUARY 2021



What are people saying?

RUMOR #1

"COVID-19 new variant is sensationalized"

"The new COVID strain in Europe and USA is more contagious but less fatal. Here in Cotabato City, those who are commonly infected seem not to feel anything at all. We get some positive results since we do the RT-PCR test and surprisingly, most recovered even with COVID. Sometimes we don't mind anymore about the infection and just manage the symptoms. Those who died here with COVID-19 complications are those with severe diseases. They are going to die anyway even without the virus. COVID-19 is nothing but it is sensationalized by people who wants to earn money." (Male Doctor, 60+ years old)

Rumor risk level: Medium

Platform: Facebook
Comments: 11

Reactions: 72
Shares: 43



Rumors Answered

This rumor was posted by a doctor in Cotabato City who claimed that COVID-19 in relation to the new variants is only sensationalized. The variants of COVID-19 are real, and it is important for us to understand them so we know what we will do. Scientists have found these variants in the different parts of the world: in United Kingdom (variant B.1.1.7) in South Africa (501.V2), and in Brazil (B.1.1.248). They spread faster than the original virus but there is no evidence yet that they cause a more severe illness or increased risk of death. More studies are being conducted to understand their nature. Here in our country, the Department of Health has reported 17 cases infected with the UK variant in the country:

- First case, returned from UAE on January 7, resident from Quezon City and recovered
- 12 Local transmission in Bontoc, Mountain Province
- 2 returning overseas Filipino workers from Lebanon
- 2 in La Trinidad, Benguet and Calamba City, Laguna

Meanwhile, Sulu went under a 14-day total lockdown last January 4 to prevent entry of another new variant detected in nearby Sabah. Travel restrictions were eventually lifted on January 18. In Cotabato City, an OFW who showed no symptoms was exposed to COVID-19 UK variant last January 26. The Ministry of Health in Bangsamoro Region said the OFW is closely monitored by health officials.

The best way to protect ourselves and our families from the rise of these new variants is not panic but proper information. We have to continue to practice washing our hands, using masks when going out, maintaining one meter distance, avoiding closed spaces, and proper coughing when in public.

And let's remember that the manifestations of the virus differ among humans. Some may display mild symptoms (cough, fever, colds, etc.) while some might not have symptoms at all (asymptomatic). Transmission may still occur even when patients show no symptoms and vulnerable groups such as the elderly may be put to a greater risk.

**DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.
FOLLOW THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES.**





What are people saying?

RUMOR #2 "COVID-19 vaccines kill people"

"They will still go on with the vaccination even after the death of Tiffany Dover. I have a link that I can share to those who want to know. Don't get vaccinated if you don't want to die. That Tiffany in the left is impostor. It is no longer her." [with screen captured photos of two identical women said to be Dover]. (Male, 26-35 years old)

Rumor risk level: High Platform: Facebook Reactions: 825
Comments: 2,200 Shares: 937

"We are miserable. I won't really get vaccinated if it will just cause me death." [with social media card by local media organization Brigada News with screaming head saying: 23 people died of vaccines; and subtext saying: 23 nursing home patients allegedly died after they got Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines in Norway and the those who died were elderly and had existing diseases.]

Rumor risk level: High Platform: Facebook Reactions: 172
Comments: 50 Shares: 361



Rumors Answered

Vaccines are not designed to hurt people.

As emphasized in previous [Salig Bangsamoro bulletins](#), vaccines are the single most, lifesaving and cost-effective medical intervention that reduces the risk of getting a disease. They have been proven effective to control, eliminate, and remove of some of the most life-threatening diseases in our history. And just like medicines that we take, side effects are usually common, mild, and usually self-heal after a few days.

As the COVID-19 vaccination has begun in various parts of the world, reports have circulated online questioning its safety just like these two rumors. The video of Tiffany Dover, a nurse manager from the United States fainting after receiving Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine was used to claim that the vaccine is not safe but Ms. Dover recovered and clarified in an [interview with a US-based news channel](#) that she has a medical condition where she faints when feeling pain. The US [Center for Disease Control](#) recognizes that one may faint after vaccination which may be a response to the process and not to the vaccine itself or its components.:

We must also keep in mind and expect that once we receive the vaccine, side effects may be experienced. Pfizer-BioNTech has reported that the following side effects may be experienced a day or two after receiving a dose of their vaccine:

In the arm where you got the shot:
Pain | Swelling | Redness

Throughout the rest of your body:
Chills | Tiredness | Headache

The [WHO](#) emphasizes that the risks carried by the diseases which can be prevented by vaccines are much more dangerous than any risks associated with vaccine itself. Being vaccinated is not just about us or our family, but it paves the way to see the light at the end of the tunnel for the entire world. A healthy population equals healthy nation.

**VACCINES ARE SAFE.
THEY ARE NOT DESIGNED TO HARM.**





What are people saying?

RUMOR #3

"COVID-19 vaccine has pork gelatin components."

"Will you agree to be vaccinated against COVID-19 if it is mixed with pork? COVID-19 vaccine has pork gelatin components." (posted with a link to an article on UAE Islamic body issuing fatwa approving COVID-19 vaccine even with pork).

Rumor risk level: Low

Platform: Facebook
Comments: 10

Reactions: 2
Shares: 7



Rumors Answered

Some live vaccines such as those intended to prevent flu, measles, mumps, rubella, and chickenpox contain gelatin derived from pigs. This gelatin is used as a stabilizer wherein it functions to protect the live virus against the effects of temperature especially during storage and transportation. And because of this, there are increasing concerns among Muslim communities regarding the components of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Pfizer BioNTech, Oxford-Astrazeneca, and Moderna have already release full product specifications wherein vaccine components are laid out. From these reports, the companies have already confirmed that their vaccines do not contain pork-derived gelatin stabilizers. Further information is yet to be release by other companies who will be manufacturing and distributing COVID-19 vaccines.

Muslim leaders have also stated that vaccines with gelatin components do not break religious dietary laws, because it undergoes a purification process.

Further, most of these vaccines are injected or inhaled rather than ingested. Thus, vaccines are allowed under religious laws, and more harm will be incurred if vaccines are not used.

For instance, in 2018, a measles outbreak occurred in Indonesia after the Indonesian Ulema Council decreed that the measles and rubella vaccines were "haram" or forbidden under Islam because of the gelatin. A spike in the number of measles cases in the country was observed, placing it in the 3rd spot with the highest numbers.

Let us be on standby for further information, guidance, and certification from the remaining vaccine companies to ensure that the vaccines that we will be getting against COVID-19 is halal-certified.

SALIG BANGSAMORO
COMMUNITY BULLETIN | FEBRUARY 2021



We welcome your feedback, questions, and suggestions to help local media produce reliable and accurate reporting on COVID-19.
Please contact: **Kia Obang, Data Analyst** (kobang@internews.org) or **Paola Mikaela Alpay, Information Manager** (palpay@internews.org)