

MEDIA INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
Southern Philippines Medical Center, J.P. Laurel Avenue, Bajada, Davao City
26 December 2017

Q: ... sir 'yung naging pag-uusap niyo nung mga pamilya sa taas?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, words of consolation, words of reality, words of... religious words. But I... stressed ko sa kanila that at this time, death to me is a spiritual journey. So nobody can deal with it except the... 'yung ano --- No amount of kind words, consoling words. Sabi ko, "It is always a spiritual journey between the mother, father, brother, sister." But I told them to pray and asked the priest to pray a very short prayer pagkatapos ko na magsalita, just to prepare them because there's really no sense in overdoing things. Nakita naman ninyo. So you just prepare for those...

Q: May hiniling po ba sila, sir, sa inyo? May hiniling po sila sa inyo, sir?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: 'Yung iba, how do they go about bringing the cadavers. May isa naman kasi nag --- Sabi niya eh, [inaudible]. Sabi ko sa kanila, "Sunog na 'yan." And even if you bring the cadaver back home, you won't be able to open up the coffin for people to see the... 'yung patay, the dead. Ingon (sabi) niya. Ako sa inyo, tatal nasunog na lang rin 'yan, sunugin na lang niyo. I suggested cremation. It's the pinaka-ano, pinakamalinis, pinaka-expedient way of doing things.

Of course, it was a crisis last night. And I consider it that lucky because I was around to commiserate with the people there. And I was the one who broke the news to them. Kasi Inday begged off. Sabi niya, "Hindi ko kaya, pa." Eh sanay naman ako sa ganito. Sabi ko sa kanila na, "According to the ground commander, 'yung, doon sa [inaudible]..." Sabi ko na ano na --- "Siya 'yung may sabi sa akin.

He communicate to me. He was there, doon sa fire scene, the chances of survival is zero o are, chance of survival is zero for all." So sinabi ko sa kanila. And this is the second time na nagkita kami. So what is there to talk about the sunog? What I assured them is that the truth will --- Let the truth come out. 'Yan lang naman ang ano rin nila eh. Totoo lang, ano ang nangyari. And for as long as the --- Maybe the compensation and the expenses are answered. Pero ako nag-commit na ako that government is willing to chip in.

Q: Sir, may information po na may dalawa pa raw po na nawawala aside from...

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Hindi confirmed 'yan. Wala... walang confirmation 'yan. So... hindi namin alam kung saan o --- All accounted na sila doon sa ano eh. The numbers are correct already as far as the...

Q: Sir, nang galing po 'yun sir sa Davao City fire marshal, 'yung babae po, Alagado, if I'm not mistaken.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Nandiyan sa --- Sabi niya, may dalawa pa?

Q: Sabi niya po, may dalawang missing. 'Yung isa daw po ay possible NCCC employee, isa naman po foreign national.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Bakit haluan nila ng foreign national? Anong gawin ng foreign national nang maagang-maaga doon?

Q: [inaudible] Pero galing po 'yun kay ma'am, sa fire marshal po.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Sana...

Q: Basta the official count is 37?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I cannot --- To me, that's speculation at this time. I have to validate it. What's really validated properly, ito ngayong na transport na dito. There's nothing to bring back the cadavers. Nandiyan na 'yung mga tao. Hindi pa naman lahat eh. Dahan-dahan lang pero they're transporting the cadavers now.

Q: Sir, any statement po sa resignation ni Vice Mayor Pulong Duterte, sir? Isip Bise Mayor sa Dakbayan sa Dabaw (as Vice Mayor of Davao City), sir?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, sa kanya 'yun. You... Hindi kita masagot. Hindi ako 'yung nag-resign eh. But nagtanong siya kagabi. Doon kami nagkita-kita kami doon sa, 'yung magkapatid, si Mayor pati siya. Habang naghihintay kami ng balita, tinanong niya ako. Sabi ko sa kanya, "Ikaw. You... you are in a position to do what is right. Kung ano lang ang tama sa iyo, gawin mo."

I never suggested any resignation. Sabi ko, "Ikaw, you..." Siguro 'yung sa anak nya, 'yung pictorial at 'yung --- Baka nasaktan din siya noong 'yung mga insinuation about 'yung sa... Napuno na siguro. Pinatawag sila sa Congress for nothing. Well, about the only thing that is there was this name, his name which appeared in a --- And he considered it most unfair to... sa kanya. Sabi ko, "Well, let the people decide. But if you think that there is a better to do it, do what is right." 'Yun lang. ---

* * *