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MEDIA INTERVIEW BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. FOLLOWING THE 125TH PHILIPPINE NAVY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

[Held at Philippine Navy Headquarters in the City of Manila | 26 May 2023]

Q: Sir, good morning. 'Yung dalawang kinomisyon na barko, do you intend to use this in patrolling West Philippine Sea?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Oh yes, oh yes. Lahat 'yan ginagamit talaga natin pang-patrolya, hindi lamang sa West Philippine Sea kung hindi doon sa civil defense.

Kagaya ngayon, ang aming pinag-uusapan at pinaghahandaan ay 'yung bagyo and of course, our Armed Forces plays always a very important part when it comes to search and rescue, pati sa pagdala ng relief.

So, all the duties, they are already --- since they have already been commissioned then talagang ito ay isasama na natin sa imbentaryo ng ating mga patrol para gagamitin, both for the defense from external forces and also for civil defense sa pagtulong sa mga disaster na nangyayari dito sa Pilipinas.

Q: Sir, good morning po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning.

Q: Our Asian neighbor countries are gearing up their navies, not just only for security concerns but also for humanitarian concerns din po. Will you do this sir sa ating Philippine Navy?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We're already doing it. Kaya tayo nagpa-partner sa kanila. We have, as you know, we held the very large-scale Balikatan exercise then we had another smaller scale exercise with the Australian armed forces. Of course, center of all of that is going to be in the Navy dahil archipelago tayo at ang binabantayan natin ay ang mga isla natin.

So, talagang patuloy ang capabilities natin. The division --- there is no need to divide between the forces that are going to be used for external --- for defense against external threats and for those used for civil defense.

So, titingnan talaga natin na ang --- pagka-acquire, pag magpo-procure tayo ng mga materials, mga equipment ay lagi nating iniisip na dual role, hindi lang defense kung hindi pati ang pagtulong sa --- pagka may dumating na disaster dito sa Pilipinas.

Q: Hi, sir. Magandang umaga po. Sir, nabanggit niyo na rin po ‘yung disaster. Ipapa-elaborate na rin po namin kung ano po ‘yung inyong direktiba, ‘yun pong instruction considering na mayroon po tayong inaasahan na posibleng super typhoon?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, we have been preparing for most of this week already. Nakapag-forward positioning kami ng mga relief goods doon sa areas na nakikita namin na aabutan ng bagyo, which is mostly in Northern Luzon.

However, there is a difference dito sa bagyong ito dahil although dadaan lang north of the Philippines, apparently hihilain niya ‘yung habagat para --- and there is a chance na magkakaroon ng malakas na ulan pati hanggang --- hindi lang Southern Luzon, Visayas, pati baka Mindanao pati.

Kaya’t we have already warned the LGUs to prepare in case of heavy rains and flooding.

So, ang aming ginagawa ay we leave it to the LGUs right now to make the call kung ano ‘yung gagawin nila pero nandito lang --- sinasabi namin, the national government is here to assist.

We are in constant contact with the local governments para makita natin what is the situation in their place pagka nakadaan na ‘yung bagyo, pagka natapos na ‘yung mga ulan, mabawasan na ‘yung ulan, titingnan natin.

We are in constant contact with them also to find out kung ano ‘yung kailangan nila, ano ‘yung nangyari doon sa lugar nila and then with that way, we will be able to respond properly.

So, it's a little different from the usual situation kung saan lang dumadaan ‘yung bagyo, ‘yun lang ang inaalala natin, pero iba itong nangyari dito kasi malakas ‘yung typhoon eh.

So, humihila siya ng mga weather pattern, pumapasok dito sa Pilipinas.

So, that’s what we are looking out for.

Q: Good morning, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning.

Q: Sir, is there a plan po to acquire a submarine for the Philippines?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Yes.

Q: And if yes po, any progress po?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: There is a plan. But it's still being developed dahil ang commitment para mag-operate ng submarine is not a small commitment, it is a very large commitment because the training that is involved, the equipment that is involved and the operational requirements that are involved are quite significant.

So, it is still part of our plan. But right now, we are in the middle of developing mostly our anti-submarine capabilities. So, 'yun ang uunahin natin and then hopefully when the time comes and the conditions are agreeable then we might be able to acquire those submarines.

Marami tayong offer from different countries. Not only to acquire submarines but also to build them here in the Philippines.

So, 'yun ang tinitingnan na natin ngayon dahil malaking bagay 'yun. If they are built here and we can actually build submarines here and provide those submarines to other countries then that's another source of jobs, and of income and increased capability for our Navy.

Q: Sir, good morning. Reaction lang po sa hirit ng isang mambabatas sir na magpatupad po ng total deployment ban ng OFWs sa Kuwait?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Ah, 'yung sa Kuwait?

Q: Yes po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Magba-ban tayo? Ako, I'm never very comfortable 'yung nagba-ban na ganon. Dahil parang ang pag-ban sinasabi mo forever na 'yan, hindi na puwede.

Ang sinasabi... Ang naging problema natin tayo ang binan (ban) ng Kuwait at ayaw ng magpa-issue ng mga bagong visa.

Ay hindi kami nagkakasundo dahil sinasabi nila may paglalabag daw tayo sa kanilang mga rules. Wala naman kaming nakikita kaya't 'yun ang naging sitwasyon.

So, we just have to... But you know, I don't want to burn any bridges na sasabihin, baka in the future, baka in a little while, a few months from now, a year from now, sasabihin magbago ang sitwasyon 'di baka puwede pa tayong magpadala ulit ng mga ating workers sa Kuwait.

Kaya't I don't know. 'Yung sometimes, overreaction 'yung ban. Basta, ban na lang tayo nang ban. Hindi naman tama.

We have to react to the situation as it is. And I think the proper reaction is to take the decision of the Kuwaiti government to no longer issue new visas.

Eh wala tayong magagawa. It's their country. Those are their rules. So, we will just leave that issue open and hopefully we will continue to negotiate with them.

We will continue to consult with them at baka sakali down the road ay magbago ang sitwasyon, maibalik ngayon ang ating mga workers, lalo na 'yung mga nabitin. There are about 800 na papunta na dapat sa Kuwait ay hindi na nakapunta dahil nga dito sa bagong ban.

So, hopefully down the road, we will continue to work to improve that situation.

All right. Thank you. Good morning.

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