PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
MEDIA INTERVIEW IN PAGUDPUD, ILOCOS NORTE
May 19, 2023

(00:00:00)
SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL: Sir, first question from Ms. Vicky Adena from Ilocos Norte Media.

VICKY ADENA: Yes, naimbag nga malem yo, Apo Presidente.

PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.: Good afternoon.

VICKY ADENA: And we're glad you're back again here in our province, Sir.

PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.: Me too. I'm very happy to be back.

VICKY ADENA: Yes, Sir. Na-mention mo kanina, Sir, na with these increasing numbers of renewable energy, particular iyong mga wind farm na nasa likuran natin at marami pa dyan at mga solar, do we expect a lower rate of electricity, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: The cost of electricity,iyon pagka naayos natin, ito iyong nababalitaan ninyong problema sa distribution, isang bagay iyan. At dahan-dahan iyong ating mga kooperatiba around the country inaayos na nila iyong kanilang financial na position para pagandahin para naman pwedeng i-privatize kaya may corporate… Para sa akin I would've hope na kaya iyong gobyerno iyong gagawa pero mukhang hindi na dahil nagsimula na iyong— iyong ibang cooperative na privatize na , nabili na ng mga private groups. Pero ang maganda sa private group, efficiency importante sa kanila kaya't aayusin din nila iyong pag-aari ng bagong cooperatives.

So, slowly iyong from the production, sa production hindi naman tayo nagkakaproblema eh, sa transmission doon tayo nagkakaproblema. Iyong production problema lang natin kulang, kaya't kailangan natin itong wind farm, kailangan natin iyong solar, kailangan natin iyong hydro, geothermal, kahit iyong nuclear pinag-aaralan natin ng mabuti kung papanong gagawin na safe. So that's just… And pag nagawa natin lahat iyon mararamdaman talaga natin, the prices will come down, our production cost will come down, our distribution

cost will come down. Iyon lang naman ang --- iyon ang nagiging problema, nagiging obstacle doon sa presyo kaya nagkakaganyan na napakataas.

VICKY ADENA: Agyaman kami, apo President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Thank you.

SECRETARY GARAFIL: Thank you, Mr. President. Next is Mr. Nel Maribojoc of UNTV.

NEL MARIBOJOC (UNTV): Sir, magandang hapon po. Sir, may panawagan na for the review ng prangkisa ng NGCP, susuportahan po ba ninyo ito, Sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, depends on what --- there has to be a good reason na para i-withdraw ang prangkisa. Ang tinitignan ko, ang naririnig ko sa mga news item ay tungkol sa security problem. Ako naman, siguro that's part of the discussion pero ang tinitignan ko rin ay talaga iyong performance kung maganda ang kanilang performance, kung sumunod sila sa kontrata doon between the government and the grod corporation.

So, iyan ang iniimbestigahan ng Congress, both Houses, at tinitignan natin kung talaga ba ay pwede na lang ayusin ang sistema. Because kung tanggalin natin ang prangkisa we will have to find somebody else to operate the grid. So, tanggalin mo iyong prangkisa, iyong nandyan ngayon tanggal silang lahat. Saan natin kukunin iyong kapalit? We will find a way to absorb the others into our new --- in other words, medyo magkakaroon tayo ng gap na walang management na experience. So, magti-train pa tayo ng tao, etcetera, etcetera. So, iyong security risk syempre andyan iyan; pinag-aaralan ng mabuti kaya may MOU na ang NICA at saka iyong NGCP para iyong NICA nakabantay sila na tiyakin na hindi maaari na kung sinumang taga-labas, somebody sitting in their office, I don't know, in Eastern Europe will decide to cut our power, eh hindi mangyayari iyon. So, that's something that we have started to look at and to attend to.

It is really the performance bakit nagkakaroon. Halimbawa, bakit nagkakaroon ng outage sa Negros at saka Panay Island? Dahil ang Negros has an excess of power supply, ang kailangan lang iyong submarine cable from Negros na ilalagay hindi pa nagagawa iyon. Kaya, it does not make any sense. Mindanao has an excess also. Ang pinaka naghihirap sa power supply is Visayas. So, Luzon medyo manageable; Mindanao excess nga. Iyong Region six, seven, eight, iba-iba ang sitwasyon. iyong Region VI mabuti-buti pero wala ngang transmission line. So, iyon ang mga kailangan nating buuhin to get this right.

And there was a very clear agreement in the contract as to what --- how much investment the grid corporation will put in. Now ang pinag-aaralan ngayon, nagawa ba talaga lahat nila iyon? Kung nagawa nila lahat iyon, bakit kulang pa at nagkaganito? That's the issue at hand for me.

NEL MARIBOJOC: Sir, given those issues, open po kayo for possible takeover ng government doon sa NGCP, Sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Whoever will take over ganoon pa rin ang problema. The problem is that we will have to replace the personnel who will operate and we still have to build. What we really have to do is to build those transmission lines, iyong ang kailangan nating habulin. I think however we handle the franchise problem, kung tanggalin natin ang prangkisa, kunin ng gobyerno, ibigay natin sa ibang korporasyon, whatever it is, but the delay that will be caused is the problem that we have. Kung basta't tanggalin natin iyong prangkisa, paalisin natin silang lahat, sino ang magpapatakbo noon? And that's the same problem whatever option we choose to exercise.

NEL MARIBOJOC: Thank you very much, Sir.

SECRETARY GARAFIL: Thank you Mr. President. Next is Nestor Corales of PDI.

NESTOR CORALES (PDI): Naimbag nga malem, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Good afternoon.

NESTOR CORALES: Mr. President, what are your thoughts on the sudden demotion of former President Arroyo from being a Senior Deputy Speaker to just a Deputy Speaker?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, you know, these things if you are in government long enough, you'll have seen many of these. In my time as Congressman, I had two terms as Congressman, naka-tatlo yata kaming ganyan eh. And this is just part of the reorganization and the Speaker's prerogative as to how he feels the House should be organized.

So, nagyayari talaga iyan. I don't think we all --- any of us know what it all means, where the chips will fall after all this reorganization. But I don't think it is --- I don't... I think we should also be careful to not read too much into it. I really see it just as a run-of-the-mill, comes in once in a while, run-of-the-mill reorganization na ginagawa sa House.

NESTOR CORALES: Thank you, Mr. President.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Ms. Cath Valente of Manila Times.

MS. CATH VALENTE (MANILA TIMES): Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. President. Can we get a reaction on the resignation of Vice President Sara Duterte as a member of the LAKAS-CMD. She denounced po what she called political toxicity and or political power play. What's your thought on this, Sir?

(00:07:49)
PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Very simple. Exactly as she says. Alam mo naman si Inday Sara is very plainspoken. Kung ano ang sinabi niya, iyon ang ibig sabihin niya. She has too much work to do that she cannot be involved in any of this. She cannot allow herself to be distracted. That's the way I read it.

And it's true because kung titignan mo kung ano iyong mga hinaharap niya, talagang marami talaga at hindi niya pwede to be involved in whatever it is that's going on. She has to concentrate on her job as the Secretary for the DepEd and now, NTF-ELCAC. Marami talaga siyang gagawin.

So, I can understand why sasabihin niya, o sige ayusin ninyo muna iyan at gagawin ko muna itong mga importanteng kailangan kong tapusin.

MS. KAT VALIENTE: Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Thank you.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Allan Francisco, PTV 4.

MR. ALLAN FRANCISCO (PTV 4): Hi, Sir. Magandang hapon po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Good afternoon.

MR. ALLAN FRANCISCO: Sir, a few days ago you mentioned about your plan to revive the Philippine Sugar Corporation. Can we ask for additional details and how soon can we expect its revival, Sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Here's the thing. There was a decision to abolish it. It was never actually abolished. Buhay pa. It exists but walang board member, hindi nag-pa-function.

So, ang ginawa namin when we met with the sugar industry stakeholders the other day, sinabi ko tingnan natin kung ano ang charter ng Philippine Sugar Corporation at tignan natin kung ano'ng gusto natin ayusin, papalitan because the situation when the PHILSUCOR was created is different certainly from the situation now. So, what would they like to do?

Kasi iba 'iyong --- when PHILSUCOR was created, malakas ang ating export --- in-e-export natin ang asukal. Eh ngayon, hindi na tayo ganoon. So, ang habol naman natin ngayon, ang concentration natin ngayon is how to increase production and how to support the farmers. Iyon ang pinaka-importante sa lahat. Kasi we have the food supply, but it's important… Lagi natin sinasabi: production, production, production. Huwag natin kakalimutan. Kailangan maganda naman ang hanap-buhay ng ating mga magsasaka. So, we're trying to put that together.

PHILSUCOR, it was the request of the some of the mill owners; sabi nila puwedeng buhayin ulit iyan dahil ang trabaho ng PHILSUCOR magbibigay ng processing equipment, magbibigay ng tractor, tutulungan tayo na— may financing para sa consolidation, and that's exactly what we need now. So tamang-tama rin ang kanilang suggestion. At tinitignan ngayon natin kung ano ang naiwan doon sa Philippine Sugar Corporation and how we will bring it back in the way in, in a way na iyon ang gusto natin para nakatutok sa mga problemang hinaharap ng sugar industry ngayon.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Thank you, Mr. President. Last question, Mr. Rex Remitio from CNN.

MR. REX REMITIO (CNN): Mr. President, magandang hapon. Ayun, 'di ba you recently signed Republic Act 11939, iyong amendments doon sa Fixed Term Law. Do you think po ba iyong amendments na ito would be enough to address the concerns of the AFP?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, not all of them. We are still in the midst of putting together the pension plans so that it will be self-regenerating. However, this takes care of— to a very large extent, this takes care of the problem of the seniority and the— ginagawa nating mga promotion na kapag masyadong tumatagal ang mga nasa taas, wala nang chance iyong mga sumusunod. Paakyat na ng paakyat iyan. So, we have to, we have to rationalize it.

We moved the retirement age from 55 to 57 for a really simple reason, K to 12. Ang mga recruit, mas matanda na. They come in two years later. So, we should move also to adjust - kasi they come in two years later - we should adjust naman doon sa retirement, and mukha namang well-received iyon.

So that really— the amendments to the AFP law, were really to address some of the comments and complaints actually from some, especially the younger officers. Aba'y kung masyado matagal maiwan iyong mga senior officers, wala na kaming pag-asa na ma-promote sa matataas na position. So, I think that took care of that.

Now we're working hard on making sure that the– we have a pension plan, both for the AFP and for the police, na maging self-sustaining. Kasi kung ganitong pabawas na ng pabawas ang pondo niyan, after a while mauubos na iyan. Ang prediction ko if we go and keep going the way we do within five, six years wala na. We will have to do something else. So, bago pa mangyari iyon inuunahan na natin, we are designing a better a better system.

We are also putting together a program for housing for, again, the uniform services, the police at saka AFP. Iba-iba naman ang issue dyan but I think we will be able to do it at kasama na rin, maybe we can tie it in with a pension. There are many schemes para hindi masyado mabigat para doon sa sundalo o para doon sa pulis.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Okay, thank you.
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