

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS, JR.'s  
KAPIHAN SA MEDIA**

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**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** Patapos na iyong State Visit dito sa Vietnam. We are just attending the state dinner that will be given by the President for myself and for the delegation. And it has been a very productive visit considering that we have been here essentially only for 24 hours. But this has been a product of a great deal of discussion and hard work on both sides, on the Philippines' side and on the Vietnam side. Nagsimula ito dahil lagi kong nakikita at nakakasama si Prime Minister Pham sa mga ASEAN, sa mga APEC.

At during that time, nilapitan ko siya at sinabi ko, dapat mayroon tayong usapan, tayong Vietnam at saka Pilipinas na hindi tayo magkakagulo. Kahit na nagkakagulo iyong iba, tayo dapat ay gumawa tayo ng agreement na hindi tayo papasok diyan sa gulo na iyan. And then after several meetings, I think four or five meetings, mayron din silang prinopose tungkol nga sa trade in rice, specifically, sinasabi nga.

Dahil nagbanggit ko rin na tayo ay number two yata na importer galing sa Vietnam. Kaya't importante rin sa kanila iyong ating exchange at siyempre para sa atin, very important iyan because it is a way to assure that we have a sufficient supply of rice.

Nagsimula sa ganyan, ngunit syempre lumawak na ang usapan at napunta sa mga iba't-ibang mga bagay hanggang sa security; hanggang sa agri; hanggang sa transfer of technology; napunta sa infrastructure development dito sa Vietnam pati na ang pagbuo ng isang sistema para maka-mina tayo ng mga tinatawag na green minerals, at mula roon ay makakagawa tayo ng baterya sa Pilipinas at ito ay ilalagay sa electric vehicles. Hangga't inaatay natin na mangyari iyon, the electric vehicles are already available and they want to enter into the Philippine market with the electric vehicles from here in Vietnam. Ito'y galing sa Vingroup.

At marami pang ibang napag-usapan, pati na iyong digital technology, pati scholarships sa AI, at saka sa tech industries. Ito talaga ay hindi namin inaasahan na mangyari, ngunit it happened.

And that's why considering that we were here for such a short time, we covered many, many subjects which provides the opening for further discussion, and I think that Vietnam is very interested in coming to the Philippines.

But ang puno't dulo nitong lahat ay iyong security and defense na usapan ng Vietnam at ng Pilipinas para hindi tayo magkakaproblema kagaya ng nangyayari sa ibang bansa sa West Philippine Sea.

Kaya't iyon talaga para sa akin ay napakahalaga at iyong agrikultura syempre hindi natin pwedeng basta't isantabi iyan dahil again, it's very important. We have commitments now to be supplied by the Vietnamese Rice Traders.

Pinag-uusapan ang amounts at inikot ni Secretary Kiko Laurel iyong kanilang mga ibang lugar. Dinala siya sa mga research stations, sa kanilang mga farms at ang sabi niya sa akin, marami siyang natutunan at marami siyang nakikitang possibilities, ng mga potential na pwedeng palaguin.

So, just from those two, I think, already we have achieved very much in this very short time. But considering that many other subjects came into play as well, again, marami tayong pwedeng i-develop na potential.

Ang ating naging arrangements sa kanila ay iyong aking laging sinasabi na... Kasi iyong Vietnam at saka iyong Pilipinas in terms of the economy, in terms of all of that, we are very similar.

So, sasabihin, "Eh bakit kayo nagtutulungan?" Eh dahil ang sinusundan natin is, "Let us compete but let us also cooperate at every possible chance that we have". At naunawaan naman talaga nila and they agreed that that is the way forward. So, that is, in essence, what we have been able to do and what we have been able to achieve on this trip to Vietnam this time.

So now, I'll open the floor to your questions.

**SEC. CHELOY GARAFIL:** Kristina Maralit from Manila Times.

**KRISTINA MARALIT (Manila Times):** Good afternoon po, Mr. President. Sir, in your recent trip to Japan, nabanggit niyo po that the ASEAN must forge its own code of conduct with regards to the South China Sea and katulad nga po ng nabanggit ninyo, it's imperative na magkaroon tayo ng agreement with Vietnam regarding this.

How soon po ninyo inaasahan for this to be crafted and have you taken this up with the Vietnamese President and the Prime Minister?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** Well, we're pretty much there.

Yun iyong Memorandum of Understanding na ating ginawa between our two coastguards, pati iyong mga plano na magkakaroon ng joint cruises at joint exercises this year 2024.

So talagang iyong sinasabi ko noon na magkaroon ng agreement, kung hindi natin matapos ang code of conduct with ASEAN and China, ay sabi ko, "Eh gawin natin na bilateral lang muna ng members of ASEAN." Para naman hindi na natin kailangan alalahanin na magkakaproblema tayo sa Vietnam, magkakaproblema tayo sa Brunei, magkakaproblema tayo sa Malaysia, etcetera, etcetera."

That's the effort that we're trying to do and we have succeeded in that to a certain measure here in Vietnam.

**KRISTINA MARALIT (Manila Times):** Thank you, sir.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Thank you.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Kenneth Paciente, PTV 4.

**KENNETH PACIENTE, PTV 4:** Hi, sir, good afternoon. Sir, may update po ba doon sa napagkasunduan ng Department of Agriculture ng Pilipinas at ng Vietnamese National Assembly noong 2022, kung saan iyong isusulong po iyong kooperasyon sa pagsasaka at pangingisda. Isa po ba 'yun sa na-discuss niyo rin, sir?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Marami tayong napag-usapan, kahit sa Research and Development. Ang Vietnam ay pumupunta naman talaga sila, iyong kanilang mga researcher, iyong kanilang mga siyentipiko at saka iyong kanilang mga magsasaka ay pumupunta sa IRRI. At madalas sila nandoon and to develop some of the new varieties, to develop some of the new techniques in the cultivation of rice. So, that would continue but mas dadami pa.

In terms of fisheries, ang napag-usapan natin ay iyong naging maliwanag sa atin kung papaano ang treatment natin kasi mayroong kaunting— kung minsan may mga Vietnamese fishermen na napapadpad sa Philippine waters and vice versa, kung paano ang handling niyan para hindi magkagulo. Just to treat them humanely and to send them back to their respective countries.

So, yes. In terms of development, ayun, iyon ang dapat nating pag-usapan pa. We have to lay down the specifics because that is one of the subjects that I was referring to, na hindi naman talaga natin— wala sa agenda pero lumitaw na subject matter na para sa atin ay very interesting iyan kaya’t— ‘yun.

Ito’y simula pa lang, maraming nasimulan ngayon kaya’t dadami ang diskusyon natin with Vietnam in many other aspects of our relationship.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Thank you, sir. Raquel Bayan, Radyo Pilipinas.

**RAQUEL BAYAN (Radyo Pilipinas):** Good afternoon po, sir. Sir, ngayon po mayroon na tayong naselyohan na Maritime Cooperation with Vietnamese Coast Guard, tapos mayroon pa po tayo, sir, na isang— ito pong incident prevention and management of the South China Sea na kanina rin po prinisenta. Mayroon po bang mga partikular na hakbang sa loob nitong mga agreement para ma-prevent na po natin iyong aggression ng China sa South China Sea?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Well, the agreement is between Vietnam and the Philippines. So, kung anong gawin ng ibang bansa, hindi naman kasama iyon. Basta’t ang ating usapan with Vietnam is pagka may nangyari mayroon tayong maliwanag na paraan kung paano pag-usapan para hindi lumaki ang gulo.

Hindi naman tayo nagkaka— we don’t have any confrontations with Vietnam, as a matter of fact. Despite the fact that we have conflicts in territorial waters— about territorial waters, but it has never gone beyond any diplomatic contacts. Hindi napupunta sa gulo kagaya nang sa mga nangyayari sa nakaraan.

So, it is a bilateral arrangement between the Philippines and Vietnam.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Thank you, sir. Other topics. Kat Domingo of ABS-CBN.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Okay.

**KAT DOMINGO, ABS-CBN:** Hi, Sir. Good afternoon. Sir, how is your relationship with Vice President Sara Duterte after [inaudible] feud vitriol between you, your wife and your administration?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Well, it's exactly the same because she hasn't said anything of that nature. And wala naman siyang sinasabi na ganyang klase. So, hindi naman nagbabago.

**KAT DOMINGO, ABS-CBN:** Sir, follow-up. Will you keep her as your Education secretary despite calls...?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** I'm sorry?

**KAT DOMINGO, ABS-CBN:** Will you keep her as your Education Secretary despite calls from the family for you to step down?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS, JR.:** Yes, yes, yes.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Sir, last question. Ivan Mayrina, GMA 7.

**IVAN MAYRINA, GMA-7:** Magandang hapon, Mr. President. Over the last few days, there were several calls for you to intervene in the clash of the two Houses of Congress over People's Initiative. How do you intend to resolve this, sir?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** Well, we have been in continuous discussion with both Houses in the recent days. In fact, before I left I met with our legal luminaries and tried to find a way dahil naman ang habol ko talaga diyan are the economic provisions that I have been talking about this for many, many years already.

So, napupunta sa ibang usapan, eh at nagagamit na pangpulitika itong isyu na ito. So, I have asked the leaders of both Houses and again, some of the best constitutional minds that we have in the Philippines to come up with a simpler solution that does not cause so much controversy.

I think it is the usual conflict between the House and the Senate in the—whether to vote together or separately. Now the best advice that we are getting, the best analysis and interpretation that we have is that the legislature is of a bicameral nature. And therefore, that implies that they will vote separately.

So, how that will be done now is what we are trying to figure out, how will it be done so that both Houses' role in this bicameral system is preserved and that is what we are working on right now.

**IVAN MAYRINA, GMA-7:** Sir, what about People's Initiative? What happens to People's initiative?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** We don't know yet. We haven't made those decisions yet. But I think as of now the People's Initiative is—they're continuing... but that is not—I don't know if that is still one of the options that remains to us.

**IVAN MAYRINA, GMA-7:** What to you is the best mode, sir?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** That's why we are asking mga former Chief Justices, si Chief Luke na tri-na-trabaho, si—our legal council in our soon to be centenarian legal counsel na si Manong JPE at iyong mga constitutionalist ay tinatanong nga natin, “Ano sa palagay ninyo ang pinaka-tamang gawin?”

So the details have not yet been decided upon. That is precisely what we will be working on when I get back.

**IVAN MAYRINA, GMA-7:** Sir, last na lang po. Follow-up kay Kat. As far as you're concerned, is there still a UniTeam?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** Is there still a...?

**IVAN MAYRINA, GMA-7:** UniTeam.

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** Well, I think so, I believe so. Because if you remember, UniTeam is not just one party or two parties or three parties. It's the unification of all political, hopefully, all the political forces in the Philippines to come together for the good of the country. And that is still there. It is still vibrant, it is still working and we will continue on that basis.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Thank you, sir.

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.:** All right. Thank you.

**SECRETARY CHELOY GARAFIL:** Thank you, Malacañang Press Corps.

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