

MEDIA INTERVIEW

Makati Diamond Residences, Makati City
May 18, 2024

[00:00:00]

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. Good evening. Katatapos lang ang pirmahan sa NPC at saka sa PFP. We have formalized an alliance so that we can continue to work together. Mga like-minded naman ang aming mga members. And, informally, the truth of the matter is matagal na talagang magkasama ang member ng PFP at saka ng NPC.

At ang madalas— although informal, magka-alyado na; dati pang magka-alyado Iyan. So this, now, it is formalized and I think that will give added motivation for us to work harder para— dahil magkasama na kami, pareho ang aming naisip, pareho ang aming mga --- nagkakasundo kami sa plano. So, that will make us more effective.

MODERATOR: [inaudible]

REPORTER: Sir, magandang gabi po. Madadagdagan pa po ba ang partido sa coalition habang papalapit po ang midterm elections?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, we hope so. Dahil, of course, kagaya ng sinabi ng isang very wise statesman-politician, politics is a game of addition. So, that is what we are hoping to achieve.

[00:01:32]

REPORTER: Sir, follow-up po. How strong and stable po 'yung coalition that will ensure the unity of the parties for the midterm elections po?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, I think, it's very natural for people to think that this is being done for the midterm elections. Of course, that's part of it. But really, it is to formalize what already existed. We are trying to put together, once again, the team and that we'll work together. And this really derives from our original concept that progress will only come from unity.

But we are thinking of really is how to be more effective, how to be able to work better so that we can help each other try to achieve the same things. Iyon ang ano diyan. So, that's more, for me, that's more important because maybe I'm not a candidate that's why I'm thinking in those terms but, of course, the elections coming up are part of it.

But also, perhaps equally important are the connections that we make so that we'd become a stronger force for progress and peace and progress and stability in the country.

MODERATOR: Next question from Noel Talacay, PTV 4.

MR. NOEL TALACAY: Hello po, question ko po. Do you see any flaws in the coalition, and how do you think it would be addressed?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Any flaws in the...?

MR. TALACAY: In the coalition.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: In the coalition?

MR. TALACAY: Yes.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Flaws? Well, the usual thing is that when you approach an election and you are in partnership together, kung minsan iyong ibang partido may kandidato para sa parehong posisyon and wala, iyong mga steering committee namin iyon ang mag-uusap. Magdecide tayo. Kung hinding-hindi talaga pwede, wala talagang magawa na kompromiso, eh di we will— kung minsan napipilitan tayong mag-free zone.

Pero as much as possible para maayos, gusto namin magkasundo doon nga sa mga kung sino ang tatakbo doon sa bawat lugar. So, that's the --- but every election ganun eh basta't nagsama ang mga partido. So, we're ready for that and we know how to handle it.

[00:04:11]

MODERATOR: Next question, Jonathan Andal, GMA News.

MR. JONATHAN ANDAL: Hi sir, may initial findings na po ba na pinadala sa Malacañang tungkol sa investigation kay Bamban Mayor Alice Guo?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Oh no, it's very, very early yet. No, we just started. Well, the Senate had just started their investigation.

As I told you before, we have been investigating the now defunct POGO installation. Hindi namin, hindi namin tinignan. It never came up. Hindi lumitaw iyong isyu ng citizenship, ng ano, all of these things that came up.

So, iyon ngayon ang tinitignan natin. But there are—it's—we have ways to go dahil talagang hinahanap natin kung ano ba talaga ang totoo, and, as I said, there is also an ongoing investigation by the Senate. So, let's allow the executive side and the legislative side to do their work and continue their --- continue our investigation.

Pero wala pang ano, wala pang definitive na conclusions.

MR. ANDAL: Follow up lang po. Recently, may lumabas po na pictures ninyo ni Mayor Guo noong campaign sorties noong election 2022 and then nasabi niyo po before na walang nakakakilala sa kanya bago siya ma-elect. Any comment po dun, ano po masasabi niyo doon? Pictures po ninyo ni Mayor Guo noong campaign sorties noong elections 2022.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: That proves nothing. You know how many pictures I take in during the campaign. Siguro isang libo sa isang araw. Lahat naman ng humihingi ng selfie hindi mo naman hini-hindian. So, doesn't really mean anything.

[00:06:00]

MODERATOR: Last question from Katrina Domingo.

MS. KATRINA DOMINGO: Sir, good evening. Sir, China reportedly approved the policy which allows the Chinese Coast Guard to detain any perceived trespasser in the seas that they claim as theirs. Your reaction to this, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, it's the --- that kind of action would be completely unacceptable to the Philippines. We --- of course, once again, I do not talk about operational details so you will leave it to us, but the position that we take is that, that is unacceptable and we will take whatever measures to always protect our citizens.

MS. KATRINA DOMINGO: All right. Sir, follow-up question. There are also concerns of about wiretapping allegedly being done by Chinese officials, and even the Chinese Embassy. What is your directive on this issue, Sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Directive? It's just a --- we are looking into it because really the fact of the matter is there have been mentions of a tape that says, that confirms that there was this agreement, et cetera, all of that.

And, I keep hearing that there is a tape and I keep wanting to hear it and as yet, we don't have it. So, we really, it's very hard to come to any conclusion until we know that the thing actually exists.

So, it's very hard to --- it's very hard. It is in the possession --- if it does exist --- it is in the possession of the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese government. So, until they release it there is, they— we cannot be— we, it is, it becomes harder and harder to believe and to accept that there was an agreement.

MS. DOMINGO: Sir, last na, Usec, related also to this topic. Do you have any directives as to whether, or not government offices should take extra precaution given we have this kind of issue now?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: There is no directive like that. It is our policy and we have been disseminating that policy to all. There have been already so many departments and agencies that have been victimized and I think we are all very aware of the risks of cybersecurity. Not only— for all kinds of reasons, so, yes, we are very conscious of that. And the DICT, for example, together with the DOST are working hard together, together with our security services to make more robust our cybersecurity.

We have spoken to many experts and we have taken— some of the best people in cybersecurity are actually Filipino, but they're civilians. So, we have to bring some of them, we will, I don't know if we can find an arrangement for

them to work for the military, to work for government agencies. Maybe as a free agent. We'll see, we'll see.

REPORTER: Thank you, Sir.
[00:09:28]



BAGONG PILIPINAS