

MEDIA INTERVIEW AT THE MANILA HOTEL

June 27, 2024

[00:00:00]

SEC. CHELOY VELICARIA-GARAFIL:

Sir, Anna Felicia Bajo, GMA News Online.

MS. ANNA FELICIA BAJO:

Good morning po, sir.

Sir, napatawag niyo na po ba si Ambassador Huang Xilian, regarding po doon sa Ayungin incident, sir?

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.: Well, we have called him many, many times. Well, the DFA will have to decide to formalize that discussion with the Ambassador but we are actually constantly in touch with him. I think we have made our --- we have already made our position very clear. We have made our objections to some of the actions that were undertaken by the maritime forces of the PLA.

Also, our objection to that, we have also made it very clear, not only to the Ambassador but also to Beijing. So, it will really depend on how formal we want to make this complaint. But, you know, we have... How many? We have over a hundred already protests. We have already made a similar number of demarche. So, we have to do more than just that.

Kasi ipapatawag natin iyong Ambassador, sasabihin natin, ito ang position namin, hindi namin gusto 'yung nangyari, and that's it. But we have to do more than that. So, we are. So, we're doing more than just that.

MS. BAJO: Sir, just a quick follow-up. Do you think, sir, it was an armed attack? Kasi sir...

[00:01:35]

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: It was a...?

MS. BAJO: Was it an armed attack, sir? Kasi...

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: It's not armed. Walang pumutok.

MS. BAJO: Sir, bakit may... Sorry, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Hindi tayo tinutukan ng baril. But it was a deliberate action to stop our people. And in the process of that, kinuhanan tayo, they boarded a Philippine vessel and took the equipment from that Philippine vessel.

So, although there were no arms involved, nonetheless, it is still a deliberate action and it is essentially an illegal action that was taken by the Chinese forces.

MS. BAJO: Sir, last na on my part, bakit lang po nagkaroon tayo ng statement na ito ay misunderstanding or accident...?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Because noong una, hindi --- tinitingnan pa lang namin iyong data, baka nagkamali lang. Pero mula noong napunta ako sa WESCOM at nakausap ko si Admiral Torres, lahat ng --- pati na 'yung mga seaman, sinabi ko: Ano ba talagang nangyari? Maliwanag, hindi misunderstanding. Talagang pinuntahan tayo para harangin ang ating resupply.

MS. BAJO: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Thank you.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Julie Aurelio, Philippine Daily Inquirer.

MS. JULIE AURELIO: Hello sir, good morning po.

Sir, may we just get your brief reaction to the dismissal of the third and last drug case against Senator Leila de Lima.

[00:03:01]

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: The?

MS. AURELIO: The dismissal of the third and last drug case against Senator Leila de Lima. May we get your thoughts on that, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Does it... What further comment does it require?

MS. AURELIO: Do you think, sir, it will impact, sir, 'yung pending probe ng ICC sa atin?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, maybe this is something we should show the ICC. Tingnan mo, our judiciary is working properly, all our investigative services are working properly, o ito naman... And former Senator De Lima has been acquitted. I don't... What further comment can there be? Dumaan siya sa paghusga, na-acquit siya. So...

MS. AURELIO: It won't change a thing, sir, your stand? It won't change your stand on where the ICC jurisdiction lies?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: I don't see what one thing has to do with the other. I don't think it is a... She has said that she would like to help the ICC but that's between her and the ICC, that's... We do not...

We still stay with our position that the ICC has no jurisdiction in the Philippines. Because we have a working police force, we have a working judiciary and do not require any assistance in that regard.

MS. AURELIO: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Thank you.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Maricel Halili, TV 5.

MS. MARICEL HALILI: Hi, sir. Magandang umaga po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Good morning.

MS. HALILI: Sir, how big a loss is Vice President Sara Duterte from your Cabinet and ano po 'yung napag-usapan niyo? What was the reason given by her bakit po siya nag-resign?

[00:04:46]

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: She didn't give any reasons. I asked her if there are any particular reasons why she has chosen to resign from the Department of Education and from the NTF-ELCAC. And she said, huwag na lang natin natin pag-usapan. So, I did not force the issue.

Well, you know, we have to carry on and the Department of Education is quite possibly, arguably, the most important department because education is that important.

So, no matter the change of leadership within the department, we still have to carry on. So, we are now --- today is... I will probably be able --- I would like to be able to announce the appointment of the new DepEd Secretary by the end of the week.

MS. HALILI: Sir, ilan po 'yung kino-consider natin?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Bakit kayo nagugulat? We cannot leave it open. Importante iyong trabaho nila. We cannot just leave it like that na nakatiwangwang doon sa --- na walang Secretary. Kaya't minamadali ko lahat, sinasabi ko bigyan niyo ako ng maraming pangalan, ano'ng gusto natin, what do we need, tingnan natin nang mabuti ulit --- the status of the DepEd.

What is now required? Ano pa ba ang kailangan gawin? So, what do we need? We need an educator? Do we need an administrator? Do we need an accountant? What do we need? And that's what we're trying to determine right now.

SEC. VELICARIA-GARAFIL: Alexis Romero, Philippine Star

MR. ALEXIS ROMERO: Good morning, Mr. President. May we get your reaction to the plan of former President Rodrigo Duterte, Mayor Sebastian Duterte, and Congressman Paolo Duterte to run for Senator in 2025; and the plan of Mayor Baste to seek the presidency in 2028?

[00:06:40]

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: It's a free country. They're allowed to do what it is that they want.

I really have no reaction to it. Besides, it's still early. We really won't know any of these things. We're talking about 2028. Ang dami pang mangyayari between now and 2028.

And the only real, the only real situation will become clear in October, sa filing. Then we will see really kung tatakbo ba talaga, sino ba talaga ang tatakbo? Sino --- kanino sasama? What are the parties involved? Which parties are in alliance with which? Iyon lang natin makikita sa Oktubre. So, all of these announcements, well, tingnan natin kung matutuloy pagdating ng Oktubre.

MR. ROMERO: Just a quick follow-up, Mr. President. Given the resignation of the Vice President from the Cabinet, can you give us the status of the UniTeam Coalition?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Of the?

MR. ROMERO: UniTeam coalition.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: You have to remember the PDP was never a part of the UniTeam. PDP was never part of the UniTeam kahit na noong election. So, it does not change anything for the UniTeam.

Depende lang kung ano iyong positioning ni Inday Sara pagdating ng election: Siya ba ay nasa administrasyon o siya ba ay nasa oposisyo? That will be the only major determinant. But as the parties involved, pareho pa rin ang UniTeam. Hindi pa nagbago.

MR. ROMERO: Sa Hugpong po yata si Sara.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Pero hindi, pumasok siya sa Lakas because Hugpong is a local. So, she entered --- she came in as Lakas pero umalis din siya sa Lakas. Kaya nga, that's why I'm saying.

Depende kung saan siya papanig, that will determine whether or not --- that will be the biggest change in the UniTeam na kung mawala sa UniTeam si Inday Sara, iyon ang pinakamalaking change kung sakali man.

Pero iyong partido, hindi naman nagbago. We are already in alliance --- we are soon to be in alliance with the --- we're already in alliance with Lakas. We're soon to be with NPC. We are soon to be in alliance with NUP. We are soon to be in alliance with the Nacionalista which is basically the same list as what we had during the '22 elections.

So, the UniTeam is still there and... If you look at the structure of the parties that ran together in the last election, that really hasn't changed. That really hasn't changed.

MR. ROMERO:  Salamat po. 

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.:

Okay. All right. Maraming salamat.

[00:09:48]

BAGONG PILIPINAS