

KAPIHAN WITH THE MEDIA IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

May 27, 2025

[00:00:00]

Good evening, everyone.

As I'm sure, of course, you know, we just concluded the first meeting here under the chairmanship of Malaysia. Our Chair was Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia.

And I think from the new releases or some of the material that has been produced for this meeting, the two main topics really were Myanmar and unilateral tariff schedules being imposed on the different countries, ASEAN Member States.

In terms of Myanmar, I think we have – it's something that several of – a couple of us, actually, Member States in ASEAN have been going to ASEAN and saying what we tried to do was with the Five-Points of Consensus that was agreed with between ASEAN and Myanmar, not only has that improved the situation – has it not improved the situation if we are to be very pragmatic or clear-eyed is the term that I used about it. It's clear that, in fact, the situation has gotten worse.

And therefore, it is very important – it is critical to realize that, to recognize that, and to try something different.

And so, Malaysia, before this meeting, had already started trying to make contact with the different stakeholders in Myanmar to try and get a feel of what needs to be done and how they can bring – at the very first, is the ceasefire – is a ceasefire and a humanitarian, to allow humanitarian aid to come in. And certainly the other countries that are deeply affected such as

Thailand and Indonesia and Malaysia, the identification and return of the refugees who ran to their countries when the war started.

So, what the Philippines proposed, because in any analysis, this problem is not going to be solved in a year's time. And so, I proposed to PM Anwar, which he agreed with, is that let us come to an agreement that since I am the Chair for next year, that we should look – you should not limit yourself to making commitments or entering into agreements that may last beyond your chairmanship.

Because so long as you and I agree, you PM Anwar and me, we agree on the principle of what you are committing to for ASEAN and with Myanmar. And even if it continues beyond your chairmanship, we will pick it up when we become chairman and we will build on that.

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So, that's simply a new concept because every time we have talked about Myanmar, we start again every single time. I've seen it in the past ASEAN conferences.

So, I think that there's new thinking now when it comes to Myanmar.

And with the upcoming elections in Myanmar, there may be a hope of stability. It's a ceasefire first that we want because the humanitarian cost has become very, very large. And we cannot see the stakeholders in Myanmar managing to find any kind of common ground.

And I'm not talking about government and the opposition. Even within the opposition, they're still squabbling, they're factionalized. So, it's become quite involved and very complicated.

Malaysia has appointed a special envoy to work on this and we actually have been in consultation with Malaysia since early this year concerning this. I sent a special representative upon the request of Prime Minister Anwar. So, that's the new approach that we are going to bring to the problems in Myanmar.

As to the second subject, which is the unilateral tariff regime that is being imposed on many member countries. Well, first of all, we're trying to compare each other's situation.

Kasi 'yung ibang ASEAN members, ang laki-laki ng tariff nila. All the way ranging from what? 40? Oo. Hanggang sa 10 percent. Sa Singapore, pinakamababa.

Tayo nga, mabuti-buti. We're second from the bottom with 17 percent. Pero tinitingnan – kasi ang sinasabi ko nga sa kanila, okay, kung negosyante ka, puwede rin sasabihin advantage sa atin ito. Dahil kaunti lang 'yung tariff sa atin, mag-export tayo, 'di ba?

Imbis na sila mag-export, dalhin nila rito 'yung pabrika, whatever it is, and then dito mga ano, so 17 percent lang ang tariff.

Pero kung iisipin mo, kung you keep thinking about this, who do we do business with? ASEAN. Kung bagsak sila, who do we do business with? Kung bumibili sila ng 100 tons of, I don't know, coconut every year o every month, whatever the number is. Tapos humina ang kanilang ekonomiya, they can only buy 20. What will we do with the remnant? Remainder? Hahanap na naman tayo ng markets.

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But if everybody is down, then everybody's markets will shrink. So this is a – it's a real problem.

I also had an actually good conversation with the Premier of China. And I asked him, "Premier, what do you think?" He says, "Well, we do not want any of this." They don't want this war. And I said, "We're very worried because China is the biggest economic driver in the region."

And, of course, we watch very closely what is happening to the economy in China because it affects all of us. Because once again, we trade with China. We have many investments in China and we have many Chinese investments in the Philippines.

So, talagang kung makita mo wala namang – walang – kung matuloy itong regime na unilaterally imposed, talagang babagsak. It has a global effect and it is not going to be a good one.

There will be, I believe, a shrinkage in economic activity. I hope not. I hope I'm wrong.

But – so ang aming laging pinag-uusapan, what will happen after the 90 days pause is over? And, that's what we will...

And, basically, we're just guessing. We don't know. We don't know what will happen between now and July when the 90 days runs out. We don't know how it will be different from each one country to the other.

The reason I asked the Premier of China is because, sabi ko, “You’re the center of attention. So, I wanted to see what your insights were.”

But we are in agreement and I... In the side discussions, it was not in open session. But in the side discussions, I was telling the others – the other leaders, I said, what we have to recognize is that kahit ano pang mangyari, kahit ibalik, bura lahat, rewind lahat, back to what it was in January, tomorrow, nangyari tomorrow, we’re back to square one tungkol sa tariff, mayroon ng permanent effect na hindi na mawawala. May effect nung pag-impose nung tariff schedule na hindi na mawawala. Nandiyan na ‘yan. Nandiyan na.

Just the risk assessment for any businesses and any investment, it changed now because this can happen. Puwede palang mangyari ito. So, ‘yung risk assessment magbabago.

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So, I was telling all the others, what we have to do is to identify what those changes are going to be. Is it damaging? Or is it to our advantage? Or is it something that we can maximize? And that’s how we need to adjust. Because whatever else happens, this will change, this is changing, this will change, this has changed.

First of all, the structure of world trade is completely different now from what it was before. The conclusion also that we arrived at is that we have to depend more on each other, on ASEAN.

ASEAN, malakas naman ang loob namin sa ASEAN member countries. The economies are vibrant. Masigla ang kanilang mga ekonomiya. Masigla ang ating ekonomiya. Kaya’t ang maaari naman natin gawin eh sabihin na kung nahihirapan ‘yung iba, tayo na lang muna mag-usap-usap.

If we cannot sell to these markets anymore, then let’s sell to each other’s markets. But we can... It seems that the best, most solid way forward is to make – to be a reliable partner for each other in ASEAN.

And it’s impossible for anyone to disagree because that is the obvious – that is the obvious answer. So, that’s more or less what we – what we did on those two subjects.

The other feature that we didn’t have in previous ASEAN meetings was the GCC, which I think is a very, very good idea, plus the GCC China trilateral meeting.

If you put these groups together... Well, just start with the GCC and ASEAN, you put that together, that is a very important economic bloc. And if we come to a good arrangement, then that will be a rival to any – any kind of economic bloc anywhere in the world. And that is well-recognized.

Of course, as they say, the devil's in the details. So, that has to be worked out. Each country has a different approach. Each country has a different context and different situation that they have to work within.

So, that's something. But conceptually anyway, in terms of principle, we all agreed on that.

And the same thing applies with the trilateral, with GCC and China and ASEAN. Talagang 'pag pinagsama mo lahat 'yan, this is a very large part of the world population and certainly a very large part of the world's wealth and economic activity and growing economic activity, energetic economic activity.

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So, that I think was a very good initiative by PM Anwar. And I think it – I...Even if we do not – kahit na hindi tayo makabuo ng agreement, ASEAN-GCC, this is a big opportunity for member countries of GCC, member countries of ASEAN, to interact and to find ways to find some things to do. The same thing with China.

So, I think it is also in response again to the instabilities that we all are worried about on the global economy.

We're trying to – trying to strengthen different groups instead of talking only about the EU, only talking about the United States or North America

We thought we now have to think about other places that will develop their own markets that we can invest in, that can invest in us, that we can trade with.

And that's pretty much a – yeah, that's pretty much a quick thumbnail sketch of all the things that we spoke about.

Of course, there were all the bilaterals, which as you know, are usually very productive. And we had a few of them. I just came out of one with the Crown Prince of Kuwait. So again, those bilateral contacts are very, very important. And we have of course continued to encourage that.

We spoke with both Thailand and Cambodia about opening up access to their markets for certain Philippine products.

And we spoke now with Kuwait about the interaction between the Philippines and Kuwait and how they would like to – how grateful they are for the contribution that our OFWs have done to the development of their country and they have been very kind to us.

So, although, this is more or less what happened in the past couple of days. All right, okay.

[00:15:16]

REPORTER: Hi Sir, good evening. Sir, kanina nabanggit po ni MinDa Secretary Tereso 'yung about po sa 300 million from the ADB. Ah, 400 million, sorry. Sir, gaano kalaking bagay po ito sa development po ng Mindanao?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Oh, malaki. Malaki. At ang ADB – this was part of the BIMP-EAGA discussion. The ADB made commitments as it has always done. Because ADB is really our counselor when it comes to the BIMP-EAGA projects. Four hundred million dollars if put together with the downstream effects of that.

And the reason that ADB is because we can see that there will be very, very advantageous downstream effects to that. It's a big deal.

Especially, Mindanao actually is, I think, if we are going to shepherd it and to help it, be successful and do everything we can to make BARMM successful – we always talk about a land of promise that we never were able to see the promise of. I think there's a chance now that we will because there's no more fighting. Well, there's some criminality but it's not the full-scale, large-scale fighting like we had during the secessionist war.

So, malaki ang ano ko sa ano – malaki ang kumpiyansa ko sa pagbulusok ng Mindanao. And ADB has always been there

But also, OIC, the Organization of Islamic Countries, Malaysia has always been very present. Japan has always been very present. ADB has always been very present.

So, even the EU has always been part of the peace process. And now, the investment into BARMM. So, I hold great hope for the future of BARMM, for the future of Mindanao.

REPORTER: Sir, one more lang po. Sir, during your Intervention sa Plenary session po, nabanggit niyo po 'yung pag-push ng Code of Conduct sa South China Sea?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Push ng?

REPORTER: ... ng Code of Conduct po sa South China Sea.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: I always push the Code of Conduct. Always. Always. It's critical to everything that's happening.

You know, if you have a Code of Conduct, essentially, freeze frame muna. Okay, hanggang diyan na lang tayo. Huwag na nating palalain. Tapos, ayon, mag-usap tayo. That will contain mechanisms also of adjudication or, you know, trying to – de-escalation processes. Kasama lahat 'yan.

So, I think that the – I think it's well recognized. It's not just the Philippines who feels that way. Everyone in ASEAN feels that way. Everyone in Asia feels that way.

REPORTER: Sir, I just want to ask more details about your conversation with the Chinese Premier. Did you talk about the situation in the West Philippine Sea?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: No. I only spoke to him... It wasn't in a meeting. He was sitting next to me at lunch. I was sitting next to the Chinese Premier and the Foreign Minister of UAE.

REPORTER: Sir, at least, did you get any commitment po from the Chinese side on your call— ?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Walang ano, tinanong ko lang sa kanya, sabi ko, what – ano, I just want...What is the Chinese perspective of this new unilateral tariff schedule?

And he says, “Well, you know, Mr. Trump has his own – seems to have his own idea. But we certainly do not want this to continue. It’s not good for everyone. We don’t want this.”

And – so that’s – that’s if... We were just walking along. Hindi kami nakaupo na nag-usap ng ganoon.

But I was very, very curious to get a little bit beyond the party line. Because we’ve heard what China says on TV, doon sa mga ano nila...But to be able to get the chance to talk to the Premier, I thought I was hoping to get in. ‘Yun ganoon din.

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I think, yes, it – you can see that it is sincere on their part that they do not want this. They do not want this to carry on. They want everything to be normalized.

REPORTER: DILG Secretary Jonvic Remulla yesterday said that nakapili na kayo ng bagong chief PNP. Is it true? Kung totoo ho, Mr. President, sino po siya?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Actually, the answer is more complicated than that as ever.

I would rather not use this forum to announce that. I think I should talk to them first because the official decision has not been made.

They should hear it... Whoever it is should hear about it first from me, not through the news.

But yes, we’re very clear on what we are going to do next.

REPORTER: Clarify ko lang po, Mr. President, may napili na po kayo?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: May?

REPORTER: May napili na po kayo?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Oo.

REPORTER: Ah mayroon na po. Talking about peace and order, security, Mr. President, ano po 'yung magiging marching orders niyo doon sa bagong chief PNP, especially na gusto niyo i-intensify 'yung police visibility sa mga kalye?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, what will I tell the new chief PNP? The new chief PNP is a very senior officer in the PNP. He knows the situation.

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And I will actually tell them, carry on what you are doing. Because we have very good statistics concerning crime.

And for example, there's a report here, Metro Manila crime rate is down by 23 percent in 6 months. If we are going to look here at the crime result at the national level... Where are the index crimes? Ito. From the period of last year, same period last year. Ito na lang, focus ngayon, kasi babasahin – ayaw kong basahin lahat. So, 15,156 last year in the period of January 1 to May 16.

In the period from January 1 to May 16 of 2025, it went down from 15,156 to 11,493.

That – minus lahat when you make that comparison of January 1st to May 16 of last year to this year, everything, murder, homicide, physical injury, robbery, theft, rape, carnapping, all went down.

So, they must be doing something right.

Now, what we have been talking about is making policemen more visible. This is to make people feel safer. I perfectly understand that. I perfectly understand that.

That, basta, you know, kahit papaano, may pulis diyan. May umiikot dito na pulis. Kaunting sigaw lang, tatakbo na 'yan. That's important, it's important to people.

So, despite the fact that maraming maganda namang result na statistic, na maganda naman ang nagiging trabaho ng kapulisan natin in terms of law enforcement, kailangan din, hindi sapat na marami tayong – nababawasan natin 'yung krimen. Kailangan nakikita 'yung pulis para feeling safe naman 'yung mga tao.

That's why this new program of Cops On the Beat has been initiated.

REPORTER: Mr. President, one last thing na lang on my part. Doon sa podcast ninyo, narinig ko doon sa pagkakasabi niyo 'yung 5-minute immediate police response. Will you please expound on that, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, first of all, we have been working on a... We've been working since last year on this. It's not so easy, but it's good to centralize the emergency calling.

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And right now, actually, the response time... Mayroon ba tayong response time dito? 'Yung response time natin bumaba na rin, especially in the urban areas. Of course, the – ay wala, there's no... There are no statistics here. No.

So, we are trying to centralize the – whatever, the emergency calls. So, 'pag tatawag ka ng emergency, whatever, isa lang 'yung number. Kasi bawat bayan halos, bawat probinsya may sarili.

So, we'll centralize it para maging mas mabilis. At diretso kaagad, makadispatsa ng pulis pagka may problema, pagka may gulo.

So, we are hoping that at least in the urban areas, we are hoping five minutes. That's the aspiration, once again. I hope...

I think naman if we have the Cops on the Beat and they're in good direct communication with their dispatsador, then that will be the system – that will be a good quick response. Pero kailangan mabuo ang system.

One of the problems with the emergency call system is the statistic that about 70 percent are prank calls. So, that's why we have to see how we can minimize that.

BAGONG PILIPINAS
REPORTER: Good evening, Sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Hi, good evening.

REPORTER: Last Friday, Executive Secretary Bersamin announced that you did not accept his resignation and that the economic managers were retained and there were other movements that were announced. The Executive Secretary also said that there would be new announcements or movements by tomorrow. Would you like to share with us?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Nope. Not yet. Not yet.

I'll share with you one thing. That as we were doing the performance review, and when we see shortfalls in performance, I don't leave it at that.

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I look and ask why is that the case? And that is why we ask all the heads of agencies to also submit their courtesy resignations because we have to look at deeper, not just look at the Secretary.

The Secretaries, I think... Well, all of them – some have to be moved around, some have chosen to leave or no longer think they can contribute.

But in any case, we are looking at the problem deeply. You know, siguro by now, you know, I don't do things pang optics.

If there is a problem, I like to fix it. So, that's what we are doing. So, expect us to be doing a rigorous performance review, not only at the Cabinet level, but even deeper.

REPORTER: Related lang po doon sa sagot ni, sir, kung puwedeng lang po? Sir, you already mentioned that you don't do things for optics. That was the criticism of some of your detractors who are allied with former President Duterte. And they also said that the courtesy resignations are not necessarily and that they want you instead to resign. How do you want to respond to that? Or if you want to respond?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: I will resign?

REPORTER: Yeah, that's what they want.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Ba't ko gagawin 'yun? At wala sa ugali ko 'yung tinatakbuhan ang problema.

REPORTER: Magandang gabi po, Mr. President. Sir, you mentioned during your podcast na sawa na 'yung mga tao sa pulitika and yet next week magsisimula na po 'yung impeachment trial against Vice President Sara Duterte.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: I'm not sure I see the train of thought there. Sawa ang tao ng pulitika pero may impeachment?

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REPORTER: Yes Sir, because it's a political proceeding. So, do you see this as a start of another political chaos?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: The legislators, the senators, and the House are going to decide on how to handle it.

I don't think that they have made any decisions yet in that regard. So, it's in there. It's there... It's – nasa kanila 'yan eh. Mostly sa Senado, pero siyempre nandiyan pa rin ang House dahil sila mag-prosecute. So, they will have to decide between the two houses how they are going to conduct this.

You remind – I was part of the Corona impeachment. We were making rules as we went along. And I think that's what will happen here, too.

So, we will see what happens.

REPORTER: Sir, I understand malinaw naman po 'yung pahayag niyo that you have nothing to do with the impeachment trial. But do you wish na sana hindi na lang ito mangyari? So as hindi na lang ito –

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: How many times do I have to say that? I didn't want impeachment. Lahat ng kakampi ko sa Kongreso hindi nag-file ng impeachment complaint.

'Yung mga nag-file ng impeachment complaint, hindi mo masasabing kaya kong utusan o pagsabihan na ito 'yung gagawin mo.

So, why do I have to keep explaining that I did not want impeachment?

REPORTER: Mr. President, again, this is in reference to your interview in the podcast where you said that you're open to reconciling with the Dutertes. And after you said that, certain conditions were floated, for example, Senator Bong Go said –

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: No, no, no, no, no, no. No. That's not how reconciliation works. You don't put conditions to reconcile.

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When you want – if you're sincere, you want to reconcile, let's sit in front of... Ano ba talaga ang problema? Paano nangyari ito? Tanggalin natin ang problema.

Pero 'yung sasabihin mo, hindi ako makikipag-usap hanggang ibigay mo sa akin ito, ito, ito, ito, eh walang pupuntahan 'yan. Tapos na, tapos na. That's not reconciliation.

That's not even a – that's not even a negotiation. That's demanding. Those are setting conditions that, you know...

So, ano ang sasagutin ng kabila? "Itong gagawin mo." Sasagutin mo, "Hindi, gagawin ko 'yan kung gawin mo naman ito." Wala nang pupuntahan 'yun. Tapos na ang usapan.

REPORTER: So, how far are you willing to go, Mr. President, to pursue this reconciliation?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Put it this way. I don't know. I don't know what will come up. What's needed.

Kaya ko bang gawin? Hindi ko kayang gawin. Hindi naman ganoon. You cannot pre-judge at the...

Oh, I'm only going – "I'm going to talk to them only this much."

Hindi. Kailangan sinasabi ko nga, bukas ka eh. Kahit anong sabihin mo, pakikikingan ko.

Kung talagang tapat ako na nais kong mag-reconcile, eh isipin ko lang, lahat ng hiningi mo, lahat ng hinanakit mo, eh kung kaya ko ayusin, 'di ayusin ko para tapos na 'to. Ayoko nga ng kaaway.

REPORTER: Good evening po, Mr. President. Any update po doon sa effort ho ng pamahalaan na maiabot ho sa lahat ng mga Pilipino 'yung 20 pesos kada kilong bigas at kamusta ho 'yung pagtanggap dito ng mga Pilipino, ng mga mamamayan po?

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PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, so – very - hindi naman nakakagulat na siyempre tuwang-tuwa 'yung mga qualified na tumanggap. Kaya't tinutuloy-tuloy natin 'yan.

'Yung mga nagsasabi, "Hindi, ano lang 'yan, medyo ano pang papogi lang 'yan. Pang ano — pang cosmetic lang 'yan." Well, they're fair to make that – to have that opinion. But kung ano... It's unsustainable. It's really that – what people are saying.

Watch me sustain it. And then, we'll talk in May of 2028, natuloy ba o hindi. We found a way. We found a way to do it. We found a way to do it. We could not do it before. Hindi kaya kasi hindi pa kaya ng sistema. Iba pa 'yung presyo ng bigas noon. Hindi pa tayo nag...

Ayan 'yung mga bilateral na ginagawa namin. We're making deals with different countries para 'yung presyo mapako na, na hindi pabago-bago.

Kahit anong mangyari down the road, nagawa na ngayon natin. Wala tayong ganoon noon eh. Ngayon mayroon na. Kaya't kaya na nating gawin 'yung 20 pesos. And other things that DA is able to sell rice. The price has come down.

But at the same time, on the other side, tinitiyak natin na ang pambili, 'yung pagbili – ang presyo ng pagbili sa farmers ay magandang presyo naman para naman 'yung farmers natin, maganda ang kanilang hanapbuhay.

And the difference there, that's what the government is paying for.

Thank you.

REPORTER: Sir, according to the latest Pulse Asia survey, your trust rating is significantly lower than that of Vice President Sara Duterte and

former President Duterte. And the previous surveys also showed a pattern of decline in your ratings. Can we get –

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: What survey?

REPORTER: Pulse Asia, Sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Pulse?

REPORTER: Yes. Can we get your comment on that, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Madaming ibang survey. Let's not base it on one.

REPORTER: Sir, follow-up lang. Have you planned to arrest 'yung decline in your survey?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, again, let's look at other surveys before we act. Know your source. That's always an... Imperfect information makes you make imperfect decisions. The more perfect your information, the more perfect your decision will be.

That is one source of information, and you have to understand where it's actually coming from.

All right.

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BAGONG PILIPINAS