MEDIA INTERVIEW IN BASEY, SAMAR
June 11, 2025

[00:00:00]
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.: We are here because we have – siyempre naririnig namin lahat ang mga problema, iyong nangyari dito sa pagsara o sa pag-limit ng traffic dito sa San Juanico Bridge. Kaya nakausap na namin iyong mga driver ng mga ibang truck.

Ang ginagawa namin ay ang kapalit itong RoRo na ganito. Ito pang tatlumpu na truck. May dadating na pang 40 trucks, mayroong pang 50 trucks.

Tapos itong rampang ito, dodoblehin natin. Maglalagay pa tayo doon ng isa pa para double. Mga 500 trucks a day. Tapos mag-umpisa na tayo ng night navigation. Ibig sabihin kahit gabi, puwedeng tumawid.

So, that's our way of trying to mitigate the problem.

Maraming nagtatanong, bakit hindi napagplanuhan ng mabuti ito?

The reason is ang talagang nangyari diyan mayroon kaming rehabilitation plan para sa San Juanico. Noong iiinspeksyon iyong tulay para titingnan kung saan kailangan i-rehabilitate, ang daming nakita na delikado. At sinabi kaagad ng mga engineer, "Isara natin ito dahil babagsak ito pagka minalas tayo."

Saan iyong... Sir, ipakita mo iyong sa ilalim ng tulay.

Iyong tulay maganda pang tingnan if you look at it from outside. Pero ito iyong ilalim, kalawang na lahat. Ito iyong mga... Ayan o, ganyan na ang itsura doon sa ilalim. Tapos hindi lang iyon, ito— so corrosion. Ito, ito – this is the third span... Iyong sa ilalim. Ito, ito iyong bumibigay na. Saan iyong sa...?

[00:01:58]
Ito, ito, buckling, buckling of the bottom na. Bumibigay na, bumibigay na iyong mga troso.

Kaya noong nag-inspection ang DPWH para nga sa rehabilitation, ika nila delikado na itong tulay na ito. Hindi namin akalain na ganito ka sama. Dahil siguro hindi namin malaman, hindi ginawa nang mabuti ang maintenance ng tulay. Dapat iyan every three years binabalik-balikan.

Tinatanong ko sa mga local, sa ating mga kababayan, kung talagang nagagawa ba noon iyong every three years. Mukhang hindi. Kaya nagkaganito. Kaya ang inabot namin talagang sira-sira na. Kaya napilitan kaming isara. Kaya biglaan.

Ngayon, ngayon na alam natin ang problema, lahat nang maaaring gawin kagaya nitong mga barko, mga RoRo, tapos mayroon kaming mga iniisip na baka iyong traffic sa San Juanico – basta papalitan natin iyong mga sistema para mas mabilis.

Nakausap namin iyong isang driver ng truck, ang reklamo naman nila ang dala nila gulay. Eh naghihintay sila rito tatlo, apat na araw. Siyempre hindi naman refrigerated van iyan. Kaya wala, nasisira iyong kanilang mga produkto. Kaya iyon ang… Gagawa kami ng sistema para mauna iyong mga perishable goods.

Those are the mitigating factors that we are trying to undertake para naman kahit papaano… Tacloban is at a center of commerce eh. Ang daming naapektuhan dahil dito.

Kaya minamadali ko na naman ang Public Works na magsabi sa atin kung ano ang maaari na masabi natin na schedule. What were you saying about the different spans?

DPWH SECRETARY MANUEL BONOAN: Mr. President, I think we will be able to increase 'yung— gradually 'yung load limits until before December.

Gradually, kukumpunihin na natin 'yung mga three-tonner na segments. And then, we increase it to four tons, to five tons. And then eventually matapos namin before December, magkakaroon na tayo ng about 12 tons sa load limit. So, puwede na po 'yung mga bus, puwede na rin 'yung mga mini trucks na puwede nang kumakarga ng mga perishable goods and everything para dito na sila dadaan.

BAGONG PILIPINAS

[00:04:36]
REPORTER: Iyong full completion po kailan?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: 'Yung?

SEC. BONOAN: Iyong retrofitting is….

REPORTER: Iyong completion talaga, the entire bridge to be back to normal?

SEC. BONOAN: The entire bridge is actually – and fortunately hinihintay na natin 'yung new bridge, the new bridge that will be constructed.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, we will know, we will work on this – and as I said, the sections, it will be a gradual process. It depends on the traffic. But ano? Kaya kaya in one year?

SEC. BONOAN: Kaya, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Narinig niyo na iyong ano ni Sec. Manny.

REPORTER: Mr. President, mayroon po bang mananagot doon sa hindi every three months na i-inspect?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Kayo ang mga journalist, hanapin ninyo. Sino ba iyong investigative journalist? Wala pa kami noon eh. Kaya….

BAGONG PILIPINAS

REPORTER: So, it was prior? It was prior to your administration?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Of course, hindi namin gagawin iyon. That's why we will plead ignorance. We were not here yet. But how old is this bridge?

[00:05:33]
REPORTER: Fifty-two years.

SEC. BONOAN: Fifty-three years.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Fifty-three years.

REPORTER: Fifty-three.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Fifty-three, siguro noong panahon pa ng father ko, maayos iyong maintenance. Nasa DPWH na si Sec. Manny noon. Maayos ang… Pero after ’86 yata, mukhang hindi na nagalaw.

REPORTER: Sir, ano ang declaration ngayon ng Eastern Visayas? Any specific order sa mga concerned agencies?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Sa mga – ?

REPORTER: Sa mga concerned agencies natin dito, sir?

SEC. BONOAN: With the declaration of the state of calamity.

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Yes, we already… Yes, that’s right. We declared the calamity so that we can bring in additional funding, we can bring in additional services. Magkakaroon na ng convergence ng mga iba’t ibang department, iba’t ibang agencies. Tapos na iyan. Actually they are already – they have already done the convergence.

We know what we need to do. We just have to do it. Kagaya ng mga construction, getting more boats, maybe finding other ways to other routes na puwedeng pantawid. Calbayog is one of the – other ones pero malayo na.

So, we’ll see, baka mayroon pang mahanap. Yes, yes.

BAGONG PILIPINAS

[00:06:38]

REPORTER: Mr. President, one of the worries is the pass-on charge to consumers considering the truckers are shouldering additional fees for the RoRo service. What can the government do to ensure that that will not be passed on to consumers?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, we will have to talk to the… But it is unfortunately I can… Ay, no, especially if it is a national entity, I don't think that will happen.

However, the smaller ones, I don't know how that will work. But inevitably, the transportation costs are going to go up. Somebody has to pay for that. So, I don't know if it will be shouldered by…

What can the government do? We can provide some assistance. We certainly can provide some assistance. But we cannot cover all of the price increase. I mean that's just what happened because of the condition of the bridge.

REPORTER: So, at least a partial subsidy?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: If the condition of the bridge had been properly maintained in these last 50 plus years, we would not be having this conversation.

REPORTER: Sir, ano pa po 'yung ibang na-mention nung truckers? I understand you spoke with them. Ano pa po 'yung na-raise nilang concerns and ano po 'yung commitment ng government?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: Well, basically they still wait here – naghihintay sila dito ng three, four, five days. So, they – sa kanila personally siyempre mahirap para sa kanila. Saan sila natutulog? Saan sila maliligo? Saan sila kakain? Et cetera.

So, we have to think about those things, too. But talaga, they are just saying please, please make sure that as quickly as possible maibalik sa normal. So, iyon ang aming iniisip lagi, maibalik sa normal lahat ito.

REPORTER: Sir, last na, metrics for you to lift the state of calamity? What conditions have to be met for you to consider lifting it after one year?

PRESIDENT MARCOS JR.: When the traffic has returned to normal.
[00:08:30]

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BAGONG PILIPINAS