

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
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**MEDIA INTERVIEW BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
FOLLOWING THE CEBUANA LHUILLIER KANEGOSYO CENTER LAUNCH**

[Held at the Palacio de Memoria in Roxas Boulevard in Parañaque City
| 29 June 2023]

Q: Hi sir, good morning. Regarding po dito sa launching po ng Kanegosyo Center, sa tingin niyo po paano po ito makakatulong lalo na po doon sa mga negosyante po sa MSMEs?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Iyon lagi talaga ang ating inaalala at binibigyan ng pansin ay 'yung mga MSMEs dahil napakarami nga at karamihan ng ating mga negosyo, lahat ng ating mga maliliit na tindahan, lahat ng other economic enterprises na very small scale 'yun talaga ang buhay ng ekonomiya ng Pilipinas.

At hindi lang... Actually, habang nakikilala ko at nag-uusap kami ng mga iba't ibang leaders sa iba't ibang bansa, ganoon din, lalo na sa Southeast Asia, ganoon din ang sitwasyon. Talagang kailangan nilang alagaan.

Kaya't itong ganitong klaseng programa ay ginagawa lahat upang maging matagumpay ang kanilang sinisimulan na bagong negosyo o ibinabalik 'yung sumara noong pandemya – paano natin pabalikin pero pabalikin natin nang mas maganda na ginagamit 'yung – ginagamit 'yung internet, ginagamit lahat ng ano... At bibigyan pa rin – may kaunting tulong, may kaunting seed money at ang pinakamahalaga sa lahat talaga ay 'yung training.

Dahil kailangan natin turuan ang maliliit na negosyante kung papaano humawak ng pera, kung papaano mag-accounting, kung papaano makipag-usap sa bangko, kung papaano gumawa ng business plan. 'Yan ang ginagawa – 'yun ang pinakamahalaga at 'yan ang ginagawa ng mga programa kagaya ng Kanegosyo.

'Yan ang itutulong nila, 'yan ang pinakamalaking tulong na maibibigay nila. Hindi lamang 'yung seed money kung tawagin, kung hindi 'yung training. Sa naranasan ko sa pag-develop namin ng mga cooperative, ganoon talaga.

Siyempre mahalaga din na mayroon silang pagsisimulan, may hawak silang kaunting cash. Ngunit kailangan kahit magkano'ng ibibigay mo 'yan kung hindi nila alam i-manage 'yung kanilang negosyo, mawawala din 'yan after a while. Kaya't 'yung training ang pinakaimportante sa aking palagay.

Q: Sir, kasabay po ng pagbangon po ng ekonomiya, sir, ano po siguro 'yung maipapayo niyo po sa mga negosyante, especially po 'yung mga nagsisimula pa lang, sir? Thank you.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Ganito, mag-training kayo at marami namang programa. Mayroon ang gobyerno. Mayroon tayong mga – 'yung sa DTI. Tinuturuan natin, nagte-training tayo.

Hindi lamang training, nagbibigay pa tayo ng mga kit kung ano bang gusto niyo. Maging air-conditioned repairman ka, may ibibigay na compressor, may ibibigay na kaunting gamit. O kung

gagawa ka ng – magbe-baking ka, bibigyan ka ng puwedeng gagamitin para lutuin ‘yung mga iyong produkto. Lahat ‘yun ganoon. So mayroon ‘yan sa gobyerno.

Ngunit lagi kong sinasabi kahit lahat ng gobyerno ay ginagawa ‘yan, hindi magiging sapat. Kaya’t kailangan na kailangan – kaya’t lagi naming pinag-uusapan ‘yung PPP dahil talaga ‘yung mga private sector na gustong tumulong.

At let us give credit to the private sector. Kung minsan tinitingan natin sila, “wala na nagpapayaman lang ‘yan.” I have to give credit to the private sector, to organizations like Cebuana Lhuillier that they really have gone out and this is a... Siguro ang iniisip lang nila kung paano matulungan ‘yung mga maliliit.

At siguro kapag pinagsabay natin ‘yung ginagawa ng pamahalaan, ginagawa ng mga pribadong sektor, ‘yun ang dapat sila mag-avail sila doon sa mga ganoong klaseng mga programa kahit papaano.

At huwag silang manghihina ng loob. Kung iyong unang pinasukan nila baka hindi masyadong maganda ang resulta, sige lang. Nandito pa kami. Uulitin natin.

Hanap tayo ng magiging maganda para sa inyo, ‘yung magbabagay para sa inyo na palalakiin ninyo.

Q: Magandang umaga po, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning.

Q: Sir, bukas po mag-iisang taon na ang inyong administrasyon. How would you assess your administration’s performance in the past year? At kung inyo pong mamarapatin, Mr. President, ano ho ang gradong ibibigay ninyo sa inyong sarili bilang Pangulo at gayundin sa inyong mga appointee in terms of delivering the promises you made during the campaign?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, you know the delivering of promises is a work in progress. It’s not something that you say, *“Tapos na. I finished it.”*

This is an ongoing process. Again, we have to bear in mind that the international situation has changed in terms of trade, in terms of geopolitics. And so, we are having to adjust to that.

And now, it is very clear that the most successful economies are those who are agile and resilient. And that I think we have put in place the basic elements for us to do that.

I saw a report earlier this morning where one of the economists said the grade that I will give the President for agriculture is “incomplete”. I agree with him. We are not yet done. Ang dami pa nating gagawin. There are many, many things that we still need to do.

We have to undo 30, 35, almost 40 years of neglect when it comes to the agricultural sector. And the agricultural sector still occupies the most fundamental part of our economy.

And so yes, we have done a lot of work. I think we have seen many of the changes. We are beginning to see the systemic changes that are going to be part of the new bureaucracy.

But there's still a long way to go. We continue to work on the economy to make sure that our basics, our macroeconomic basics are in place.

We are still fighting with inflation. Talagang 'yan isa pa rin 'yan na pinakamalaking problema na hinaharap natin. At lahat ng ating maaaring gawin ay ginagawa natin para hindi masyadong nahihirapan ang taong-bayan.

So, I think we will be concluding the negotiations – the tripartite negotiations on the wage board. So, mayroon tayong makikita na para makatulong naman tayo doon sa mga mas maliliit at nangangailangan ng tulong.

So, you know, it's never enough. It's never enough. Whatever it is that we have managed to do, there is still a great deal more to do. We have a lot of work still to do and we have to work smart and we have to work well and we have to be very conscious.

We should not be insular and think that it is only the Philippines that exists in the world. Tingnan natin, what is our true place in the world?

So, that is what something – it is not a small thing that's something that we are redefining. The world looks at the Philippines in a different way now than it did one year ago.

You go anywhere now and the Philippines is always recognized. They say that if you are an invest – you are planning to invest in ASEAN, then you must have a plan of your investment in the Philippines. Otherwise, it is not going to be a good plan.

So, that is now the place that we occupy. The job ahead of us is to make those structural kit changes that we have instituted, make them work now. And so that we can see the results not only in terms of statistics from the PSA but in the lives of ordinary people.

Q: Yes, good morning, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning.

Q: Yes, sir. Sir, will you accept the request of the United States to allow daw po 'yung mga Afghan refugees in the country? Some groups and lawmakers have expressed concern na these refugees might be a risk to our national security. So, what's your take on this, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, there are many issues involved in that question. That's why I was a little surprised when I saw some of the news reports "there is a deal between the..." There's no deal. We're still looking exactly at how to make it work if we can.

It's entirely possible that we will not find a way to make it happen. But we are – we have a long tradition in the Philippines of taking in refugees. Although, these are not refugees. They are an entirely different class of person. They are Afghan nationals who are being resettled by the United States in the United States and/or other places.

We are only going to be a – *[How do you say?]* – a transition area. Dadalhin sila dito, ire-relocate sila. Ang sabi ng mga kaibigan nating Amerikano, ika nila, hindi palalampasin ng 1,000 tao doon sa ating – kung sakali man ay matutuloy itong request na ito.

So, but there are many... There are security issues. Of course, we have to be conscious of that. But there are even more difficult legal and logistical issues because if the plan as it stands runs exactly as it's planned, eh 'di maganda, wala tayong problema.

But what plan ever ran exactly as you had hoped? So, what we are trying to say, what if something goes wrong? Paano kung magka-delay? Paano kung hindi tanggapin 'yung tao? Iyan ang aming pinag-uusapan. And we are continue... Because we want to help, we want to help.

Ito kasi ang mga Afghan na tumulong sa mga Amerikano noong giyera. Tapos biglang umalis ang mga Amerikano, naiwan ito. Ang katotohanan pinapatay talaga sila ng kalaban. Kaya't 'yun – so inaalalayan nila 'yung mga ano. Pero hindi nga sila refugee. Iba nga ito eh. This is something different. It is not something that we've encountered before.

They have – they are Afghans who are being resettled primarily in the United States and we are going to be the third country. That is the proposal of the Ameri[cans].

We'll continue to study it and see if there is a way we can do it without endangering the security of the Philippines. We'll see if we can actually manage it and to make sure that if things start to go not as planned, ano 'yung mga puwede nating gawin para naman hindi... Before you know it, sampung libo na sila doon, ang dami na nating kailangang gawin. Kahit sinasabi that the Americans will pay for everything, who will handle all of that? The Filipino.

You know, there's even the... Anything. So there's still quite a few issues that we have to hammer out with the Americans.

In principle, we would like to help. We took in the Vietnam boat people, we took in the German Jews during the war. Ganyan naman ang ugali ng Pilipino eh na mga matulungin tayo.

But again, we have to make sure that it's not something that will affect the lives of ordinary Filipinos.

Thank you. Magandang umaga sa inyo. Thank you.

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