

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

MEDIA INTERVIEW BY

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

FOLLOWING THE

**CELEBRATION OF THE NATIONAL PEACE CONSCIOUSNESS MONTH
2023**

AND

DECLARATION OF PALAWAN ISLAND

AS INSURGENCY-FREE

[Puerto Princesa City, Palawan | 1 September 2023]

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Kasabay doon sa ating pag-celebrate ay `yung pag-deklara ng Palawan Island na insurgency-free kaya't napakagandang pagse-celebrate.

All right. So, `yun lang naman. But I thought it would have been a good opportunity para ulit ay ibalik natin sa ating pag-iisip, na patuloy pa rin ang proseso ng paghahanap ng kapayapaan para sa lahat ng komunidad ng Pilipinas, ngunit ay maaari rin na makapag-celebrate tayo dahil nakita naman natin, may progreso naman, gumaganda naman ang sitwasyon.

So, thank you. I'll open the floor.

Q: Sir, I just want to ask. In terms of Palawan po, this is an island province and in terms of sustaining this insurgency-free status para ho hindi tayo bumalik doon sa insurgency sa Palawan. Do you have any specific or guidelines or orders for the local government officials here? Just to maintain `yung na-gain po natin.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Your local government officials have many, many plans already na talagang matagal ng gustong gawin ngunit 'yung ibang lugar hindi nila magawa dahil nga may gulo pa nang kaunti.

But now that we are able to declare --- because even if there is only --- alam naman natin Palawan is very tourist sensitive.

Alam naman natin sasabihin nila may nangyari sa Jolo, sabit ang --- wala ng gustong turista pupunta rito dahil nga sasabihin magulo sa Pilipinas, huwag na tayo doon, doon tayo sa ibang lugar.

And that is the problem that we are slowly solving now, because unless you have a peaceful community, unless you have security in the area, ang hirap talaga maka-attract ng investment.

And so now that we are able to wave that flag, sabihin natin: "No, Palawan is free." Then, Palawan is already a very large part of all our plans for transformation of the economy. Tourism plays a very, very large part in that. And Palawan plays a very, very large part in Philippine tourism.

Q: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Sir, good morning. How are you?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Hello. Good morning.

Q: Sir, in 1978 'no. Your father issued P.D. 1596 that created the Municipality of Kalayaan and Pag-asa was a barangay. That now stands as a solid symbol of our claim to the WPS. In your term sir as President, are you contemplating any action with regard to areas that we occupy and exercise jurisdiction over, to have something similar to P.D. 1596 that will have a far-reaching and intergenerational impact?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, that occurred in '70 because we were already looking at our claims, we were already discussing this with the United Nations and this is --- we were a part of a group of I think three countries that established the archipelagic principle of baselines and your EEZ.

And we just remain consistent to that. Hindi naman nagbabago. Siguro 'yung pag-establish ng municipality, na Pag-asa was to be able to make sure, to establish to show that this is part of the Philippines.

Ngayon, we of course will continue to defend our territorial sovereignty, our territorial rights. We have not changed our approach. It is other countries around us that have changed their approach.

Now, once again, we received the news, that now the nine-dash line has been extended to the 10-dash line. So, these are the --- we have to respond to all of these and we will but again, these are operational details that I would prefer not to talk about.

Q: In terms of strategy sir, are we upscaling our response?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: I think for the international ---because we have stayed true to the rules-based international law, especially the UNCLOS, and that I think puts us on very solid ground in terms of our claims for territorial sovereignty, for maritime territory, and this has been validated and supported by many, many countries around the world.

And we should take strength in that and I believe that that again is a very big help to the Philippines in continuing to defend our maritime borders.

Q: Thank you sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Hi, Mr. President. Magandang umaga po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Hello. Good morning.

Q: Sir, my question is about the price ceiling of rice. How would you make sure or ensure that the implementation of the price ceiling EO of rice?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We have put together a structure for the continuing monitoring. This will include --- essentially the lead agencies on this are the DILG, DA, DTI, DOJ, as well. More or less, that will be --- those are the agencies that will be...

Because all of those agencies already have regular inspections when it comes to other issues.

So, they will now apply the price ceilings that I have ordered in the EO that I signed yesterday, to make sure the prices stay within the limits that we have prescribed.

Now, the real problem is in NCR. It's not so bad outside of Metro Manila. That's why maybe we will be focusing our efforts in Metro Manila.

But, I mean --- if it comes to that, I would encourage anyone who finds that someone or a retailer is selling at above the price ceiling, i-report po ninyo, i-report ninyo sa pulis, i-report ninyo doon sa DA, doon sa lugar ninyo, i-report ninyo sa local government para matingnan po namin at tiyakin na hindi lalampas doon sa ating presyo na linagay na 40 pesos at saka 44 pesos.

Maraming salamat. Thank you.

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