

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

MEDIA INTERVIEW BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

[Taguig City | 24 November 2023]

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning. It is a very important day that we are here now in this Cancer Specialty Hospital that has been put up by Ayala Health and their partner Varian here in the Philippines.

Kung maalala ninyo, ito 'yung prinisinta sa atin noong nasa San Francisco tayo tungkol nga sa MOU tungkol dito — nabuksan, they started two years ago in the middle of COVID. Pero ngayon natapos na.

So, it is a very important development because it shows how working together can produce such impressive results and it is something that is very clearly needed because cancer is now the number three killer in the Philippines.

And so, you can see that the necessity of it is clear and the response also has been something that we consider terribly important.

So, congratulations to all those who have been involved, both in the public sector side, the private sector side.

Kagaya ng nasabi ko kanina. It is a very good example of how cooperation on all different stakeholders, both in the private sector and in the public sector, and the professionals, and ordinary citizens can bring about such impressive results. So, we hope to do it even more. All right.

Q: Sir, kanina nabanggit niyo po 'yung may mga financial burden, 'yun pong cancer assistance fund. Can you tell us more about this, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, we're still putting up the details together, especially how to fund it. But one of the main problems that we have been seeing... Although they have made some progress --- the technical progress in terms of the science, that the costs have been brought down and I take note of the fact that AC Health has actually take on the profit margin to keep the cost down.

And I thanked them all for that. And I think that the patients that will go through --- that will be helped by this facility will also be thanking them for that for many, many, many years to come.

So, these are the things that we are trying to do so that the --- number one, the cost come down and we can support what the insurance cannot cover.

PhilHealth cannot cover all the medicines. Kahit 'yung private na insurance, hindi nila ma-cover lahat. So, kaya natin pinag-uusapan 'yung fund para 'yung --- malaki rin, malaki pa rin. So, 'yung hindi pa kaya na ma-cover ng insurance baka mayroon tayong magawa from the government side para maging naman mas magaan ang financial cost sa pasyente.

Q: [off-mic]

PRESIDENT MARCOS: On?

Q: ICC

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Oh, okay.

Q: Sir, there's a resolution filed by some lawmakers asking the government to cooperate with ICC para ma-push through daw 'yung probe? What do you think of this, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, this is not unusual. It's really a sense of the House resolution and the sense --- they are just expressing or manifesting the sense of the House that perhaps it's time to allow or to cooperate with the ICC investigation.

But as I have always said, there are still some problems in terms of jurisdiction and sovereignty. Now, if you can solve those problems then that would be something else. But, medyo fundamental 'yung mga question na ganun. Because if you're talking about the sovereign --- jurisdiction of the ICC, especially since we have withdrawn from the Rome statute few years back, that brings into question, whether or not this is actually possible.

There is also a question: Should we return under the fold of the ICC? So, that's again under study. So, we'll just keep looking at it and see what our options are.

Simple lang para sa akin. Simple lang naman 'yang isyung 'yan. Hindi naman siguro tama na ang mga tiga-labas, mga dayuhan ang magsasabi sa atin kung sino iimbestigahan ng pulis natin, sino aarestuhin ng pulis natin, sinong ikukulong ng pulis natin. Hindi naman siguro tama 'yun. Dapat Pilipino lang ang gumagawa niyan. May pulis naman tayo. May NBI naman tayo. May DOJ tayo. Kaya nila 'yung trabahong 'yan. And that's really where the conflict is.

Q: Mr. President, magandang umaga po. Sir, last year po naglabas kayo ng AO na nagbibigay ng P20,000 na Service Recognition Incentive para sa mga government employees. Will there be another SRI for this year para sa mga government employees?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We'll see. We'll see how --- what is our financial position at the end of this all. Ganyan lang naman talaga 'yan.

We wait until the end of the fiscal year to see what it is that we can afford. So, we will have another look at that to see --- if it's possible.

Marami tayong pinapagawa ngayon sa mga ano natin. So, kailangan natin mag-compensate naman to... Lahat ng mga Pilipino ngayon naghihirap. So, kung ano 'yung maitulong natin gagawin natin. So, we'll see if we can --- if it is actually viable, if it is financially feasible to give. All right. Thank you. Ah, mayroon pa?

Q: Sir, another question on health. Pero on your health. We heard that you were feeling...?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: My health?

Q: Yes, sir. We heard that you were feeling under the weather yesterday. That's why you didn't attend the...?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: I, basically, just ran out of steam yesterday. Hindi pa ako nakapag-recover sa biyahe. I suppose I just needed rest. I'm fine now. Thank you for your concern. *[applause]*

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