

MEDIA INTERVIEW BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

**FOLLOWING THE INAUGURATION OF THE NORTH LUZON
EXPRESSWAY CANDABA 3RD VIADUCT**

[Held in Barangay Tabon in Pulilan, Bulacan | 10 December 2024]

Q: O sige, sir, mayroon pong 87,000 na residents na kailangan i-evacuate. Do we have enough funds, resources, evacuation centers --- ?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We do. I was with... First of all, I got the report from si Secretary Rex Gatchalian who is already --- landed already in Negros early this morning.

DBM has already assured me that they are ready. So, yes, we are ready to support the families who have been evacuated outside the six-kilometer danger zone.

So, talagang pumutok na. And so now, DENR, DOST are continuing to monitor air quality to see if we need to do more in terms of evacuating. Kung maging dangerous na ang levels ng toxic gases na lumalabas doon sa bulkan.

So, yes, we're ready. We know what to do and we have already started to send food packs, and we already started to send all of the things that we bring to the --- to those who are in evacuation centers.

So...

Q: Sir, any update po on Mary Jane Veloso? Makakauwi ba siya before Christmas, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, you know we were asked by the Indonesian government that not to make any announcements until everything is settled. So, let's respect that request.

All right?

Q: Mr. President, there were fresh incidents of the use of water cannons and the presence of Chinese Navy warships in our exclusive economic zone, how are we going to respond, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We are going to continue to perform our mission. We will never be part of an escalation in the situation in the West Philippine Sea.

We will... If we look at the evolution of the situation in the West Philippine Sea, the Philippines has never been an agent of escalation of tensions.

So, we will not do that.

Q: Sir, we will not be deploying Navy warships?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We are not at war. We don't need Navy warships.

All we are doing is resupplying our fishermen, protecting our territorial rights.

Again, it will be provocative and will be seen as an escalation. We don't do that. The Philippines does not escalate tensions. Quite the opposite, the Philippines always tries to bring down the level of tension.

Q: Mr. President, we heard the good news about the SRI for teachers...

PRESIDENT MARCOS: The, the -- ?

Q: SRI for teachers.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Yes, yes.

Q: But how about other government workers, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, we are doing... Teachers are special category. So, we have to handle that individually.

All right, thank you.

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