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PRESS CONFERENCE BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

[Held at the Kalayaan Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 11 August 2025]

OPENING STATEMENT:

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.: Thank you, Dave.

Well, today very simple, I have asked to – so that we can present to you... If you remember, I'm sure you do, that during the SONA, I made the – I gave instructions for all our different agencies led, of course, by DPWH to give us all of the information on specifically flood control projects that were started, were finished, were in progress from the beginning of my term, which was on 2022 – mid-2022 until now.

And so that – and part of that process of auditing these projects was to also publicize the list that we were going to get from DPWH.

Well, we have done it. We have received the list from DPWH. We, I think, have put it into a form that is accessible to the public. And most importantly, it is in a form that the public can use so that they can first, identify the projects that – the flood control projects that are within their area, within their barangay so that they can actually go and look at it. Or if they already have information, they can tell us about it kung maganda 'yung naging project. Kung hindi maganda 'yung naging project, bakit hindi maganda 'yung naging project, ano naging problema, et cetera, et cetera.

And that's what the present website is supposed to do.

Now, this is the third iteration of this website.

We've been working on it. Kahit noong nasa India kami, we're already working on it. And it was – this is the final form of it.

And we are very much open to suggestions if the people want us to put more info or other info onto the website, we will certainly do that.

But to begin with, we have – I think there will be a video later on to show very simply how the website is being used. I was asked if again – this is something that everybody can use and I'm confident that the way that we have done it is very accessible to people.

Before we get to this point, can we do the video first? *[Can we do the – can we hang on to this? Wait, wait, wait. Let's start from the beginning. Let's start from the beginning please.]* Yeah, okay, let's do that. O sige, gawin na natin 'yun.

[video presentation]

That's another feature that we just added na puwede mong hanapin sa mapa. And then beyond that, this is the street map pero maraming overlay 'yan. May overlay pa 'yan na satellite picture.

Can we just show the first page? Iyong list of projects and then 'yung search? Well, that's the... There... Okay, going up. All right.

Doon sa pinakita, nilalagay 'yung location, 'yung date kung ano 'yung project. You don't need to have all of those details.

All the public has to do para – ang ginawa ko sabi ko kasi noong una naming natanggap ito, it was map coordinates eh.

So, sabi namin hindi puwede. So, we transmitted a map coordinates down to the barangay level.

So, ang kailangan lang ipasok ng kahit sino, buksan 'yung website para makita, tiga-barangay 1, 2, 3 ako, tama. Iyon ilagay lang – ayan Barangay Tabaco. And they can search – they can search all of the – they can search all of the projects that are in their area.

So, kung alam na nila, puwede na silang magsabi, maganda naman. Puwede silang magsabi hindi maganda ang naging project.

And so, those are – we're just trying to keep it as simple as possible so that people can just put... Iyan lang naman eh. Basta barangay lang tama na 'yun. Kasi 'yung isa may listahan pa eh where, when, that's not necessary.

If alam ninyo, eh 'di gamitin ninyo. Pero kung hindi necessary na ganoon, ito na lang. Basta ilagay ninyo 'yung barangay ninyo at lalabas na lahat ng flood control project.

Maybe there are certain – there are certain already initial findings that we have made during the ongoing investigation that we have initiated since the SONA.

And I think it is interesting for people to look into so that it can be a guide as to where maybe the problems have arisen.

And these are key findings on flood control projects. Can we put that up? Yeah.

This is – basic data lang ito. Next page. Iyan.

The total cost of all of the projects since July 2022 until today is PhP545 billion. I don't know about you, but that is a very big number. By any measure, that is an enormous number.

Let's keep going.

Another observation is that there are 6,021 projects worth more than 350 billion that do not specify the exact type of flood control that is being built. Then, many projects also in different locations have exactly the same contract cost.

I think anybody who works in either the private sector or the public sector, 'pag sinabi may limampung project, pare-pareho, 150 million lahat. Pare-pareho, pare-pareho, pareho lahat. Impossible 'yan.

It is impossible for one barangay, even if they are the next barangay, to have the exact same project to the exact same amount with the exact same contractor. Impossible 'yan. And that is why that is a significant – significant finding already that we have made.

Now, can we keep going please?

There. So, we looked at the regions kung saan ang pinakamarami. And this is what came out.

So, that's something that we have to dig deeper into. Parang 'yung NCR, that makes sense. Kasi talaga – 'di 'yung flood problem nandiyan. Pero titingnan pa natin 'yan.

Tapos, Region 3, well, they're flood prone. But tingnan natin why as opposed to other places that have known – that are also flood prone.

Okay, next.

Here, I think you can analyze this for yourself. I don't need to explain this. These are the provinces with the most projects. And at the same time, here's a list of the top 10 provinces that are most flood prone, that have been assessed to be the most flood prone.

I think you will notice they don't necessarily match. This side and that side don't necessarily match.

Now, I'm sure there are explanations for that. We will have to study it further. But you would intuitively say that projects – that the areas rather, the provinces or regions, whatever you want to do, whatever pinaka-flood prone, 'yun dapat ang pinakamaraming project 'di ba.

Pero parang hindi tumutugma. Kaya 'yan, kailangan natin pag-aralan nang mabuti kung bakit nagkaganyan.

And, well, this is just another piece of information. Out of 170 pumping stations – that's the next one, 'yan – pumping stations, 157 were in Metro Manila.

This really, more than anything, manifests how the pumping stations have become ineffective because of the garbage collection problem. So, that's indicative of that.

Kaya namin nilagay 'yan diyan. Kaya dahil para malaman ng tao gawa tayo nang gawa nitong pumping station 'pag 'yung basura naman ay natapon, nabara 'yung bomba, nabara 'yung estero, nabara lahat – kagaya 'yung pinuntahan natin noong isang – ng last week – wala rin silbi 'yung pumping station.

And that's just to bring home the message that we really have to do something about the garbage problem.

There are – let's see. Yeah, this is... All over there are 2,409 contracting entities which is understandable. Kasi sa local ganyan talaga 'yan. May Double A, Triple A. Iyon lang ang puwede ninyong gamitin. And 'pag 'yung malilit na project, the local can do it already.

So that's not ano – just to show paano 'yung nagkahatian. However, this is another disturbing assessment, statistic: 20 percent of the entire 545 billion budget napunta lang sa 15 na contractor. Sa 15 na contractor na 'yan, lima sa kanila ay may kontrata sa buong Pilipinas. Keep going. Ayan. Ito na 'yung listahan.

And this is what I was talking about. Five of these 15 contracts have projects in almost all regions nationwide. Ang justification sa pagpili ng kontratista ay para sasabihin, pagbigyan naman natin 'yung local. 'Di ba? Para naman 'yung mga maliliit na contractor eh may trabaho naman sila. At mas mabilis kasi kung local. Kausap mo 'yung tao eh.

Again, my experience as governor is that as much as possible, we try to do it by local. Kasi puwede na may madali. Sabihin, "bilisan niyo na, bakit wala pa?" Puwede mong anuhin. You have some influence over the thing.

But that one, that for me was the one that stood out very much. Five of these contractors had projects in almost the entire country. So, those are the ones that immediately pop out na sa aking palagay ay kailangan natin tingnan.

So anyway, this is the initial. We are rolling out the website today. We have provided you with some of the initial information that we have had.

They are not assessments. We are not accusing anyone of anything yet.

However, it gives us an idea of what – how this has been conducted.

So, I hope the people – that I hope people will take advantage of this. And as I said, there is always a way for them to give their comments.

Magsumbong sila kung 'yan ang gusto nilang gawin. O maaari naman sasabihin nila: hindi, walang problema dito. 'Yun ang pinakamagandang balita na matatanggap namin.

So, I encourage everyone to look into this and, you know, say your piece. Kasi parang sinasabi ng mga iba, nakikita naman namin hindi maganda, pero wala naman kaming mapuntahan, wala naman kaming malapitan.

Ngayon mayroon na. Ngayon mayroon na kayong malalapitan. Ito, ang lalapitan na ngayon ninyo ako mismo dahil ako ang titingin dito araw-araw sa website natin at babasahin ko ang report na ibigay ng taumbayan.

So, this is the first step. We are going to keep going. This is something that is, I think, absolutely necessary.

We have to clean our ranks.

This is... It might be a little painful. Baka masangkot diyan 'yung mga tao na malapit sa atin. Ngunit kahit malapit sila sa atin, mas malapit naman siguro sa puso natin 'yung taong-bayan kaya sila ang uunahin natin.

All right. I think that's just a preliminary briefing.

And thank you and I'll take some questions if you have.

Q&A:

Q: Mr. President, magandang umaga po. Hi, sir, good morning po. Mr. President, Mr. Ramon Ang is offering to solve the flood problem in the National Capital Region. What is your take on this?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you. What else? What else can you say? This is – this is why we have – this is the reason why from the very beginning, I always said, the private sector needs to be part of everything – of our national development. Hindi puwedeng ganoon.

Now, 'yung proposal ni Ramon Ang is also certainly very welcome because, you know, we've seen his projects. Maganda naman ang mga nagiging resulta.

He's able to bring it in on time. And, you know, the man is an engineer. So, I'm sure he has – pinag-aralan niya nang mabuti 'yan.

He's actually given me already this briefing before. And however, there is still another side to his proposal. And the other side of his proposal, I will fix the flooding problem, I will desilt the areas here in Metro Manila anyway, but the mayors, the LGUs, have to take care of the garbage problem.

It simply doesn't work until we have a solution to the garbage problem. We have a proposal for waste-to-energy solution in Manila – City of Manila. So, baka naman... So, that – I think that will go on but that's only for Manila.

So, itutuloy natin, titingnan natin kung maganda ang lumabas doon. And if that's the case, then that's what we will do with other parts of at least Metro Manila sa una or the other – the other urban areas na nababaha. So, again, anybody who wants to help, it's a welcome offer.

Yes?

Q: Sir, just a quick follow-up. So, 'yung proposal po ni Senador Panfilo Lacson na i-tap din 'yung ibang mga bilyonaryo sa bansa, welcome din po sa inyo 'yun?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Siyempre. You know, you do not – you don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Kung handa silang tumulong, tumutulong...

And I – this is not – this is not anything new. The so-called taipans of the country pagka mayroon tayong gustong gawin, nago-offer talaga sila. Kaya marami silang naitutulong.

So, we should – we will – I will certainly look at this proposal of Ramon very, very closely and see if it's actually – if we can do it.

This – like I said, it will require the coordination between LGUs and, I guess, San Miguel, whatever it is – what part it is that they want to play.

Pero nagde-desilt na siya – nagde-desilt na siya. Iyong Pasig River dine-desilt na niya. So, alam niya talaga 'yun.

So, anyway, that's – that's something that's very welcome, as I said. Any offers of help are always welcome.

Q: Maraming salamat ho, Mr. President.

Q: Good morning, Mr. President. Sir, Senator Tulfo mentioned earlier na isang undersecretary ng DPWH 'yung reportedly nasibak dahil po dito sa anomalous flood control. Is this confirmed, Mr. President? And sino-sino pa po kaya 'yung na – involved dito sa corrupt flood projects po? If we can name them, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Now? We just opened the website.

No. I need to hear from other people because anong makukuha kong report? Makukuha kong report sa kung sino man eh maganda lahat. So, I need to hear from people first.

And then, if there is really something na kailangan sasabihin talaga ito consistent, ang dami nilang – 15 'yung project nila, puro palpak. Delikado na 'yan. Titingnan na namin.

But we don't have that yet. We haven't conducted... If you remember, the DEPDev is going to now – go into all of that. Pero parallel – parallel ano 'yan – parallel effort 'yan sa gobyerno at saka sa taong-bayan.

Importante 'yung kontribusyon ng taumbayan. Napakahalaga. Dahil kami, nandito kami, pinag-uusapan nga natin ano? How – 9,000 projects. Siyempre idedetalye namin 'yan, iisa-isahin namin 'yan.

Pero ang tao, nandoon – nandoon sa harap nila eh. Paggising nila sa umaga, maglalakad lang sila ng kalahating kilometro, nandiyan na, nakita na nila eh. So, that's more – that's maybe more important.

Kaya we have encouraged – the way we put the website toge – kahit may picture, may video, i-upload ninyo sa amin para makita namin.

Kasi hin – kami, mayroon kaming 'yung mga malalaking analysis, 'yung mga satellite nga, pati 'yung mga report. Pero iba na rin 'yung nakikita mo, sasabihin mo, dito nasira eh, dito pumasok 'yung tubig. Noong bumagsak – noong bumigay ito, wala na, binaha na kaming lahat.

So, that's why we are encouraging to go – we are asking people to help us and to help themselves. Dahil kung maaayos natin ito, hindi na sila babahain o at least not as badly as they are now.

Q: Sir, quick follow-up lang po. Doon po sa 15 contractors na nakita natin, mayroon po bang link sa mga government officials, especially po sa mga congressmen na nakaupo, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Wala na ba talaga tayong investigative journalist ngayon dito sa Pilipinas?

Trabaho niyo 'yan. Look it up. We are going to look at it also. But it's very – it's – it will be premature for me to name names, et cetera, until we really know what's going on.

But you know, go out there, tingnan ninyo. Talk to the people. We need to hear from everyone.

You know... And that's – that's I think something that we can all play a part in.

Ang... I know that once this comes out, that kung ano-anong mga papasok na reklamo, kung minsan justified, kung minsan hindi, dahil may alitan for political or whatever. Natalo sa kontrata, the usual thing.

But we will still go through every single one. And we still have to see what really is – what really is credible and what needs to be acted upon.

So, let's also be fair to everyone. And not say, ito si ganito, ito si ganyan, ito si ganyan, tanggal ka sa trabaho, unless we have a good idea of what went wrong.

Q: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Good morning, Mr. President. Ito pong presentation ninyo na website, ito po 'yung – based na po ito sa inventory na sinubmit (submit) po ng DPWH?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Yes.

Q: Opo. Sir, bali doon po sa presentation ninyo 'yung may amount – a total cost of PhP545 billion, eh 350 po doon is almost 50 percent. Puwede po ba natin ma-consider 'yun na ghost projects?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: No.

Q: Or hindi naman po?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Hanggang wala... We're just starting this process. Remember, we haven't...

I mean, DEPDev is already working on it. Public Works is already working on it. My office is already working on it.

But, it's – if I'm to stand up here and then, mali si ganito, mali si ganiyan, tapos mali, that's not fair.

So, let's be – let's be circumspect about pointing fingers and shouting at people.

Tingnan natin nang mabuti. Because always remember, the assumption – kasi masama ang loob ng tao eh. So, the assumption is "ah lahat 'yan walang kuwenta." Hindi totoo naman 'yun.

Mayroon din maganda. Mayroon din nabuo. Mayroon naman na nakatulong.

So... Pero hanapin natin 'yung hindi maganda, 'yung hindi nabuo, 'yung hindi nakatulong, at kung saan napunta 'yung pondo para doon sa ganoong klaseng project.

Kung sasabihin natin, it's also possible that palpak 'yung flood control project dahil climate change na eh.

Sa buong kasaysayan ng lugar na 'yun, hindi pa binaha. Nangyayari sa amin 'yan eh. Hindi pa binaha. Ngayon lamang binaha dahil ganyan na 'yung climate change.

Naiba ang lakas ng bagsak ng ulan. So, na – kaya na-overwhelm 'yung flood control.

Wala naman nagnakaw pero 'yung specification natin doon sa flood control na 'yan ay para doon sa pre-climate change na sitwasyon.

So, you cannot – we have to be careful – careful about this. Of course, we want to get to the bottom. Of course, we want the people who have taken advantage of the system to pay and to be answerable to the shortcomings that [have] been demonstrated.

And if there is evidence of corruption, then of embezzlement, of any kind of wrongdoing, that's when we will move.

But again, that – we cannot do all of this without the help of the ordinary citizen.

We need the citizen to play their part, their civic duty to report to the government what they see as being wrong.

So, let's be, as I say, circumspect and maayos 'yung ating pasok dito. Hindi 'yung bara-bara na, you know, bahala na.

You know what the expression in English is, is throwing the baby out together with the bathwater, 'di ba? You choose. You make sure that you're on good ground.

Q: Sir. Mr. President, follow-up lang po. Doon po sa SONA, bale 'yung Regional Project Monitoring Committee po ay naatasan ninyo na 'yung parang ma-identify 'yung failures, tapos 'yung mga hindi natapos at saka 'yung alleged ghost projects. Puwede po bang malaman ngayon sa inyo kung sino po talaga 'yung ahensya na mag-iimbestiga nito, 'yung pangkalahatan? Thank you po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Sila din. Sila na. It will be DEPDev. The regional – they will look at all of these.

That's why... What we can – what the DEPDev, for example, can do... For those who are not up to ano – DEPDev is what NEDA used to be. We just renamed it. So, it's now called the Department of Development.

So, anyway, ang gagawin naman ng DEPDev, titingnan 'yung papel and see what happened where... Tapos 'yung mga really very, very problematic areas, siguro papupuntahan nila. But how many – how many areas can they go to?

We were talking about 9,000 projects. Hindi nila mapupuntahan lahat. Kaya para sa akin, napakahalaga ang kontribusyon at ang mga komento, ang mga reklamo, ang mga video, mga picture na ipapadala sa atin ng taong-bayan.

This is – this will not work – this whole process will not work unless people are involved.

It is not going to be enough if only government is involved, if only DEPDev is involved, if only Public Works is involved, if only the Office of the President is involved.

We need everyone involved. Because, I don't know, 80 million, 90 million pairs of eyes are better than all the eyes in entire – entirety of government.

So, again, let me stress that, that it is exceedingly important that people get involved.

So, lahat ng hinaing ninyo, masama loob ninyo, 'yung – nagrereklamo kayo, frustrated kayo dahil nakikita ninyo wala naman kayong malapitan. Ito na 'yung chance ninyo. Ito na 'yung chance ninyo.

Mayroon na tayong website. Ang isusulat ninyo doon sa report, 'yung tinatawag 'yung sa – 'yung sa ano na report, ang isusulat ninyo doon sa report, ako mismo ang babasa. 'Yan ang asahan ninyo, babasahin ko bawat isa.

Q: Good morning, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good morning.

Q: Pardon me if I may have to divert a bit from the issue this morning because this is a breaking story, Mr. President. Two BFAR vessels in Bajo de Masinloc were just water cannoned today. And there is a heavy flotilla of Chinese vessels, more than our vessels, from the PCG and BFAR. They have around 30 vessels and we have 10, so we are outnumbered, obviously.

What immediate actions will the administration take specifically for this particular incident? And how will you respond, sir, to China's complaint regarding your recent statement in India, in your State Visit to India?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Oh, let's take the second part of your question first.

I don't know what they are talking about. Playing with fire? I was just stating facts. There... We do not want to go to war.

But I think if there is a war over Taiwan, we will be indrawn, hihilaan tayo sa ayaw at gusto natin.

Kicking and screaming, we will be drawn and dragged into that mess. Whatever you do... Come on, let's be – huwag na tayong mag... Hope. I love this saying, hope is not a plan. I hope it doesn't happen. I hope it doesn't...

But if it does, we have to plan for it already. And that's what I was talking about. How do we get our people out? How do we protect the – kung magkagulo – giyera na nga dito, eh malapit na sa atin. Anong gagawin natin? "Okay lang, normal lang 'yan, pababayaang na lang natin kung sino pasok-labas dito sa atin." Hindi naman puwede 'yun.

So, we'll have to do something. So, inevitably, despite our fervent wish to avoid any confrontation with anybody anywhere, war over Taiwan will drag the Philippines kicking and screaming into the conflict. That is what I was trying to say. That's why I don't understand.

And I think because of the narrative coming out about playing with fire and being provocative and all of that, kaya nagka-increase ng activity doon sa West Philippine Sea.

What special instructions I have? We don't have any special instructions. Sanay na tayo rito eh.

You know, it is not – it is not a one thing na – there's no silver bullet na 'pag pinaputok mo, solve lahat ng problema mo.

What will happen here is we will continue to be present. We will continue to defend our territory. We will continue to exercise our sovereign rights. And despite any opposition from anyone, we will continue to do that as we have done in the past three years.

Now, we do not intensify our operations, we just respond. Hindi naman tayo aggressive eh. Ano lang tayo, dumedepensa lang tayo.

So, that is a – that's the situation there. Unfortunately, we are – I think, for propaganda purposes, misinterpreted. But I – the Philippines is not... We are constant in our defense of the territory, of the state, of the population of the Republic of the Philippines.

Ganoon lang ang trabaho namin. Ganoon lang ang aming gagawin. Wala tayong interes na pasukin kahit sino, na puntahan kahit sino, sugurin kahit sino. Wala tayong kainteres-interes diyan.

Sana nga eh, 'yung ginagastos natin for defense and security, hindi na kailangan, kung saan-saan natin magagamit 'yan.

We can use it for agri, for housing. We can use it for job creation. We can use – but we have to do this because we are under threat. We are forced to do this. We do not want to do this. We are forced to do this.

We do not want any kind of confrontation with anyone. We want to build a better, stronger, freer, safer Philippines. That's what we are working for.

This does not build – this kind of confrontation does not build a stronger, better Philippines. All it does is continue to defend our country

Q: Sir –

PRESIDENT MARCOS: So, that's the – I'm a little bit perplexed why it would be characterized as such, as a – as "playing with fire."

Q: Sir, so right now, our vessels there in Bajo de Masinloc will not be instructed to back out? We will just continue to stay there at this point?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We have never instructed any of our vessels to back out.

Q: All right. Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Never, never. But we have to always – we do not back out because natakot tayo, umatras tayo.

Alam mo, I don't know about other places, pero dito sa – dito sa gobyernong ito, hindi tayo umaatras sa laban.

We don't – we don't... We are brave. Filipinos are brave.

And but we do not... Sinong Pinoy na gustong magkagiyera? Sino? Kahit maghanap ka para sa akin kahit isa. Kahit 'yung sundalo, kahit 'yung Coast Guard, ayaw nila ng gulo.

So, no. But at the same time, we have a duty to perform. And that is to defend the country. So, no, we never back down.

We always continue to do the... Our uniformed personnel, the Navy, the Coast Guard, the Army, the Marines, all of them, the Air Force, all of them are pledged. They took an oath.

And they're just doing their duty. They're performing their mission. Defend the Philippines. 'Yun lang naman ang ginagawa nila. And we will not stop doing it. We will not stop doing it.

We will stop doing it when the threat stops.

Tigil na 'yung mga threat. We can all sit more safely at home. And mas magiging magaan ang kalooban natin kapag ganoon ang sitwasyon.

Okay?

Q: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

That concludes our press conference this morning.

Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. Maraming salamat.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Salamat, salamat. Thank you.

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