



TATAK

EDSA 25

PILIPINO AKO  
AKO ANG LAKAS NG PAGBABAGO



ALL PHOTOS FROM THE COLLECTION OF VAL RODRIGUEZ

# PEOPLE POWER AT 25: Celebrating SILVER in YELLOW

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS. A QUARTER OF A CENTURY. ONE GENERATION.  
A long time ago perhaps, but for those of us who were a part of that history, even with senior moments creeping in, the memories are vivid.

**PEOPLE AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE:** EDSA was literally a sea of humanity as hundreds of thousands massed around Camps Aguinaldo and Crame, protecting those inside from attack. After the dictator left, President Cory visits Malacañang; the presidential seal on the wall would now be her symbol.



**REVOLUTION WITH A SMILE:** Citizens clamber atop a military transport vehicle, all the while cheering and flashing the Laban sign (above). By day and by night, for four days in February a quarter of a century ago, the people stood their ground, demanding change, defending freedom. Military and civilian were opposites, adversaries, seemingly irreconcilable, but with people power, the two were reconciled, one people – Filipino. A woman and a nun share a snack with soldiers (right), something they probably would not have thought of doing in the past.





**THE WAY IT WAS:** The tolohib fields of the then open Ortigas area in Pasig became the parking lot for tanks and other military transport (above), as well as soldiers taking a breather, while a ways off, on Ortigas Avenue, thousands stayed in the streets to protect Camp Aguinaldo. A sign calling for prayer proves prophetic: God did listen (top right). Gen. Fidel Ramos makes his famous victory jump, as a grim-faced defense secretary Juan Ponce Enrile speaks to the crowds in Camp Crame (right). Soldiers read about the four-day revolution that would change the country – and then the world (top left).



### ■ Celebrating silver...

From page 3

The People Power Revolution of 1986 is not something one forgets. On a large scale, it changed not just our country, but also the world and the way revolutions are waged. As we mark the 25th anniversary of our People Power, a nation far away changed its leadership in much the same way – without violence, with the people crying out for and achieving change.

This whole week, as the nation celebrates People Power, the stories of those four days in February 1986 will be retold, some details perhaps fuzzy now, but the feeling of pride, of nationhood, of heroism even just on a small scale, of making a stand, of fighting for something we were sure was worthy and noble... will come flooding back.

Before gathering at EDSA we had sustained a long and difficult protest, waged a difficult campaign, went through a difficult electoral exercise. We rallied behind a simple housewife, a woman dressed in sunshine, a reluctant candidate who admitted she knew nothing – of corruption, of stealing – and following her lead we achieved the impossible.

The world marveled – we marveled, wondering how it all happened. In 1986 there was no precedent, nothing like this had ever been done before anywhere in the world. People went to EDSA on the evening of Feb. 22 on sheer instinct and perhaps impulse – not thinking of the consequences or the possible scenarios, because if they did probably very few would have gone. They probably had no idea of what they hoped to achieve there at EDSA, on the road in between two military camps, answering the call of a cardinal to protect a soldier and a minister, both of whom had been part of the dictator's machinery.

Historians may eschew as superstition the claims that a divine hand had guided the people and choreographed



the events of those four days. But when thousands upon thousands move as one, acting on little more than faith and that Pinoy sense of *pakikisama*, when newspapers spread out on the pavement is a welcome bed for the night and the *pan de sal* that an itinerant vendor offers for free is the best breakfast you'd ever had, you cannot but believe that it is not a purely human endeavor.

In the next few days, whether or not you were there 25 years ago, and whether or not you join the present-day celebrations at EDSA and elsewhere, do share in the euphoria of those four days, and try to remember what it meant – and means – to be Filipino, to have fought for and won our freedom and regained our dignity. And after February, to keep that spirit alive, and live like people powered, and empowered. 🇵🇭



**A NEW DAY DAWNING:** On Mendiola street leading to Malacañang, people cart away a barbed wire barrier, dreaded symbol of a regime isolated and separated from its people (above). After the gates of the Palace were opened to the people, throngs waving yellow ribbons and flashing the Laban sign celebrate underneath the Philippine flag and a campaign poster on the grounds of Malacañang (right and on the cover). Cory Aquino holds a press conference (right, middle), flanked by her vice president Salvador Laurel and Juan Ponce Enrile. President Cory Aquino takes her oath at Club Filipino before Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee, the Bible held by her mother-in-law Aurora Aquino (top right). President Cory's first visit to Malacañang (top left), with Joker Arroyo, who would become her executive secretary. Opposite page: Once forbidden territory, Mendiola and J.P. Laurel streets around Malacañang were made accessible to the public, with vendors selling People Power and Cory souvenirs doing brisk business. We asked photographer Val Rodriguez if he remembered what President Cory was saying to him when this photo was taken; she asked if he had had something to eat, and then handed him some sampaloc (sweetened tamarind).