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President addresses nation on Poland's Independence Day

President Andrzej Duda made a TV address to the nation on the occasion of Independence Day on Wednesday.

"One hundred and two years ago the great desire of generations of Poles was fulfilled - the Polish state returned to the map of the world," Duda said in his address. "Poland regained independence! A dream came true for which many of our countrymen paid the highest price - the price of their own life. Let's remember them on this exceptional day."

The president said this year's celebrations fall at an exceptionally difficult time. "The whole world is struggling with the coronavirus pandemic, which completely changes our everyday lives," he said. "For weeks we have been struggling with its second wave. We find out about thousands of new infections and illnesses and also about fatal victims. The situation is very serious."

Duda described the situation as a "great challenge" for all citizens, for the health service and for the state authorities and recognised that the public is tired of the restrictions as well as the uncertainty, with many people worried about their companies, jobs and the futures of their loved ones. He said exceptional times called for exceptional actions.

He thanked "everybody who bravely bears this difficult time, observing recommendations, not exposing themselves or others (to infection)."

In his address, Duda described the pandemic as a time of difficult, unpopular decisions and thanked everyone who observed official recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19, describing it as an expression of patriotism.

The president also appealed to all those who have defeated the disease to donate plasma, saying he himself would do so in the coming days following the proper medical procedures. "Today that is an expression of patriotism," Duda said. "It bears witness to what real citizenship is, a responsible attitude. Thank you for that with all my heart."

He went on to thank doctors, nurses, emergency crews and the whole personnel of the Polish health service as well as soldiers and the police and all officers of the uniformed services. "Your professionalism and devotion deserve the highest respect," he said. "You are our heroes."

Source: PAP

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