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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE 2024 NATIONAL
INVENTION CONTEST AND EXHIBITS (NICE) PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS**

[Delivered at the Main Ballroom of Sheraton Manila Hotel in Pasay City | 24 July 2024]

Thank you to our Science and Technology Secretary, Secretary Renato Solidum Jr.

[Please take your seats.]

The National Invention Contest and Exhibits awardees, congratulations.

I think we have here a perfect example of what is the distinct quality in Filipinos that has made us so successful in the labor markets all over the world. And that is ingenuity. Hindi tayo sanay dahil hindi --- galing tayo sa Pilipinas na hindi naman kumpleto ang gamit natin. Nakakapaghanap tayo ng remedyo.

Ang Pinoy magaling makahanap ng remedyo at kahit na limited lang ang resources natin, kahit na mahirap ang sitwasyon, walang masyadong kuryente, walang masyadong tubig. Whatever it is, we find ways around that and that's really the distinct for me.

I always say that the success of Filipinos lies in their industry, their compassion, and resourcefulness. And resourcefulness always plays a big part of that.

There's many expressions for that pero asikaso ang ginagawa ng Pilipino. Bahala ka na pagka... "Hindi sir, hindi puwede, hindi namin magawa dahil nasira 'yung..." "Basta, asikasuhin ninyo, bahala kayo, hanapan niyo ng paraan."

And Pinoys find a way because we have to. And that's part of our culture. That's why I am so happy to be able to come here despite this imperfect weather, that I was able to attend because I'm so curious to see what the awardees have done.

And I can only congratulate you and I hope and I know that you will inspire many other people to come up.

Well, let me first greet all the others --- all of those who are part of this effort, the members of the private sector who are our full partners in all that we do; my fellow workers in government.

What we --- there is also... To continue with my thought, there is also a very strong motivation for the Philippine economy to have an environment that is conducive to startups.

It's a difficult thing because startups generally have a failure rate of --- it's rather high. It's the nature of startups.

But one unicorn makes up for all of those others that did not make it. And that's what we have to do. Marami talaga tayo... Ako nakikita ko sa mga universities, ang dami kong nakikita, really good ideas.

Ang problema talaga natin hindi tayo marunong mag-scale. How do you scale it into --- so that it becomes a commercial production? How do you design, engineer the production? How do you keep costs down? How do you procure the supplies, the raw materials that you need?

All of these things, the inventors who have mastered the technology do not necessarily have those skills of dealing with banks, of dealing with the market, of finding distributors, of all of these, and with the licenses, the patents, all of these things.

And this is I think where the government can really put in a good hand. You must gain the advantage of your very fine intellectual property. Kayo nakapag-isip niyan. Kayo nag-imbento nito. Kailangan mayroon din --- maramdaman ninyo na may magandang nangyari dahil kayo'y naka-isip nang napakagandang invention at maraming natutulungan. I think that...

Once again, that will encourage... Ang Filipino naman is very innovative in our own way. So, if we have this environment, if we have the environment that is conducive to startups and we begin to see successes in that environment, other people will now be able to say: "Well, you know, I can actually make a living out of this if I come up with a good idea, puwede kong i-hanapbuhay ito."

And that's what we want. We want them to be successful. We want them to have --- to gain the benefit from their very good work.

All of these inventions here are very fine ideas and that you have put into reality. Hindi niyo lang inisip, drinawing (drawing). Pero ginawa talaga ninyo, tinesting (test) ninyo, gumawa kayong prototype. Iyong nasira, inayos ninyo dahan-dahan hanggang na-perfect na ninyo. And that takes a great deal of persistence, determination, and a belief in the technology that you are developing.

And that's what we see here today. And these are all applicable to the everyday lives of every Filipino.

Magandang 'yung mga... Puwede rin tayong mag-design ng mga spaceship 'di ba? Pero hindi naman bagay sa Pilipinas 'yun. Tama ito. We have 15 million riders in the Philippines. This is --- you have the helmet for.

We also have the... The fishermen have been in a very poor shape for a very long time. We are really going to fish cages and this is an even better and cheaper way of doing.

Here, this is... Napaka... When I was looking at the --- 'yung para sa pag --- ng bigas, 'ka ko paano... Like any good invention, when you see it happen, why didn't we think of this before? Suddenly, it's naging obvious 'di ba? Obviously, we need something like this. Obviously, we have to develop and that's the sign. That's truly a sign of a good invention.

And the two, the inventions that have to do with... This one is the salt harvesting and this is to the cleaning of the salt, all the way to table salt quality, with an iodizer. All of the necessary will -- is an enormous help.

Once we develop the salt industry, that is an enormous help because for some strange reason, 90 --- I think it's like 95 percent of our salt has been imported.

It was based on a WHO recommendation that table salt should be iodized and we didn't iodize our salt. But table salt comprises, I think, six, seven percent of the actual salt na ginagamit natin.

We use it for fertilizer, coconut. We use it for industrial purposes.

So, again, this is... You can see it is --- these are relevant. They are not just pie in the sky na well, it's a nice toy, it's interesting, the science is fun. But it really has a practical purpose and that's the most important part of this invention.

They are brilliant ideas but if they remain as an idea, then that's all they are and it's no benefit really, except as a mental exercise perhaps for the inventor. But there are no benefit to the inventor or to anyone, to any of the communities.

And that I think is the best quality of the inventions that we see here. They apply immediately to the everyday life of Filipinos. And in their way, will improve the quality of life of everyday Filipinos.

So, a hearty congratulations to all of you. And of course, the DOST for putting together the program. And that is what --- that will be probably be my message today. Let's now make sure that we use these ideas, they're good ideas. We can't just put them and then, you know, store them away, kalimutan na natin. Gamitin natin 'to. They are good ideas.

And so, let's --- find a way to make it --- commercialize, to put it in the market and for people to gain, for people to enjoy the advantages of all of the new technologies that you have developed, all the advantages that it brings.

I hope that there will be more of these awards. I mean, we can increase the categories if you want because we really want it...

I'm a great believer in Pinoy, talagang... Ang Pinoy may asikasong sariling Pinoy, 'yung Pinoy talaga. "Basta't hanapan mo ng paraan. Huwag ka nang magreklamo. Hanapan mo ng paraan." Ganyan ang buhay ng Pinoy.

And we do, hinahanapan natin ng paraan. Kaya tayo may mga inventor na ganito. Nahahanapan nila ng paraan. Ginagamit nila ang science. And that's exactly what we want to see.

As you all well know, the entire global economy is moving towards the more technological base. Whereas before, we would see that technology played a part. But now, technology is the business and that's... And so that's why we have to continue to encourage all these brilliant Filipino minds to come together and say that --- and find ways to make life easier.

I'm sure all of you were inspired by your own personal experience. The high school students who won the... I asked them, "rider kayong lahat?" Oo, rider silang lahat. Nagmomotor silang lahat kaya naisip nilang imbentuhin ito.

And I'm sure all of you also gained from your own personal experience and that's what we like to see. What we like to see is you see --- you are conscious of the environment that you have. You can see your community members. Nahahirapan dahil hindi maganda 'yung makinarya na ganito. It doesn't come out with good products. Let's find a way to make it better.

And that's what we need. That's what we need. We need high tech certainly, but most importantly relevant technologies that apply to the lives of Filipinos and that is what you have done here and so my most heartfelt congratulations.

Well done. Keep it up. Keep inspiring the other inventors and I hope to see many, many more of these wonderful Filipino inventions.

Congratulations sa inyong lahat. Maraming salamat. Magandang umaga. *[applause]*

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