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SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE PAGBIBIGAY DANGAL: A HEROES' WELCOME CELEBRATION FOR THE PHILIPPINES' PARIS 2024 OLYMPIANS

[Delivered at the Ceremonial Hall of the Malacañang Palace | 13 August 2024]

Thank you to ES Lucas Bersamin.

[Please take your seats.]

Alam kong naka-barong tayo pero hindi tayo masyadong formal dito kaya't sinuot ko 'yung aking uniporme para ipagmalaki. Ito 'yung binigay niyo sa akin noong nag-send off ako sa inyo. And wow, I never thought how proud I would be to wear it again because of our --- brilliant performance of our athletes. Let me greet the Philippine Olympic Committee President, Abraham Tolentino *[applause];* and PSC Chairman, Richard Bachmann *[applause];* our supporters and friends who we could not do without in the private sector; fellow workers in government; of course, the First Lady, First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos *[applause];* and of course, the most important group that --- pinakamahalaga na grupo na nandito ngayon, ang ating mga atleta na nakilahok sa Olympic *[applause]* at bumalik ng napakagandang resulta. And that is what we are commemorating and celebrating a little bit now; ladies and gentlemen, magandang gabi sa inyong lahat.

Unang-una sa lahat, sa ating mga atleta at sa inyong mga pamilya, welcome sa palasyo. And it is --- the honor is mine, the honor is ours to be able to welcome you, such achievers who have… Kumbaga sa --- pinapaganda ninyo at pinapatingkad ninyo ang pangalan ng Pilipino.

At kaya naman ay kami naman nagpapasalamat sa inyong lahat. Dahil bukod sa medalya --- but of course, you know, Caloy, [inaudible] your performance was just --- it deserve two gold medals. And that's how high a standard that we have reached.

At ngunit nakikita naman namin na --- siguro lahat naman kami rito ay ipinagdadasal namin kayo. At saka isa lang ang irereklamo ko sa inyong lahat at napuyat ako ng ilang --- dalawang linggo akong puyat *[laughter]* para manood ng sari-saring mga event.

But 'yung puyat ko worth it na worth it dahil talagang napakagandang panuorin kayo at makita kayo.

At 'yung performance ninyo na naging bunga sa taon-taon na sakripisyo ng sarili ninyo, ng inyong mga coach, mga trainer, mga nutritionist, at lalong-lalo na ang mga pamilya ninyo.

At alam naman natin na hindi talaga --- walang mananalo na atleta na hindi suportado ng katakot-takot na karaming tao na walang iniisip kung papaano kayo tulungan para maging successful. And ito ‘yung ating kinikilala ngayon. At napaka halaga.

At ngayon, it is now in the international stage. And so, we can see that --- ulit, sikat na naman ang Pilipinas.

Pinapasikat ninyo ang Pilipinas sa buong mundo. Alam ko na iniisip ninyo na --- ikaw gymnastics, boxing. ‘Di ba sa pole vault --- ‘yan ‘yung iniisip lang ninyo ‘yung event ninyo. Pero ‘yung performance Ninyo, may malaking kahulugan ‘yan, it means a lot. May malaking kahulugan ‘yan para sa amin dito na nanunood sa inyo, na sumisigaw at nagsusuporta sa inyo.

And that’s why it was, for me, I think we should recognize not only the athletes, although they are, of course, deserving of recognition but also all the support group over the years is not --- hindi nangyari ito dahil noong last year nag-decide ka mag-sports, matagal-tagal ito. Lalabanan --- you go through injury, you go to --- ‘yung hindi ka makabiyahe dahil walang pambayad ng pamasahe to go abroad, to go to the international competitions. All of these… And yet you come through.

And yet you have shown the spirit of the Filipino, the determination of a Filipino, and the excellence of the Filipino spirit. And that’s what you have shown for us today.

And for that… Iniisip ko kanina, iniisip ko nung nangyayari ito, sabi ko: Ano kayang puwede nating maitulong sa ating mga atleta, sa ating mga tumulong sa kanila?

Habang nanunood ako ng news, naku sabi ko, mayaman na ito si Caloy. *[laughter]* Daming perang binibigay, may ---teka kung ano ito. Sabi ko, isipin kaya natin magbigay tayo ng ganito, mayroon na, mayroon nang nagbigay dalawa pa. Sabi ko, sige, paano natin gagawin ito? So, I said --- I thought that we --- what we should do is really recognize all the athletes, number one, all the athletes. I think any athletes… *[applause]*

Kahit sinong atleta dito sa Pilipinas o kung saan man lang, na makapag-qualify sa Olympics, mabigat ‘yun. That is an extremely difficult achievement to have manage.

So, that’s why, tamang-tama nandito si Chairman, siya ang maraming pera. *[Laughter]*

So, lahat naman ng atleta natin bigyan na natin basta nag-Olympian, bigyan natin tig-iisang milyon, ‘diba? *[cheers and applause]*

Ima-match pa ng Office of the President ‘yung ibibigay mo para at least… *[applause]*

Bukod pa roon, dahil sa ating pangingilala sa mga lahat ng tumulong, the coaching staff, bibigyan din natin ng kalahating milyon [inaudible]. *[cheers and applause]*

Hihingi ako ng paumanhin ninyo dahil maliit lang at alam ko na ‘yung isang milyong piso halimbawa ay ikumpara mo sa inyong sakripisyo, ikumpara ninyo sa inyong pinagdaanan, ikumpara ninyo, napakaliit lang. Pero ngayon lang ito ‘yung gagawin natin.

Ngayon, sabi ko nga ay marami na tayong ibinibigay na material things. What I would like to now do is to ask our athletes, our coaches, all our sports organizations.

Imbis na maglalabas kami ng cash --- well, if you need more cash, we’ll find some more. But I think, more importantly, I want to be part of the development of sports in the Philippines. Naiwan-iwanan na tayo. *[applause]*

If you can consider that all of these athletes who have done so well and have made us so proud, there’s no official, technical support from the government.

They did it on their own, siyempre mayroong tumutulong. Kung minsan ‘yung gobyerno nakakatulong. Pero walang pormal na istraktura para tulungan ‘yung ating mga atleta. And that’s what we are going to establish now.

So, I ask all of you to tell us, what is it that you need. Saan kayo --- noong sa pag-training ng mga atleta natin, saan kayo nahirapan? Anong hindi ninyo magawa na maitutulong namin? You tell us and hopefully, if we really work together and start to prepare --- for not only the Olympics, of course, that’s a very important one, but not only the Olympics. We start to prepare for all the international competitions that we have --- that are there before us. And I’m sure that --- na magkikita ulit tayo rito sa palasyo, magku-congratulate ulit ako sa inyo, at hihingian natin ng pera ‘yung PAGCOR ulit. *[applause]*

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