

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT LINE 1 (LRT-1)
CAVITE EXTENSION PROJECT (L1CE) PHASE 1**

[Delivered at the Dr. Santos Station, Dr. A. Santos Ave. in Parañaque City | 15
November 2024]

Thank you to our Transportation Secretary, Secretary Jimmy Bautista.

Honorable members of the Cabinet who are excitedly joining us here this morning; the honorable members of the Senate and the members of the House of Representatives; Parañaque City Mayor Eric Olivarez; Metro Pacific Investments Corporation Chairman MVP, Manuel Pangilinan; our partners in the private sector; my fellow workers in government; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, a very good morning to you.

Today, we build on the dreams and dedication of those who came before us.

The LRT-1 Cavite Extension has become a reality because 40 years ago, one man had the bold vision to build a modern transit system.

Like many monumental undertakings, the concept of the Light Rail Transit was first met with doubts.

It was criticized as a project way ahead of its time—with costs way above what the country could afford and engineering challenges way beyond the expertise that we had.

But despite these, three years later after the groundbreaking, the first train started rolling. Rolled into history as the first rapid train system in Southeast Asia – many people have forgotten that. But the LRT-1 was the very first light rail urban transit system in Southeast Asia. [applause]

And since then, people have now discovered the joy of an easy commute.

Above all, as one of the biggest and most complicated public works at that time, it instilled pride in our people, and reinforced the belief that Filipino talent and ingenuity can always overcome any odds.

It broke bureaucratic reluctance to tackle the grand and the enduring, instead of being contented with the temporary and the piecemeal.

On this day, no one is happier than his son in seeing that his father's foresight is being validated by another work that expands the mass transit that he had built for the people that he loved.

The L-1-CE Project has been a long time in the making—spanning five administrations, starting with President Estrada, to President Arroyo, President Aquino, President Duterte, and now, to mine.

We owe this progress to the hard work and dedication of my predecessors; we must recognize their roles in helping make this dream a reality.

And as we unveil the Phase 1 of the L-1-CE Project, we are reminded of a simple yet powerful truth: the way forward is guided by learning from the past and honoring the values and traditions that shape our path towards a better future.

The Phase 1 extends the LRT Line 1, bringing us the first five new stations in Parañaque City.

These stations—Redemptorist-ASEANA, MIA Road, Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange, Ninoy Aquino Avenue, and Dr. Santos—will serve as vital access points for many, many Filipinos.

The Dr. Santos station, formerly known as Sucat, is an intermodal transport facility, offering multiple bays for public and private vehicles.

This facility exhibits our firm determination to provide efficient, accessible transportation options for all.

With the Phase 1 completion, the LRT-1 will have the capacity to serve an additional 80,000 passengers every day, significantly enhancing our current ridership.

Commuters will now see a great reduction in their travel time, allowing them to spend more time with their loved ones.

By serving commuters across Metro Manila, Cavite, and neighboring areas, the whole project creates a smoother, more reliable mode of transport.

Our journey towards a more seamless and modernized public transportation system does not end here. We are committed to building station after station, reaching as far and as fast as our people's needs dictate.

Patuloy pa nating pinapalawak at pinapaganda ito. Tulad na lamang nitong pinasisinayaan natin ngayon.

At the same time, I recognize that countless rail projects—those conceived, broken ground upon, thoroughly studied, and even initially financed during my administration—may not see completion in my term.

This is the nature of railway development and of any large-scale development: this is not a short-term endeavor. It requires patience, persistence, and passion, and commitment that extends beyond immediate timelines.

Rail projects not only commence when soil is first taken from the earth. In fact, most of the heavy lifting is done during the preparations.

Our role is to ensure that we have a roster of projects running along the pipeline so that the next generations will assume these heritage projects and take on the responsibility to finish them.

Carrying the lessons of the past, we aim to intensify our work on rail initiatives.

The issues on road right of way must be resolved fast and disputes must not hinder work.

To attract foreign investments in the transport sector, we should leverage the Public Service Act that removes the 40 percent cap on foreign investment in railways.

Finally, the Public-Private Partnership or PPP hybrid model on L-1-CE serves as a perfect template for future investment.

With these in mind, we are pursuing more transportation projects.

Dito sa LRT-1 Cavite Extension, hangad ko na matapos ang natitirang tatlong istasyon hanggang Bacoor, Cavite sa lalong madaling panahon. [applause]

Ukol sa Unified Grand Central Station sa Quezon City na magsisilbing terminal kung saan magtatagpo ang apat na linya, hangad ko na agaran itong magkukumpleto. Nang sa gayon, handa itong magbigay-ginhawa sa mga pasaherong tumatangkilik sa tren araw-araw.

Para naman sa MRT-7 na tatahak mula sa Quezon City hanggang Bulacan, inaasahan ko na magamit na ito upang maranasan ng tinatayang 300,000 pasahero ang pangakong 35 minutong biyahe sa magkabilang dulo.

Sabik na rin akong makatanggap ng paanyaya sa pagbubukas ng unang yugto ng North-South Commuter Railway. [applause]

Hangad ko rin na maging komportable ang mga pasahero sa MRT-3 sa EDSA at sa LRT-1.

Hindi na sana kailangang maglakad ng mga pasahero mula sa MRT-3 North EDSA Station na malapit sa Trinoma para lang lumipat sa FPJ station papuntang Balintawak o sa Caloocan.

At this point, I would like to express our gratitude to the people behind the success of L-1-CE Phase 1 completion—of course, the DOTr, that has played a central role in all of this. [applause]

The Light Rail Transit Authority, the Project Concessionaire—the Light Rail Manila Corporation, including our financial stakeholders and contractors, for providing the Filipino people with safe, reliable, and efficient transportation services.

If ease of travel is key to prosperity, then it is in the railways that we find the drivers for growth.

When we connect our hubs and our heartlands through a reliable, efficient transportation system—a people's system accessible to all—we foster a truly inclusive and connected nation.

Together, let us build a more advanced, progressive, and prosperous Bagong Pilipinas—one where every Filipino can look towards a future of seamless connectivity, improved mobility, and the freedom to spend time on what truly matters.

I took note of MVP's quotation of the Colombian President and this is my – this has been actually what I have told all in the transport system and why I have put so much emphasis on rail transport.

And that is my experience in taking train – I've been riding trains for most of my life. Simply because as a student and as a young man it was simply the most convenient.

But I think that anyone who has had any experience commuting in big cities like New York, or London, or Paris, you can see that the ridership is a mixed bunch.

And it's not only ordinary workers who are going to work, but you also see people who clearly are people with – 'yung maykaya. Iyong mga maykayang magkaroon ng limousine, magkaroon ng mga naka-Rolls-Royce sila nakaparada sa bahay. Ngunit ang ginagawa nila sumasakay sila sa tren. Dahil

`yan ang pinakamabilis, `yan ang pinakamaganda, at `yan ang pinakaginhawa na paraan upang makarating sa kanilang pagtatrabahuhan.

And that is the – that is the point at which when we can see the -- as we refer to them “the rich folk” riding the trains in -- as a matter of choice before riding their fancy automobiles going to work. Simply because it is the quickest way there, it the easiest way there, then I can say we have succeeded at least partway in what we have been aspiring to do.

This is the Philippines we strive for, a nation that moves forward as one.

Maraming salamat po!

Mabuhay po ang Bagong Pilipinas! [applause]

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