

**SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**

**AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY
CANDABA 3RD VIADUCT**

[Delivered in Barangay Tabon in Pulilan, Bulacan | 10 December 2024]

Thank you very much Speaker Martin Romualdez for your kind introduction. *[Please take your seats.]*

Former President and Pampanga 2nd District Representative, Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; Public Works and Highways Secretary Manny Bonoan; the honorable members of the House of Representatives here with us; of the course the Ama ng Lalawigan ng Pampanga Governor Delta Pineda; and the Province of Bulacan Governor, Governor Dan Fernando; our private sector partner in development in terms of not only infrastructure but many other systems that we are putting together the Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation Chairman MVP, Manny Pangilinan; officials and employees of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation led by President Arrey Perez; my fellow workers in government; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Today, we come together to celebrate the realization of our collective vision for resilience and for progress.

The North Luzon Expressway 3rd Viaduct is a fulfillment of a promise—a promise of safer, faster, more reliable travel for every Filipino.

Since its opening – and I did not realize it was quite so long ago – since its opening in 1977, this five-kilometer bridge has been a critical link, connecting the towns of Pulilan in Bulacan and Apalit in Pampanga.

It was one of the landmark projects initiated by my father—then President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. Years later, it remains a vital link between the North and Metro Manila, leaving a lasting impact for generations to come.

For nearly five decades, this bridge has carried the aspirations of countless Filipinos—workers, farmers, entrepreneurs, businessmen, families — and bringing them closer to their destinations and to their loved ones and to their work.

This viaduct has likewise evolved to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. From a two-lane design, it expanded to three lanes in each direction by 2017, now accommodating over 80,000 motorists every day.

In 2023, construction on the 3rd Viaduct was began—a project born of our collective resolve to further strengthen this vital artery of progress.

So, as we mark its completion, we show what can be achieved when we work together as one—fueled by our commitment to enriching connectivity, opportunity, and the brighter future that we continue to create together.

The 3rd Viaduct enhances the capacity of this expressway, reduces congestion, and ensures faster, more efficient travel.

Standing as a testament to this Administration's commitment to the 'Build Better More' program, this also shows that we are building the foundation to nurture the development of our countryside.

By improving the movement of goods, services, and of people, we steer economic growth, expand opportunities for trade and tourism, and drive regional development.

Designed with the latest in engineering innovation, this structure attests to our dedication to safety, durability, and progress.

And furthermore, I take note of the fact that the scheduled program – was scheduled to be completed in 24 months. But with the use of the latest technologies, we were able to cut it to 20 months. Congratulations to Metro Pacific for the good work. *[applause]*

Built to withstand the challenges of nature and the demands of our time, it is poised to serve our people for decades, offering them not only convenience but also security as they traverse this route.

The timing of this milestone could not be more opportune. As we enter the holiday season, a period marked by heightened activity and an influx of holiday travelers, this bridge becomes even more crucial.

Let me assure though everyone that the Department of Transportation and the Toll Regulatory Board are implementing measures to ease congestion and to ensure smoother travel across this corridor.

With all this in mind, I call on all concerns — especially the Toll Regulatory Board and the NLEX Corporation—to remain vigilant. Let us prioritize with

swift responses, mechanisms and deploy well-coordinated traffic management strategies to address the ever-changing conditions and the increasing demands on our toll roads.

And of course, let us not forget to honor the collective effort that made this achievement possible.

To the private sector partners, particularly NLEX Corporation and the Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation, your work mirrors the kind of nation that we aspire to be— consistent, synergistic, forward-looking.

Its early completion only underscores what can be achieved through grit, collaboration, and determination, and an open mind to accept new technologies and new ways of doing things.

Let us build infrastructure projects with future challenges in mind. Remain focused on pursuing initiatives that uplift lives, build communities, and most importantly, meet the needs of the future that we hope to build for our children and their children.

Every bridge we build and every road we pave should remind us of our collective responsibility to bring meaningful change to our people.

Together, let us create a *Bagong Pilipinas*—one where progress is felt in every corner of the country, where development is inclusive, and where opportunities are within reach for every Filipino.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat. [applause]

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