

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE NLEX CONNECTOR
CALOOCAN-ESPAÑA SECTION**

Toll Plaza, Caloocan City and City of Manila
March 27, 2023

[00:00:15]

[applause] Thank you very much to our Public Works and Highways Secretary Manny Bonoan. Please take your seats.

Our Transportation Secretary Jimmy Bautista and the other members of --- we also have the Department of Finance Secretary, Secretary Ben Diokno here with us; of course, our partner in this extremely important project, the Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation Chairman Manny V. Pangilinan; the North Luzon Expressway Corporation President Luigi Bautista; my fellow workers in government. Nandito yata ang ating mga representante ng LGU and I see some of the local government officials from the other cities who have come to witness the opening of this extremely important connector.

My fellow workers in government and clearly our partners in the private sector; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Today, we are witnessing the inauguration of another milestone of government projects in our national infrastructure agenda. So, we are all extremely happy to be with you all to launch the newly constructed Caloocan-España Section of the NLEX Connector.

Together with the España-Magsaysay Section of this connector --- which is targeted for completion in June this year --- the Caloocan-España Section will finally connect the NLEX with the SLEX.

Gaano katagal na natin hinahantay ito. It just made too much sense and I think notwithstanding the pandemic, the MVP group has still managed to work their way through to bring us to where we are today.

This road project will form an integral part of the Luzon Spine Expressway Network, which in turn, is a component of the Philippine High Standard Highway Network. Once completed, this connector shall provide another alternate route that will reduce travel time for our motorists.

(00:02:32)

Nagtitinginan kami kanina noong sinabi Manila-Caloocon will be five minutes. Sa buong buhay natin never pa natin nakita iyong five minutes na galing Caloocon hanggang Maynila. Baka iyong ating pangarap ay matupad na.

The NLEX Connector will also contribute to the ease of movement — cargo and goods — from north to south and vice versa, especially those coming from the Port of Manila. It will provide great relief to the logistics sector since there will be an alternative route for truckers who wish to avoid the congestion in the main roads within the metropolis.

Ang tawag --- this is referred to I think in other countries, these are the surface roads kung tawagin. And so we will bypass all of those and the traffic that we all know, that we all suffer through in Metro Manila. Ito ay hindi na dadaan doon sa tinatawag nga na surface roads and we will be using the bridge flyovers for us to transport goods and passengers both coming from the port of Manila all the way to Caloocon.

This is indeed another achievement and undoubtedly will significantly improve the mobility of people, of goods and of services not only within Metro Manila but also within its environs.

With the opening of this project, we sustain and accelerate the momentum started by the previous administration in terms of infra development. We will continue and complete these projects as efficiently as we can, crucial as they are in achieving our national development goals.

Under the “Build, Better, More” program, we will continue to push for the interconnectivity of major roads and expressways, as well as build even more roads and bridges in strategic places within the archipelago.

At this juncture, I extend my sincerest gratitude and congratulations to everyone both in the private sector, both in the --- and in the local government and of course, in the national government, to them I say my congratulations for having made this all possible.

Thank you to the NLEX Corporation, the Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation for completing this part of this project. We certainly need to recognize as well your continued efforts in improving our country’s infrastructure systems such as the proposals for the Candaba Viaduct Renewal and Expansion, the Traffic Mobility Program and the Urban Ring Road. Remain please steadfast in your desire to assist and to collaborate with government in improving the infrastructure landscape of the country.

[00:05:30]

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of our officials and employees in the DOTr and the DPWH and all its attached agencies who have played a very important and crucial role in the success of this project.

Let us keep up the good work. We have ways to go but we have made some good starts. Let us continue our service to the public with integrity, with accountability and with professionalism. It is true that synergy between the government and the private sector will always be a defining factor in the overall development of the country.

So once again, I call upon the DOTr and the NLEX Corporation to work closely and effectively in accomplishing our noble objectives in improving the road infrastructure on this side of the country.

Try very hard, as we all do, to stay within the target time frame, although your success rate in this regard is exemplary. Avoid unnecessary delays and finish the project as scheduled so that the Filipino people will be able to reap the benefits as soon as possible. Ultimately, the positive effects of this project will speed up mobility and transactions, will spur economic productivity of the country.

High-impact infrastructure improvements, visible and directly felt by our people, will be credible proof that their government is indeed effectively and tirelessly working for them and applying what we have come to call the whole-of-government, whole-of-nation approach.

So we will not stop here. We will continue to develop a highly interconnected road network that will facilitate our country's rapid, inclusive and sustained economic growth.

Once again, congratulations to all who have made this project possible.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat at magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat. [applause]

[00:07:38]
