PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s SPEECH AT THE AWARDING OF INCENTIVES FOR THE SEA GAMES AND ASEAN PARA GAMES MEDALISTS

Ceremonial Hall, Malacañan Palace
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[00:00:00]
Thank you very much to our Philippine Sports Commission Chairman, Chairman Richard Bachman, for your kind introduction.

Senator Francis Tolentino, who has joined us for this afternoon; PAGCOR Chairman and CEO Al Tengco; the Philippine Olympic Committee President Abraham Tolentino; Philippine Paralympic Committee President Michael Barredo, who you may not know is actually a schoolmate of mine and he has used it to his great advantage to bring all of these issues that before were not really in the fore, especially when it came to Paralympics, when it came to disabled people. Marami siyang nagawa. So, I'm glad to see him continuing in that vein. To our, of course, our athletes, who have represented our country and have brought pride and honor to all Filipinos; ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Malacañan Palace. Good afternoon. [applause]

Today, we are fortunate to welcome the latest in a long list of triumphant heroes in Philippine sports. Athletes from the Philippines have surpassed the competition and brought out the best version of themselves, becoming exemplars of sporting prowess for our nation and the rest of the world.

But I think the most important thing that you demonstrated as you competed in these tournaments, in these games was to show the strength of the Filipino spirit, the grace of the Filipino character and the passion of the Filipino heart. And that is what comes out with the results with what you have been able to do with, admittedly, limited resources.

I am always a little embarrassed when I see that we are not supporting our athletes and our coaches and our trainers and all the support groups, even the families.

Alam naman natin hindi kayo naging champion na nag-iisa. At maraming tumulong para kayo ay maging champion. Maraming

nagsakripisyo. Iyon na nga iyong ating mga coach, kung sino iyong mga nagpapakain sa inyo, mga magulang ninyo.

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So, it seems that what we in government, considering the honor and the pride that you bring to the Philippines, it seems that it is not commensurate for the great service that you do to our country and to our people.

Kaya naman nagkataon, alam ko darating kayo ngayong araw. Kaya naman nagkataon noong Linggo ng gabi, andito po ang ating idol si Senator Manny Pacquiao at mayroon kaming pinapanood na palabas, 'yung mga ibang para-athletes ay nandito rin who joined the Paralympics. They were here and we did a tribute to our athletes.

At kasama ko si Senator Manny Pacquiao at pinag-uusapan namin ito. Sabi ko, dahil atleta ka talaga, naiintindihan mo kung ano iyong pangangailangan. At ika ko, sa makalawa ay bibigyan ko ng premyo o incentive, kung ano man ang tawag, sa ating mga atleta na nanalo na maganda ang naging resulta.

At sa palagay ko naman, tama rin naman dahil kayo naman ay nag-perform kayo. Hindi naman nangyayari iyan na hindi kayo naghirap, hindi kayo nagsakripisyo.

Ngunit sabi ko, hindi lang naman ang mga athlete ang nandiyan. Kaya gumaling iyan dahil na-train iyan nang mahusay, dahil may coach iyan, dahil masustansya ang kinakain, dahil mayroon siyang access sa mga training facilities, lahat ng pangangailangan para nga maging champion.

Kaya't gumawa kami ng paraan at gagawa kami ng plano na susuportahan natin lalo na basta't Philippine Team na athletes at saka coaches at saka trainers at saka mga nutritionist at saka pati na iyong mga driver, lahat. Kasi kailangan niyo iyan. Ang hirap. Paano kayo magte-train, hindi kayo makarating doon sa— binaha iyong NLEX, hindi kayo makapunta doon sa pinagpupuntahan ninyong stadium.

Kaya't kailangan nating tulungan kayo at kaya naman dahil sa dami natin, darating kayo rito kagaya ngayong hapon at lagi nating sinasabi ipinagmamalaki namin kayo. Totoo naman, ipinagmamalaki namin kayo. Dapat naman susuklian naman namin ang inyong ginawang sakripisyo, ang inyong dinala na dangal para sa ating mahal na Pilipinas.

Kaya't asahan ninyo na sa administrayon na ito ay gagawin natin ang lahat para masuportahan natin at ipalabas natin ang kagalingan, ang husay ng ating atleta para makita...

Kung iniisip ko, sinasabi ko nga sa sarili ko, karamihan diyan hindi natin natulungan. Talagang kung saan-saan na lang kumukuha ng suporta, nakakahiya. Pero ganun pa rin ang resulta, ang ganda-ganda pa rin ng resulta, ang titibay pa rin. Nakaka-proud pa rin.

Kaya't isipin ninyo kung tulungan natin. Isipin ninyo kung suportahan natin. Iyon ang pangarap ko na mangyari iyan at masabi natin na dinala kayo namin sa mas mataas na standard para sa bawat inyong sport at napalabas natin ang tunay na galing ng atletang Pilipino.

Maraming salamat at magandang hapon sa inyo. [applause]
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