

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE CAPSULE LAYING CEREMONY
OF THE MACTAN EXPO CENTER**

Brgy. Mactan, Lapu-Lapu City
April 27, 2024

[00:00:00]

Thank you, Secretary Anton Lagdameo.

Please take your seats.

The Alliance Global Group Chief and one of our most trusted and reliable partners in the private sector, the Group Chief Executive Officer Kevin Tan; [applause] House Speaker, Speaker Martin Romualdez; [applause] Lapu-Lapu City Lone District Representative Ma. Cynthia Chan; [applause] and, again, our good friend in Cebu who has really brought Cebu to the fore and has really given an inspiration for all other cities around the country, ang ina ng Lalawigan ng Cebu, Governor Gwen Garcia; [applause] and our very busy Mayor now at marami siyang project na nangyayari dito sa kanyang Lungsod, ang ating butihing mayor, Mayor Ahong Chan; [applause] the Megaworld Chief Operating Officer, Lourdes Gutierrez Alfonso; [applause] my fellow workers in government; our full partners in development from the private sector, other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. A lovely, warm day to all of us.

I am delighted to be here in Mactan Newtown to lead the capsule laying of the Mactan Expo Center, which is a part of the grand township being developed by our friends in Megaworld.

Over the years, the Alliance Global Group, as ably led by Kevin, has always been committed and reliable partner to the government in nation-building,

particularly in terms of tourism investments and in general development, land development.

[00:02:14]

And they have gained the reputation for their developments being very well-rounded. And we learned a new term today, “workcation”, ngayon ko lang narinig iyon eh. But these are the concepts that make for a livable community.

I think that we have long ago learned that it is not sufficient when you say, when you talk about housing or you talk about urban development that you just build homes; you have to build communities. And that is exactly what Megaworld has done here and what they have done around the country and that is why they have been so successful.

Because through their pioneering live-work-play township development, they have cemented their role as a crucial player in shaping the Philippines as a hub of progress.

The Mactan Newtown is the latest testament to their team’s passion, dedication and brilliance; and new concepts and new ideas on how to develop our country. This township will further strengthen the city’s position as a major destination for key business events, both local and international.

Today, we will witness the laying of another cornerstone in this township as the Alliance Global Group set to build a world-class convention center that will be a source of pride not just for Cebu, but for the entire country.

Currently, there has yet to be a standalone convention center in the province and this 1.5-billion-peso Mactan Expo Center is truly a first-of-a-kind development here in Cebu.

By tapping the huge potential of the Meetings, Incentives and Exhibitions or the so-called MICE sector, the Mactan Expo Center will enable us to generate more employment and business opportunity to solidify our position as an events destination and entice even more investments.

The convention center, being situated here in the beautiful island of Mactan, is a strategic development, especially considering its vicinity to the Mactan-Cebu International Airport and the world-class resorts and hotel developments here on the island.

There is no better way to end a long day of meetings or conferences than to enjoy the beaches of Mactan, partake in its local food, drinks and delicacies,

take a short trip to nearby Cebu City, experience its sights and sounds. And this investment will certainly solidify Lapu-Lapu City and the Province of Cebu's position as a leading driver of growth and prosperity in the country.

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The government, for its part, will also continue to invest in its success, which is why in 2024, the DPWH is funding about 2.9 billion pesos in infrastructure projects here in Lapu-Lapu City alone. [applause]

These include road widening projects that will help decongest traffic along major thoroughfares such as Mactan Circumferential Road and the Mactan Airport Road.

The government will also pursue major projects aimed at improving road connectivity and addressing traffic congestion such as the ODA-assisted Cebu Mactan 4th Bridge and the Lapu-Lapu City Coastal Road.

On a relevant note, it is fitting that we conduct this special ceremony in time for the commemoration of the 503rd Anniversary of the Victory at Mactan which we just celebrated earlier this morning.

All the feats that we are witnessing today follow in the footsteps taken by our valiant hero, Datu Lapu-Lapu and his warriors, the former of which the city where we are now is named after.

We honor their memory today by also taking brave steps to develop the island and help the people who they fiercely fought --- who fiercely fought for more than 500 years ago.

I am certain that we all share the same excitement and happiness to witness how Megaworld will transform the Mactan Newtown into a bustling district and a learning district.

In this light, I express my heartfelt thanks to Alliance Global Group, Megaworld, the City Government of Lapu-Lapu for forging this partnership and for setting a great example for other localities to follow.

The story that Kevin told you earlier is absolutely true that we came back from Jakarta and we were thinking ahead that we are going to host the ASEAN in a few years' time and that we had to --- we have to come up with a good place in which to host it.

And I did not realize that when he went to the bathroom --- he did not really go to the bathroom --- but he went and talked to his people already, and that's

it's always good to work with people like Kevin who really do not waste any time.

And that's why for me, it is one of the quickest, shall we say, build up to a major project that we've had and thanks again to the Alliance Group and, of course, to the Megaworld.

So, I look forward to the glorious day when we will be gathered here once again to witness the completion of the project and to be ready to welcome guests from the rest of the world and around the country.

Once again, congratulations to Megaworld, congratulations to the Lapu-Lapu City government. [applause] Congratulations to the Cebu Province and everyone who has been involved in this project.

Daghang salamat! More power to you all! [applause]

Maraming salamat at magandang tanghali po sa inyong lahat! [applause]

[00:08:27]

BAGONG PILIPINAS