

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
64th PALARONG PAMBANSA**

Cebu City Sports Center, Cebu City
July 9, 2024

[00:00:01]

Thank you very much to our good Governor, Governor of the Province of Cebu, for her kind introduction; the honorable members of the House of Representatives who are with us here today; Cebu City Acting Mayor, Raymond Alvin Garcia; Philippine Sports Commission Chairman, Chairman Richard Bachmann; mga kalahok ng Palarong Pambansa 2024; mga kagalang-galang na panauhin; mga kasamahang lingkod-bayan; mga binibini at ginoo, maayong hapon sa inyong tanan. [crowd: indistinct reply]

Before we start, I have received initial reports on the effects of heavy rains here in Cebu yesterday. They resulted in flash foods, structural collapse, and damage to property. At the moment, the concerned agencies are actively conducting S and R — Search and Rescue operations.

Rest assured, national and local governments are working closely to bring speedy help to those who are affected by the heavy rains, especially in Carmen, in Minglanilla, and Cebu. I also direct the Office of the President and the DSWD to provide assistance to the local government units affected by the flooding. We include all those affected in our thoughts and in our prayers.

However, despite these challenges, we remain resilient and focused on the goal just like the athletes here who are about to compete in the Palarong Pambansa. It is therefore, with a great deal of pride that I welcome all our athletes, our trainers, our coaches and guests to the opening of Palarong *Bansa (sic)* Pambansa 2024.

[00:02:06]

The Palarong *Bansa (sic)* Pambansa stands as the country's pinnacle of national sporting events. Today, we continue this important legacy, celebrating not just the games but also celebrating the unity, the camaraderie and the national pride that these games inspire.

This event is more than just an inter-school, inter-regional competition; it is also a platform where we discover, where we develop and hone future professional athletes, Olympians and servant-leaders.

Of the five hundred forty-one athletes competing in this year's Palarong Pambansa, I am certain many will become record holders and champions in their respective fields, not only at the national level but I'm sure, also internationally.

This year's edition of Palarong Pambansa is particularly special because it marks many firsts. For one, we welcome the debut participation of athletes from the National Academy of Sports and Philippine Overseas Schools. Dance sports will become a regular feature of these game, a fitting tribute to Cebu, which is one of the most active cities and provinces in the dance sport competition. [applause] We also have Soft Tennis, Karatedo, Football for Secondary Girls and E-sports — all of these are set to make their debut as exhibition sports in this year's Palaro.

Moreover, this year's Palarong Pambansa will see the integration of technology in web platforms, social media, game statistics and live streaming. It will not only connect games to families and fans around the world but also provide valuable data that we can use to improve performance in future competitions.

This occasion holds enormous significance beyond just sports. The values and virtues that will be displayed and put into practice here such as excellence, teamwork, discipline, perseverance and most importantly sportsmanship are the same ideals that we need to succeed in life and build a great nation.

Let this week-long competition showcase not only the mental and physical fortitude of our athletes, but also the fortitude and strength of the Filipino heart and the Filipino spirit.

To all our athletes, let this serve as your training ground and demonstrate the unwavering spirit, talent and dedication of all young Filipinos. It is your moment to shine. Participate actively in your events, play with pride, tenacity, play with integrity. Show the Filipino's indomitable character, our graciousness in defeat and our magnanimity in victory. In this way, you will bring pride to the schools and regions that you represent.

I congratulate you all in advance. You are already champions, all of you that are here. Your hard work and determination have made you true champions in the hearts and minds of your family, of your schools, your

communities, regardless of whatever the outcomes will be during this palaro.

To the coaches and the education officials, thank you for your continuing support and commitment to the development of your wards. Let us continue to guide them towards success and instill in them the values of hard work, of discipline and perseverance as they move forward with their education and with their training as athletes.

To the local government officials and the people of Cebu, thank you for making this event possible. [applause] It was a very great success. It is a very great achievement that you were able to manage to put together this spectacular event in such a short time. And I know that there were many sleepless nights before we considered ourselves ready for this but for that, we thank you.

Because your warmth, your hospitality, and enthusiasm are clearly, truly remarkable, I'm confident these will undoubtedly lead to the triumph of this year's Palarong Pambansa.

So, let us celebrate this occasion together, with joy and with camaraderie. Let us build a brighter future for our youth, for sports and for our country so that through the fires and the forging of competition, we become stronger and closer as a nation towards the Bagong Pilipinas that we aspire.

Sa bisa ng kapangyarihan na ipinagkaloob sa akin bilang Pangulo ng Republika ng Pilipinas, idinideklara ko ang pagbubukas ng Palarong Pambansa sa taong ito! [cheers and applause]

Mabuhay ang Palarong Pambansa 2024! [cheers and applause]

Mabuhay kayong mga atleta! [applause]

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! [cheers and applause]

[00:07:52]

BAGONG PILIPINAS

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