

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE NATIONAL HEROES' DAY 2024**

Libingan ng mga Bayani, Taguig City
August 26, 2024

(00:00:00)

Thank you to our National Defense Secretary, Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, for his kind introduction.

Please take your seats.

House Speaker, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Speaker Martin Romualdez and the Honorable Members of the House of Representatives with us today; Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin and members of the Cabinet; His Excellency, the Most Reverend Charles Brown and the esteemed members of the Diplomatic Corps; honorable members of the Senate; National Historical Commission of the Philippines Chairman Regalado Trota Jose Jr.; AFP Chief of Staff General Romy Brawner and the Major Service Commanders; Taguig City Mayor, Maria Laarni Cayetano; my fellow workers in government; our beloved veterans who are here with us today; ladies and gentlemen; distinguished guests. Good morning.

On this day, the National Heroes Day, we commemorate and honor the courageous men and women who fought in battles to safeguard our land, our freedom, and our dignity; the heroes who dedicated their lives for our nation and represent the unbroken lineage of Filipino heroism and the enduring spirit of our patriotism.

Our country's rich history produced a number of great heroes.

Lapu-Lapu and his warriors stood firm and defiant against foreign aggressors; Dr. Jose Rizal whose brilliance and passion sparked a revolution; Andres Bonifacio, Antonio Luna, and the Katipuneros whose dauntless courage blazed the trail for freedom.

Gabriela Silang, Trinidad Tecson, Teresa Magbanua proved that Filipino women are just as fierce and valiant as their male counterparts.

Their bravery and determination paved the way to the freedom that all of us enjoy today, although it came at a high cost—their peace, their rights, their lives.

While these gallant men and women remind us that our liberty was hard-won, those who lie here at the Libingan ng mga Bayani reminds us once again of the constant vigilance that is required to preserve it.

(00:02:31)

Let our commemoration today teach us the importance of not only remembering our heroes but also of continuing to perpetuate their legacy of patriotism and of nobility.

After all, heroism is not confined to just the history books. Heroism also lies in him and her who are virtuous, in those who are compassionate, in those who are just.

We have seen how it resides in the heart of a modern-day Filipino, fearless amidst the continuing adversities and perils that the world has unleashed – geopolitical conflicts, diseases, climate change.

We see it in the navy and the coast guard who defend our maritime borders; in the soldiers who protect our citizens; and in the healthcare workers who put their lives at stake for others.

We also see it in the overseas Filipinos who leave the comfort of home to support their loved ones; in the ordinary workers who turn the gears of our economy; and in the farmer and fisherfolk who increase our agricultural output to put food on every Filipino's table.

It is emulated by educators who lead our fight against illiteracy, journalists who promote truth and accountability, the environmental advocates who ensure that we and our children will have a safe place to call home.

It is embodied by our athletes who stood before millions, bearing the name of the Philippines in the international arena.

All our Olympic athletes who persevered and highlighted, once again, the Filipino talent in the field of sports.

Soon, the Paralympic games will start, and the six Filipino Paralympians are already there, making us proud. The extraordinary strength and dedication to compete despite their disabilities are a symbol of hope for all of us.

The national pride they brought and continue to bring home is unrequitable – not by awards, not by effusive praises, not by incentives.

We have heard their stories, we saw the glory, we did not, however, witness the discipline and the sacrifice that they endured to train every single day, the risks of injury, the struggles of financial constraints.

And yet we see them and they have come through.

That is the definition of a modern hero and a testament that each of us is capable of becoming one; by uplifting our fellow men and women, serving our communities, and working to save our heritage for future generations.

As we dedicate this day to honor our heroes of the past, let us not lose sight of what is asked of us for the present and for the future.

Let us carry on the great legacy of our brave ancestors with the fortitude of an enlightened mind, the strength of compassion and generosity and the courage of our convictions.

In the spirit of shared responsibility, I call on everyone to be heroes in their own right. Uphold the principles of democracy, abide by the rule of law, and defend our sovereignty.

Let us acknowledge the significance of history and pass it on to our young Filipinos so we can nurture in our children the love of country; for it is only in that patriotism that we can preserve our national identity.

Let us pay homage to our past so that we can be worthy of the freedom that our ancestors fought for and of the Bagong Pilipinas that we can proudly leave to succeeding generations.

With this vision ingrained in our endeavors, we can build a nation where the dreams of our heroes are realized in every home, in every community, in every single Filipino heart.

I wish everyone a meaningful day of remembrance.

Mabuhay ang ating mga bayani!

Mabuhay ang kabayanihan ng bawat Pilipino!

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

(00:06:55)
