

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s  
SPEECH AT THE CEREMONIAL TURNOVER OF THE KOREA  
PARTNERSHIP FOR INNOVATION OF AGRICULTURE (KOPIA)  
GREENHOUSES AND POSTHARVEST FACILITIES**

Lucban, Quezon  
November 29, 2024

[00:00:01]

Maraming, maraming salamat sa ating Kalihim ng Department of Agriculture, Secretary Kiko Laurel.

Magsi-upo po tayo. Please take your seats.

His Excellency, the South Korean Ambassador to the Philippines, Ambassador Lee Sang-hwa. We are... Kung hindi niyo po maitatanong kami po ni Ambassador ay madalas magsama dahil sa dami ng proyekto na ginagawa ng Korea dito sa Pilipinas. Napakabait po sa atin ng ating mga kaibigan galing Korea. Ito na ang isang napakagandang halimbawa ng kanilang mga project na ginagawa.

I just said, Mr. Ambassador, we are always together because the Republic of Korea has always --- we are always opening new projects because you are so helpful and we are very grateful to our friends in Korea [applause] for all the assistance that you are giving us.

Ang ating congressman na naging classmate ko rin noong kami ay congressman, Congressman Mark Enverga; [applause] at ang mayor ng Lucban, ng bayan ng Lucban, Mayor Agustin Villaverde. Baka iyong iba po sa inyo hindi niyo nalalaman iyong lupa na ginamit na pinagtaniman nitong

bagong proyekto na ito ay lupa pala ng pamilya ng ating butihing mayor. [applause] Kaya't napakaswerte naman ninyo dito sa Lucban na mayroon kayong mayor na nakakaunawa.

[00:01:44]

The Korea Partnership for Innovation of Agriculture, KOPIA, Director Kyuseong Lee; [applause] my fellow workers in government; our farmer beneficiaries --- ito po ang --- nag-hand over po tayo, mapupunta na po sa inyo itong proyekto na ito --- at lahat ng farmer beneficiaries; ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon.

In our ceremony today, the Turnover of the Korea Partnership for Innovation of Agriculture Greenhouses and Postharvest Facilities, we open a new chapter in our agricultural sector --- one rooted in partnership, driven by innovation, and aimed at achieving food security for our nation.

Before I go any further, allow me to once again express our gratitude to the government and the people of Korea. Your support and belief in the Filipino people have made this very important milestone possible. [applause] We are also thankful to the Republic of Korea for the overwhelming support of your National Assembly for the ratification of our FTA, which came much earlier than we had expected.

Ang FTA po ang tinatawag na Free Trade Agreement sa gitna ng Korea po at saka ng Pilipinas nang sa ganoon ay tayo nabubuksan ang kanilang mga merkado para sa atin, makapasok ang ating mga produkto sa kanila na hindi nilalagyan ng malaking taripa. Kung hindi, simpleng-simple lang.

Kaya't kung maganda ang ating produkto, maidadala natin sa Korea, maipagbibili natin sa kanila. At malaki ang maitutulong nito dahil hindi lamang para sa lokal kung hindi mag-export na tayo sa Korea. Napakalaking bagay po.

Very soon, this Free Trade Agreement will enter into force. This will allow Philippine --- hindi lamang na gulay kung hindi tropical fruit: bananas, pineapple. Lahat ito ay magkakaroon na --- they will have access to the Korean market. You have reinforced our call for a brighter and more sustainable future for all. [applause]

Against this backdrop, these greenhouses and postharvest facilities turned over to us today hold more meaning. These facilities help our small communities improve their capacity to export their products. Through continuous collaboration, soon, they will be part of the regional value chain.

We celebrate this success as a testament to the enduring relations between the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. For 75 years, our two nations have journeyed together, united by friendship, shared values and a common aspiration: to uplift the lives of our people.

[00:05:02]

The Korea Partnership for Innovation of Agriculture, or KOPIA Philippines Center, is a perfect example of the strength of this collaboration --- showing what can be achieved when we have trust in our collective vision and trust it to guide us forward into the future.

To the KOPIA Philippines Center, your unwavering dedication has uplifted our agriculture sector. Your work reflects the principles of Saemaul Undong --- diligence, self-help, cooperation --- values that resonate deeply with the Filipino spirit. Together, the KOPIA and the Bureau of Plant Industry have created pathways for our farmers to grow, adapt and succeed in an increasingly competitive landscape.

And now, the results speak for themselves. As of today, 20 greenhouses have been established across pilot villages here in Lucban, Quezon; in Siniloan, Laguna; and Zaragoza in Nueva Ecija. These greenhouses are hubs of fresh vegetable and very importantly seedling production --- complemented by three post-harvest facilities, advanced machineries all designed to reduce the burden of our farmers and increase profitability.

Iyan po ang pinakamahalaga na dala nitong project po na ito. Dahil alam po natin, nakikita po natin, nararamdaman na po natin ang pagbabago ng panahon. Pagbagsak ng ulan, pagdaan ng mga bagyo ay kailangan natin matuto ng mga panibagong teknolohiya at mga bagong pamamaraan upang tayo naman ay hindi... Pagkatapos --- 'pag dumaan ang bagyo ay wala nang maiwan doon sa ating tanim. Kaya't po napakaimportante nitong bagong teknolohiya na ito. At napakasimple po ng teknolohiya na ito. Iyon lamang -- madali natin i-expand.

Mr. Ambassador, if you noticed we were talking very excitedly because we're already thinking what are the new sites, where will we put it, what can we grow, where would be the best places and how do we expand.

Dito po sa binigay ninyong halimbawa para sa Department of Agriculture at sa pamahalaan ninyo, ay nakikita natin, matagumpay naman ang naging pananim dito sa ilalim ng ating mga greenhouse. At iyong aming hinahanap, nagkaroon lang po kami ng meeting noong last week, at ang pinag-usapan namin ay seedling production dahil kulang po tayo sa seedling production. Nagi-import pa tayo ng seedling production.

Kaya't sa pamamagitan nitong bagong teknolohiya, nitong bagong pamamaraan ay makikita po natin iyang seedling production ay makakabawas na tayo sa importation at makakapili tayo na anong klase, anong variety nung tanim ang pinakabagay dito sa Pilipinas. Kaya't napakaimportante --- kaya po napakaimportante itong nakalagay po rito "innovation". Ito ang mga bagong pamamaraan para sa bagong klima natin ngayon na hinaharap.

[00:08:39]

In Lucban alone, nine greenhouses, a seedling nursery, a postharvest facility now are here --- modern tools to boost the potential of more than 2,000 farmers, technicians and their families and their communities.

What sets this initiative apart is the emphasis on community empowerment. Napakahalaga po ng konseptong iyan --- community empowerment. Ibig sabihin ang paglalagay nitong ganitong klaseng proyekto po ay hindi... Kagaya ng kung minsan iyong malalaking korporasyon papasok dito, kukuha ng lupa, sila ang magtatanim, sila rin ang kumikita, at kung saan-saan dinadala.

Ngunit, dito sa proyektong ito ay tinuturuan tayo ng ating mga kaibigan na galing Korea kung papaano ang gagawin. Tapos ganito, kagaya sa araw na ito, ibibigay naman nila sa atin din para sa pagpaganda naman ng buhay ng ating mga kababayan, ng ating mga magsasaka at ang kanilang mga pamilya.

Kaya po iyon ay isang mahalagang bagay, marami pong proyekto, private lang po, ang mga nagsasaka empleyado lang po. Ito, kayo ang may-ari nitong proyekto na ito. Iyan ang pinakamaganda sa kanilang ginawa. [applause]

So, beyond adopting new technologies, our farmers are striving to master these new technologies. Innovations are being tailored to local conditions, enabling the production of high-quality vegetables that can meet international standards.

Regular training sessions have equipped our farmers and local leaders with the knowledge and expertise to improve skills, to be able to adopt new practices, to increase their yields and incomes. Study tours to Korea have broadened the horizons of farmer leaders. They return now with new ideas, complemented with renewed determination to realize these possibilities in their own localities, in their own communities. And so, this is what we honor today. Not just an increase in productivity; it is about transforming the lives of our people and strengthening our agricultural sector.

To our producers, you remain at the heart of this endeavor. Sa ating mga magsasaka, kayo po ang inaasahan po ng lahat para dito para maging mas matagumpay pa ang ganitong klaseng proyekto. Dahil nasa kamay po ninyo ang papakain sa buong bansa na nakakatiyak tayo na lahat ng Pilipino ay may pagkain.

The technologies and facilities provided here are just the beginning. I am optimistic, with your grit, tenacity and commitment, you will carry this progress forward. I encourage you to pass on this knowledge to the next generation, ensuring that the seeds of excellence and passion bear fruit for decades to come.

Importante din po iyan. Iyong inyong natutunan, ituro po ninyo sa mga kabataan na susunod sa inyo na mga magsasaka. At turuan na rin po ninyo ang inyong mga kamag-anak, ang inyong mga kaibigan, ang inyong mga kakilala upang sila naman ay makagawa rin ng ganitong klaseng proyekto.

Kami naman sa national government ay kami ay susuporta dahil alam na natin kung papaano gawin dahil naibigay na sa atin ng Republic of Korea.

On the part of this government, the administration reaffirms its commitment to expanding the KOPIA pilot village model to reach more rural communities across the nation. Together with this effort, we are developing our capacity for local seed production to sustain our agricultural sectors' needs.

With the leadership of the DA and the DILG, and the CHED, ang ating mga state universities, our colleges, we are working towards developing community and university-based seed production facilities. Through these endeavors, no farmer, no family, no community will be left behind as we strive for a future where agriculture drives growth, nourishes our people, and sustains our nation.

Let us move forward together --- strengthened by the spirit of Bayanihan and inspired by the virtues of Saemaul Undong --- to build a Bagong Pilipinas. A nation where every farmer prospers, every harvest brings hope, and every Filipino takes pride in our hard-earned progress.

Maraming, maraming salamat sa inyong lahat!

Mabuhay ang Lucban!

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! [applause]

[00:13:45]

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***BAGONG PILIPINAS***