

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE PARANGAL: GAWAD NG KAHUSAYAN SA
KOMUNIKASYONG PAMPUBLIKO**

PICC, Pasay City
December 16, 2024

(00:00:00)

Magandang, magandang gabi sa inyong lahat, at isang maalab na pagbati sa ating mga binigyang parangal ngayong gabi!

Please take — magsiupo po tayo.

Tonight, we come together to recognize achievements and to confront a fundamental truth that communication is one of the foundations of leadership. It is the force that builds nations, that inspires movements, and turns ideas into reality.

Every spoken word carries with it the power to unite or to divide, to heal or to harm, to lead or mislead.

Alongside collaboration, integrity, and accountability, effective communication forges trust between the government and its citizens. Without it, leadership will falter, policies will be forgotten, and the people—our people—are left searching for direction.

The campaigns, the messages, and the voices we celebrate this evening remind us what leadership is capable of when there is a connection with the people.

While these awards recognize your achievements, they are also declarations of leadership standards that enhance public awareness and empower participation in governance.

The Public Service Campaign Award recognizes local government units, and agencies, departments, instrumentalities of the national government with the most effective campaigns that bridge the divide between what government plans are and what people, in fact, experience. They ensure that government efforts do not remain confined to policy briefs that are only spoken about in private offices but moved into the neighborhoods, promoting positive behavioral change in our communities, in our people.

The Government Innovation Award is a tribute to those who refuse to accept outdated systems and practices. These innovators remind us that leadership requires boldness—the willingness to break with tradition, to adapt to new realities, and build future-ready solutions.

Meanwhile, the Information Integrity Award celebrates defiance in the face of what is a new phenomenon of misinformation. Falsehoods are corrosive and erode trust, they destabilize governance, and divide societies.

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Nowadays, disinformation is not just a threat—it is a weapon that is used to distort facts, to sow fear, to weaken democracy. However, the awardees we honor tonight stood firm and proved that integrity is the unshakable foundation of public trust.

Fake news, disinformation, and misinformation are active forces that proliferate division and ignorance. They thrive in the shadows of social media, spreading lies faster than facts, turning public discourse into a battleground of confusion, manipulation, and eventually chaos. In the face of this, silence is also complicity.

Leadership, therefore, must stand firm, defending truth with vigilance, exposing lies with resolve, and ensuring that the public is armed with the clarity that they have in a sea of vision — of confusion.

Then, there is the digital frontier—the battleground of our age.

The Outstanding Digital Campaign Award demonstrates that governance must adapt to the digital realm and not only adapt, but must lead it. Because these campaigns transformed screens into platforms of empowerment, they amplify voices, we engage communities, remind us that technology is not a threat to governance but its greatest ally when wielded with proper purpose.

Finally, the Outstanding Public Communicator Award celebrates those who have courageously led through words and deeds. Their words connect the government and the governed, forging a bond that endures even in the most challenging of times.

Every award tonight tells a story of transformation. These campaigns and voices are proof that communication is the force that makes governance real.

To our awardees and participants: Your work has transformed abstract ideas into meaningful, understandable action, making governance a shared experience rather than some distant ideal discussed in high levels of government.

To my fellow leaders: Tonight is a call to action. Governance cannot rely on the weight, solely of its authority— it must earn its place in the lives of the people that we serve. Leadership must be rooted in connection so that our vision will inspire, our action resonate, our legacy will last.

To our partners in media, civil society, and the private sector: thank you for being the stewards of democracy and the champions of accountability. Your work does more than report—it shapes the national narrative, challenges complacency, and demands better from those holding public office.

At sa sambayanang Pilipino: Kayo po ang pinakamahalagang puwersa na nagtutulak sa pagsulong ng ating bansa. Ang tiwalang ipinagkaloob ninyo at ibinigay, ang nagbigay ng inspirasyon sa amin upang maglingkod sa inyo nang may dangal at katapatan. Asahan po ninyo na patuloy kami sa paghahatid ng serbisyong epektibo, may integridad, at may pananagutan.

This is the challenge we must all embrace. Leaders that fail to connect will fail to endure. Policies mean nothing if they are not understood. True leadership builds trust not through words alone but through the clarity and conviction that make these words matter.

Today, we honor the recipients. Tomorrow, we will achieve the Bagong Pilipinas we aspire for. This is our commitment. This is our resolve. This is our future.

Congratulations to all the awardees and organizations and organizers.

Maraming, maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.

Maligayang Pasko at mapayapang Bagong Taon sa inyong lahat! [applause]
(00:07:16)

BAHAGYAN PILIPINAS ***