



Filipino Organizations Celebrate 128th Philippine Independence

By Leinad Velasco and Keizha Nunez

The Filipino community in Qatar celebrated the 128th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine Independence with the theme '*Kalayaan, Kinabukasan, Kasaysayan*' on June 12 at the Edgar V. Bondoc Gymnasium and June 13 at the Mall of Qatar to commemorate and showcase Filipino culture.

The event opened with the Philippine Ambassador, **His Excellency Mardomel Celo D. Melicor**, highlighting the significance of the historical theme. Ambassador Melicor noted that national development relies on collective civic action rather than individual efforts, emphasizing that a strong sense of community helps Filipinos support long-term nation-building, stating:

"Let us continue to embody the spirit of bayanihan, communal unity and support, selflessness, and collective action in achieving our goals as a nation."

Following the opening statement, **President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.** delivered his national address through a video message, mentioning that independence must be actively sustained by the citizens rather than a passive inheritance. Outlining the current generational responsibilities, he noted:

“It is incumbent upon us, the present generation, to carry forward the duty of building a nation where justice, dignity, and opportunity are not distant promises.”

Presentations from labor and social welfare sector leaders were then held detailing institutional programs for overseas workers, such as safeguarding statutory rights across various workplaces, the Expanded Relief Programme to manage inflation from the recent global oil crisis, and the Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino programme, from the **Department of Migrant Workers, Social Security System (SSS)**, and **Pag-IBIG**, respectively.

The event concluded with a series of multi-genre cultural performances by the **PSD Rondalla, PSD Hiyaw, Banyuhay, Keith Bugahod, Haydee Marcellana, MAHARLIKAns, Alexa and Cairo Soriano, FFHQ, Willy Munar, and Jollibee**. Later in the evening, the Philippine flag was illuminated across the structures of The Torch and Sheraton.

The annual Philippine Independence Day celebration in Qatar is a major diplomatic and community event marking the declaration of independence on June 12, 1898. Organized by the Philippine Embassy and local community groups, the festivities serve to strengthen ties between the two nations while providing a platform for cultural exchange and government services for the expatriate population.