

Philippine Independence Day Message 2025
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Warwick Le Lagoon, Port Vila Vanuatu
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Theme: Kalayaan. Kinabukasan. Kasaysayan. (Freedom. Future. History)

Magandang gabi sa lahat! To all our visitors and guests, Honorable Prime Minister of Vanuatu Mr. Jotham Napat and his wife Madam Lettis Napat, the Filipino community members, mga kababayan, Maligayang araw ng Kalayaan or happy Philippine Independence Day celebration to all!!

I am deeply honored to welcome everyone, our distinguished guests Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Jotham Napat and his wife Madam Lettis Napat and All Filipinos in Vanuatu as we celebrate the 127th Philippine Independence day! Thank you tumas long important presence blong yumi everyone tedei!

This year’s 127th celebration of Philippine Independence day marks a significant milestone for all Filipinos. For one, the country, has just concluded the Philippine midterm elections where Filipinos are given opportunity to choose the next leaders. This freedom to choose and exercise the right to suffrage is not just afforded to our kababayans in the Philippines but it included all of us here in Vanuatu. As we commemorate the freedom and independence that was fought for us by our ancestors, we are enjoying its benefits through overseas absentee voting rights and the technologies that we use today. Distance is no longer an issue, wherever we are, our voices are still being heard in a national decision making. We Overseas Filipinos, matter.

Secondly, according to the latest World Bank analysis, *The Philippines has been one of the most dynamic economies in the East Asia and Pacific region today. Country’s economic dynamism reflects increasing urbanization, a large and young population, strong consumer demand, supported by a vibrant labor market **and robust remittances**, which have raised the incomes of the most vulnerable.* Although Philippine Statistics Authority said that there are only around 2.16M Overseas Filipino workers in 2023 – that includes all of us here, our contribution for a prosperous future cannot be undermined. Overseas Filipinos – Us included matters when it comes to economic development of the Philippines and our host country.

Thirdly, as we continue to develop ourselves through our own creativity, initiative, and work ethics here in Vanuatu, we are likewise participating in the renewal, upgrading and development of this country. As we work hard and push our luck for our families back in the Philippines for them to have a better future, we become an active contributor to the history both of the Philippines and Vanuatu. Whatever happens at home or here in Vanuatu, our second home, it directly affects us. The commemoration of our Independence Day reminds us of our heroic roots, to be of service to our communities and to others. As Overseas Filipinos in Vanuatu, we are making history for our country and we are part of the current history of our host country. We, Overseas Filipinos matter.

As we thread to the new chapter of our on going history, I wish to underscore these three things about our freedom and independence, the future and about the history that we are part of – regardless of our contribution, big or small, line of work, accomplishments; we, Overseas Filipinos matter ----- to our families,---- our communities and ---- to the two countries that we both consider home.

As our country sails through the tides of different challenges and societal problems at different fronts and levels, I wish to ask everyone here to use our individual and collective powers in ensuring that no one is left behind, abandoned or helpless. By living up to the values of our forefathers, we can, in solidarity with all the people we are dealing with, able to contribute to our collective aspirations of a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient development for both the Philippines and our host country, Vanuatu.

Maraming salamat po. Sa muli, Maligayang araw ng Kalayaan sa lahat!

Mabuhay ang malayang Pilipinas! Thank yu tumas!