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Headline: Bongbong Marcos leaves for Apec Summit in Thailand

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President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in one of his speaking engagements in Davao City on October 27, 2022. FILE PHOTO

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in one of his speaking engagements in Davao City on October 27, 2022. FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has departed the Philippines to participate in the 29th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Economic Leaders Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand.

A departure ceremony was held at Villamor Airbase in Pasay City on Wednesday afternoon for Marcos' four-day trip.

Marcos' attendance in Apec, which will be held from November 16-19, will be his first time as the country's president.

Marcos noted the importance of Apec during his departure speech.

"APEC remains to be one of the prime platforms to engage the economies of the Asia Pacific region. The importance of this region to us and to the rest of the world cannot be overstated," he said, noting that the region hosts 38 percent of the world's population and 48 percent of trade.

Eighty-five percent of the Philippines' trade, Marcos said, is within the Asia Pacific.

"That's the reason why Filipino consumers have access to goods and services from this region, but more importantly, our farmers, our laborers, our businessmen, and most importantly our MSMEs (micro, small, and medium enterprises) are able to export their goods and services to the economies in this region," Marcos said.

Among the issues that the Chief Executive will raise during the summit are food security, energy security, and climate change mitigation.

"We will be engaging with the leaders of economies of the Asia-Pacific region to agree on how we can achieve food and energy [security], safe and seamless cross-border passage of our seamen and our other Filipino workers, economic inclusion of our MSMEs, women, indigenous people, and other segments whose economic potential remain to be unlocked, digitalization and our participation in the digital economy, and the connectivity that must be achieved if we are going to take full advantage of that digitalization, sustainable development, and of course that existential problem that we all face, the climate change crisis," Marcos said.

Presidential flight PR001, which carried the Marcos and the Philippine delegation, arrived in Bangkok around 6 p.m. (Manila time).

Marcos is also anticipated to join world leaders in various dialogues and will have bilateral discussions with other heads of state on the sidelines of the summit.

This year's Apec will be the first in-person meeting of Apec economies' leaders since 2018.

Established in 1989, the Apec serves as the premier Asia-Pacific economic forum with a goal of supporting sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the region.

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