

SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE NATIONAL HEROES DAY: "TAONG BAYAN: ANG BAGONG BAYANI NG BAYAN"

[Delivered at Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City | 28 August 2017]

Kindly sit down. Thank you for the courtesy.

Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo; Excellencies of the diplomatic corps; Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and other members of the Cabinet; Historical Commission of the Philippines Chairman Rene Escalante; Taguig City Mayor Maria Laarni Cayetano, ma'am; General Eduardo Año and the other major service commanders; Police Director General Ronald Dela Rosa and the officers of the Philippine National Police; the officers and enlisted personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; ang mga magiging nating Pilipino beterano; mga kasama ko sa gobyerno; mga kababayan.

I'd like to just start by giving you --- hindi ho kasali sa speech --- about the rationale of the award. I have felt a long time ago, na ang karamihan kasi ng mga heroes natin puro taga-Luzon.

We had Dagohoy and I forgot the other one, pati si Lapu-Lapu who was the first Filipino to kill the invaders, si Magellan.

And all of these years, ang Commission, not the present one, Mr. Badoy, wala namang ni-recognize na Muslim na hero.

And to think that Lapu-Lapu, in all probability, was really a Muslim. He resisted imperialism because may poste sila eh. He had a post, the rallying point and even in Mindanao until today.

Nandiyan 'yung poste, ang Islam. So nung bakbakan sa Mactan, syempre mas matapang talaga 'yung native na --- I don't know how we were called at that time, we were all Malays. Tinaga talaga niya si Lapu-Lapu and Dagohoy, pero wala sa roll of ating heroes.

I don't know who was the office responsible for this fiasco. But instead of giving him honor, a place under the sun, ang pangalan tuloy ng Lapu-Lapu, ginawa nilang isda. *[laughter]* Kaya sabi ko, *[inaudible]* pala itong mga taga-ano.

Eh kaming mga Bisaya, We have kept our silence long enough, kasi wala man rin akong magagawa. I urged just everybody to take into account the exploits of Lapu-Lapu.

So when I became President, I made a promise that I will recognize the first --- the very first --- I don't know what was her name before because Philippines is from King Philip.

But he resisted imperialism and of course, maybe when they were overwhelmed by the Spaniards, he died. But hindi siya hero.

Ngayon, gumawa ako ng Executive Order. Was it a Proclamation? I do not know. But raising to the level and dignity of a national hero Lapu-Lapu. Kaya pasalamat ako sa Commission for agreeing with me. *[applause]*

Kasi `pag hindi `di wala kayong budget next year. *[laughter]* Purposely omitted. You can there, exist there, but no budget, no operational something.

So every Filipino who actually done something for our country, must be recognized, living or dead.

Ako, naiinggit ako sa kanila. Of course, everybody will die. Wala mang question `yan. But they went out of this planet blazing and living a legacy of the term "bravery."

Every year, we come together every last Monday of August to celebrate the bravery of all Filipino heroes, named or unnamed.

In these trying times, when our people are in need of heroes to look up to, we pay tribute to those whose heroism made our nation what [it is] today.

More importantly, we honor our nameless heroes whose exploits are never published in history books [or] whose death anniversaries are not celebrated as public holidays. We thank them still for their deeds and remember their exploits forever.

As we further our efforts to build a stronger, peaceful, and more secure nation, we count on our people to emulate the patriotism of our heroes so that we may all prevail against the looming threats of criminality, terrorism and [illegal] drugs.

Today, we confer the Order of Lapu-Lapu [on] individuals who rendered extraordinary service to our country. Of utmost significance are the fallen heroes of Marawi, of Jolo, Sulu and in other places in the country fighting terrorism and subversion of the New People's Army and the ISIS-Maute terror groups in Lanao.

I cannot thank them enough for their valuable service to our nation, and we shall forever be in [their] debt.

To the awardees fortunate enough to be here with us today, your contributions to our efforts to build a better life for our people have earned you the right to be called heroes. Treat it not as an honor but a responsibility and always live your lives in a manner befitting the title.

Again, I urge our people to just follow our heroes by becoming heroes in their own private ways. Join the government in building a stronger nation that is capable of providing a better life for its people.

I will cut this by inserting something which... Espenido, where are you? Diyan ka lang, okay lang. I will ask you again. You asked for the assignment sa Leyte. Namatay ang mayor doon.

You asked for another assignment sa Ozamiz, namatay ang mayor doon, si Parojinog. *[laughter]* Ngayon, gusto mo sa Iloilo, kasi si Mabilog has been identified as a protector. Mayor. Mabuhay kaya siya? *[laughter]*

Gusto ko lang tanungin kasi ako naman ang pagbibintangan. *[laughter]* Ikaw nga ang nagbaril diyan tapos ako ang napa-publish kung saan-saan eh.

Pero if you do the country a favor, I will support you. And we all... then we'll all go to jail, do not worry. Just follow the rules of engagement, the requirements of the performance of duty, which you have learned in your PNP... in all those four years.

Murder and homicide or whatever --- unlawful killing --- is not allowed. But in the performance of your duty, tell your men that whenever their life is in danger and they are in the actual performance of a duty, your duty requires you to overcome the resistance of the person you are arresting.

Not only just shouting at them to surrender, because if he does not, and he resists, and it is a violent one, placing in jeopardy the lives of my policemen, and of course, the military, you are free to kill the i****. That is my order to you. Always in the performance of a duty.

Because if there is violence, then you have to overcome that violence to bring him to the folds of the law, and you can put him under your custody.

But if he resists, and if it is a violent one, I hate to see dead policemen and soldiers performing their duty. Do you hear me? Your next assignment is Iloilo. Thank you. *[applause]*

In the face of the difficulties we are facing as a nation, I am confident that we can overcome the challenges and emerge triumphant for the simple reason that it is through tough times that heroes like you are made.

Thank you very much at mabuhay ang bayaning Pilipino! *[applause]*

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