

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

**SPEECH
OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE
SANGYAW FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS 2018**

[Delivered at the Balyuan Ampitheater, Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City | 29 June 2018]

Maraming salamat po. *[Cheers and applause]*

Kindly... If you are standing, just sit down. If you are sitting down, you might stand up if you want. *[laughter and applause]*

I will not go to my prepared speech yet --- as yet. I'd like to just say that I... Na-timing po. And I'd like to thank God for making the coincidence.

I came here to visit the wounded soldiers and policemen in a very unfortunate event.

So nagbigay po ako ng ano, na for both the Filipino soldiers and the Filipino policemen, I'd like to tell you that the ultimate blame or fault, is on me, being the Commander-in-Chief.

I do not want to use the word. But ako po 'yung pinaka nila. And so there was a lot of tragic stories weaved around the incident.

Sabi ko sa kanila, "Kalimutan na lang ninyo. Tatal, hindi naman sinasadya." At you know, the Murphy's Law operates the way it is. If things can go wrong, it will go wrong.

And so I said, "Kayong mga pulis, ako 'yung pinaka-commander ninyo, pati 'yung kayo mga army, ako rin. And so you --- let's just to say that it's all my fault. But since you are all my soldiers, let us forget the hurts, allow the investigation to go on, and let us see what develops in the future."

So may I now pay my courtesies --- si Senator Cynthia Villar; Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Michael Dino; Tacloban City Mayor Cristina Romualdez; and the other members of the local government.

[Nandiyan 'yung husband mo, ma'am? Is he here? Ah, 'yan. Ah, si ano.]

Huwag ka lang magalit. But ang Tacloban ang pinaka-magandang mayor sa buong... *[cheers and applause]* Kung hindi sa buong Pilipinas, sa mundo. *[laughter]*

Wala akong nakitang kasing... 'Yung --- it's just an appreciation of beauty. Nandiyan si Bong-Bong. It's nothing else but pure admiration. Kaya siguro... Malas lang na tag...

Taga sa Leyte ako pero Southern. Taga-Maasin ako. So I was born there sa Maasin. And of course, I'd like to thank you for your help in making me President of the Republic of the Philippines. *[applause]*

You ought to be proud of me. *[applause]* Wala naman akong hinihingi except that I have to work hard because I am a government worker. Trabahante lang po ako ninyo at ginagawa ko po ang lahat para maging mapayapa ang ating bayan.

Do not believe in the stories na around my persona because ganyan talaga ako. Once in a while, I shake the tree. Para uyogon lang (Just to shake it) na you know, so that society can more or less see the truth of what is really behind our story as a Filipino people.

Andito po si... Salamat sa telescope mo, Imee, ha. Binigyan niya ako ng pang-pasilip ng... Hindi man --- hindi sa baril 'yun, 'yung ano 'yun. Pangpa-tingin lang ng magandang babae sa malayo. *[laughter]*

O, ayun, meron doon o. *[laughter]* Bigay niya nung isang --- was it the other day? I was in Davao. Tapos si... Ang mga Leyteño.

Basahin ko na lang po ang speech --- I am not into reading speeches. Dalawang page lang po ito. *[laughter]* Kahiya naman sa inyo pero kawawa naman 'yung gumawa ng ano ko. Nandyan sa likod ko hindi lang --- hindi ko lang man binigyan ng importansya 'yung sinulat niya. *[laughter]* Baka...

It is my pleasure to join all of you in celebrating the Sangyaw Festival of Lights.

I also commend and recognize the outstanding and talented Taclobanons behind the success of today's festivities.

This gathering is the perfect opportunity to showcase the religious heritage of your people and express your passionate devotion to the Santo Niño.

Ako man rin. Iba man 'yung God na sabi nila na... It does not only enrich the culture of your locality, but also strengthens your bond as a community.

By preserving and passing on the heritage to the next generation, we not only safeguard our unique identity amidst these changing times, but also make development meaningful as we embrace the diversity of our society.

The progress we see today is a testament of the resilience, unity, and hope of the Taclobanons, which have been tried and tested by various challenges faced in the past years.

Magka-cut ako dito. I do not want to remind you of the sorrow and agony. But I'd like to tell you that the day after, I was here and all that I could --- except of course to give instructions to the doctors and the unloading of the equipments and medicines, it was one of my saddest in my life.

I never saw such magnitude of... Kaya nagastos ang luha ko dito siguro mga --- mga dalawang panyo. Totoo. Literally. I was bleeding inside my heart. Not because --- eh boundary lang naman ang ano natin eh.

But I was born in Southern Leyte. It was the place where my grandfather, a Chinese, built his first bakery here.

We, in the national government, are grateful to have the Filipino people, our greatest assets, as our partners in assuring peace and order in our country.

With the collective efforts of your [local] officials, I am confident that Tacloban City will continue to be a vibrant and thriving local community in your region.

More than just a display of your exuberance and dynamism, may the Sangyaw Festival of Lights further highlight the unwavering spirit of the Filipinos and inspire everyone to use the lessons of the past as the source of strength and hope as we make and realize our goals and aspirations of our country.

You know, historically, Leyte has always been in the map of the Philippines. Lahat na --- since the war and the landing of MacArthur and everything, and of course the tragic events but I see...

You know, about six months after, I went back here to look at the progress of the housing. 'Yung ginawa ko sa panahon ko na ha, 'yung akin.

I was really surprised na Leyte almost was back on its feet and the skyline was more pleasant to see. More buildings and all.

So 'yung resilience ninyo pati 'yung swerte ninyo, baka nga talaga it's a matter of, you know. But you have been blessed by several times.

And I hope that God will continue to bless you as a people and itong mga Leyteño, kasali na ako, *[applause]* magiging parte ng importanteng tao sa Pilipinas.

Mabuhay kayong lahat. Mabuhay ka, Mayor. At may I --- I cannot now recognize the officials there. I can see the profile of Bong, si Alfred --- si Antonio, and others. Hindi bale, lalapit na lang ako mamaya.

Salamat sa inyong imbitasyon and I will enjoy the evening with you. *[applause]*

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