

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. **5244**



Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, and FERDINAND R. GAITE,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS, and
KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

AN ACT
DECLARING JANUARY TWENTY-TWO OF EVERY YEAR
AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS
NATIONAL FARMER'S DAY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On January 15, 1987, the *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)*, a national peasant organization, held a camp-out in front of the office of the then Ministry of Agrarian Reform to assert their demand for genuine agrarian reform.

On January 20, 1987, a dialogue took place between the peasant leaders and then Minister of Agrarian Reform Heherson Alvarez. But the government has no clear and substantial response to the demand of the farmers.

On the morning of January 22, 1987, farmers led by *KMP* decided to march to Malacañang to air their demand for genuine agrarian reform. They were later joined by members of other sectoral organizations such as the *Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)*, *Bagong Ahiansang Makabayan (BAYAN)*, League of Filipino Students (LFS) and *Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod (KPML)*. They arrived at Liwasang Bonifacio at about 1:00 p.m. where they held a brief program.

The demonstrators numbering from 15,000 to 20,000 then reached C.M. Recto at around 4:30 p.m. It was during this mobilization that the OPLAN YELLOW was put into effect by the Capital Regional Command (CAPCOM). Task Force Nazareno was deployed within the vicinity of Malacañang. The civil disturbance control units of the Western Police District (WPD) were also activated.

While the leaders of *KMP* were negotiating with the police to allow the body to proceed and continue up to the gates of Malacañang, policemen then suddenly fired their guns indiscriminately, shooting directly at the throng. It was at this moment that a tumult occurred.

As a result of the pandemonium, thirteen (13) marchers died namely: Danilo Arjona; Leopoldo Alonzo; Adelfa Aribe; Dionisio Bautista; Roberto Caylao; Vicente Campomanes; Ronilo Dumunico; Dante Evangelio; Angelito Gutierrez; Rodrigo Grampan; Bernabe Laquindanum;

1 Sonny Boy Perez; and Roberto Yumul. Thirty-nine (39) were wounded by gunshots and twelve
2 (12) sustained minor injuries, all belonging to the group of the marchers.
3

4 In the aftermath of the said fateful day, now known as "Mendiola Massacre", then President
5 Corazon C. Aquino issued Administrative Order (AO) No. 11 dated January 22, 1987, which
6 created the Citizens' Mendiola Commission (Commission for short) to investigate the incident.
7

8 Among the findings of the Commission were:
9

- 10 (a) the crowd dispersal units of the police and the military were armed with
11 .38 and .45 caliber handguns, and M-16 armalites, which is a prohibited act
12 under paragraph 4(g), Section 13, and punishable under paragraph (b),
13 Section 14 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 880.
14
15 (b) the security men assigned to protect the WPD, INP Field Force, the
16 Marines and supporting military units, as well as the security officers of the
17 police and military commanders were in civilian attire in violation of
18 paragraph (a), Section 10, Batas Pambansa Blg. 880.
19
20 (c) there was unnecessary firing by the police and military crowd dispersal
21 control units in dispersing the marchers, a prohibited act under paragraph
22 (e) Section 13, and punishable under paragraph (b), Section 14, Batas
23 Pambansa Blg. 880.
24
25 (d) Tear gas was not used at the start of the disturbance to disperse the rioters.
26 After the crowd had dispersed and the wounded and dead were being
27 carried away, the MDTs of the police and the military with their tear gas
28 equipment and components conducted dispersal operations in the
29 Mendiola area and proceeded to Liwasang Bonifacio to disperse the
30 remnants of the marchers.
31

32 This event, subsequently, served as a wake up call to the Aquino administration to push for a
33 legislated land reform program in the country.
34

35 After twenty nine (29) years, people may have forgotten what transpired on that fateful day.
36 Some journalists called it "Black Thursday" but to many, as stated above, was tagged as
37 "Mendiola Massacre".
38

39 This bill was originally formulated by Anakpawis party-list to remind the nation of the tragic
40 incident, which very much deserves a chapter in our country's history, and to honor the
41 heroism of the peasants whose lives were offered in the struggle for genuine agrarian reform
42 but, more importantly, to recognize the historic, continuing role of the farmers in the pursuit
43 of a just, prosperous and democratic society.
44

45 During the 13th Congress, this bill was approved by the Committee on Revision of Laws
46 (Committee Report No. 1955) and was included in the Business for the Day on November 15,
47 2006.
48

49 This bill passed Third Reading in the 14th Congress and was transmitted to the Senate on
50 January 28, 2010, short of successfully being enacted into law.
51

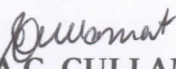
1 The 15th Congress again failed to pass the bill even as the measure got the nod of the Lower
2 House on Second Reading on February 5, 2013.

3
4 Submitted once more in the 16th Congress, the bill was never deliberated even at the committee
5 level. It was again refiled in the 17th Congress where it was referred to the Committee on
6 Agriculture and Food.

7
8 The Makabayan bloc once again files this bill in the 18th Congress to continue to push for the
9 much-deserved official national recognition of the Filipino Peasantry's heroic struggle for land
10 and justice.


11
12 In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

13
14
15
16 *Approved,*

17
18
19
20
21 
22 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
23 *Bayan Muna Party-list*

24
25
26
27
28
29 
30 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
31 *Bayan Muna Party-list*

32
33
34
35
36
37 
38 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**
39 *Bayan Muna Party-list*

40
41
42
43
44
45 
46 **REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**
47 *GABRIELA Women's Party*

48
49
50
REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Party-list

REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Party-list

1 Republic of the Philippines
2 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3 Quezon City

4
5 EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
6 First Regular Session

7
8 HOUSE BILL No. **5244**
9

10 Introduced by
11 BAYAN MUNA Party-List Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
12 Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, and Rep. FERDINAND R. GAITE,
13 ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
14 GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS, and
15 KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

16
17 AN ACT
18 DECLARING JANUARY TWENTY-TWO OF EVERY YEAR
19 AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS
20 NATIONAL FARMER'S DAY
21

22 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*
23

24 **SECTION 1. *Short Title*** – The twenty-second day of January of every year is hereby
25 declared as a special working holiday to be known as “*National Farmer's Day*”.
26

27 **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy*** – To ensure meaningful observance of the holiday as
28 herein declared, all heads of government agencies and instrumentalities, including government-
29 owned and controlled corporations especially those that are dealing directly with the farmers
30 as well as local government units, and employers in the private sector shall encourage and
31 afford sufficient time and opportunities for their employees to engage and participate in any
32 activity conducted within the premises of their respective offices or establishments in support
33 and sympathy to farmers across the country to celebrate “*National Farmer's Day*”.
34

35 **SECTION 3.** This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the
36 Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.
37

38 *Approved,*