

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED PORT
OPERATIONS BUILDING (POB) AT THE PORT OF DUMAGUETE
[Delivered at the Port of Dumaguete in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental | 11 March 2021]**

Kindly sit down. Salamat po.

Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade; Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III; Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar; Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque; Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo; Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Michael Lloyd Dino; Senator Bong Go.

Ito ba si Senator Bong Go, pababa kami sa eroplano sabi niya na, “Sir may hingiin sana ako sa iyo ng pabor.” Sabi ko, “Ano ‘yon?” Sabi niya, “Medyo ma --- it leaves a bad taste in the mouth, malayo pa eh pero ikaw na lang ang magsabi sa kanila.” Eh ‘di sabihin ko. Ang totoo talaga isang bagay lang, sabihin daw sa inyo gusto niya maging presidente. [laughter & applause]

Oriental --- Negros Oriental 2nd District Representative Manuel Sagarata --- Sagarbarria [applause]; Philippine Ports Authority General Manager Jay Daniel Santiago [applause]; Negros Oriental Governor Roel Degamo [applause] --- we were together, I think yesterday; Negros Oriental Vice Governor Mark Macias [applause]; Bohol Province Governor Arthur Yap [applause]; Eastern Samar Governor Ben Evardone [applause], yes sir; Dumaguete City Mayor Felipe Antonio Remollo [applause].

I would have --- if I had a time, hindi kasi ako sanay magbasa ng speech, not because I want to waste your time pero gusto ko kasi magsalita ng galing lang sa puso. But for want of a space sa ating panahon, gipit ‘yong schedule, mas basahin ko na lang rin ho ‘yong prepared speech.

We are gathered today for the inauguration of another successful project aimed at enhancing the seamless connectivity of our islands, promoting more vibrant trade and tourism, and bringing growth to the countryside.

Despite the pandemic, this new Port Operations Building at the Dumaguete --- Port of Dumaguete was completed on October 15, 2020 through the combined efforts of the Department of Transportation, the Philippine Ports Authority, and the concerned agencies and partners of government.

This 114-million two-story facility which includes the Port Integrated Clearing house, conducive [office] spaces for PPA-Dumaguete employees, and a pre-departure area capable of accommodating another 500 passengers. Okay. It is expected to raise over 13 million pesos annually in Passenger Terminal Fee collection.

It will allow the public to enjoy a spacious and comfortable pre-departure area. Further, it will provide our PPA-Dumaguete employees, regulatory agencies and other offices to be located here with state-of-the-art facilities for monitoring and facilitating the efficient arrival and departure of passengers.

I will cut my speech para ipakilala ko lang sa inyo --- baka sabihin na sino 'yong tao diyan nakaupo sa --- nakaupo diyan sa stage? Are they invited guests or are they...?

Si Bong Go, he has maybe... Michael Dino. You know, we are really very lucky sa totoo lang. Ako hindi ako nagkamali. Noong estudyante kami, ito si Tugade nagtatrabaho na sa Delgado Shipping, one of the top executives there. He was my classmate sa law school and he was the valedictorian sa San Beda College of Law sa aming batch.

Kaya sabi ko, ito 'pag pumayag ito na kunin ko... He was the manager of Clark, napunta ako --- napasyal ako doon, sabi ko sa kanya na balang araw.

He was quite a bit nagva-vacillate. Eventually, I was able to convince him to do his part in nation-building. Lahat-lahat dito, airport pati iyong mga ports natin magaganda na sa panahon niya. He was able to improve... Cebu was a splendid airport and other ports of authority. Hindi nga naman ma-ano, maliit, malaki, napa --- napaganda niya. So hindi ako naka --- I'm just saying na ganoon ka-talent itong tao na ito.

And the other one is Mark Villar. He is responsible for the Skyway now. And if you go out of Luzon and travel towards the north, makita mo a long stretch of highway, sementado, talagang maganda. So he is not here but gusto ko lang purihin 'yong tao kasi dapat naman talaga.

Dito sa likod ko si Sal Panelo. Sal Panelo is the lawyer, ito 'yon siyang mga abugado ng mga artista. Totoo. Iyang mga iskandalo, nag-aaway, kanya 'yan lahat. High-profile ito si Sal, and maybe he would make a good senator someday. [applause]

Harry Roque. I am sure you know him. Ayan. [applause]. Then we have Martin Andanar. And the hardworking fellow sa labor department, handling any and all kinds of problems regarding our overseas workers, Bebot Bello. [applause]

I don't know if he is interested to run for senator or maybe baka doon sa kanila 'yan tatakbo, he is from Isabela. Alam mo, sa Cabinet dalawa lang kaming Bisaya diyan. Lahat 'yan sila puro Ilocano na. Because there are 12 military men --- ex-military, retired, sa harap namin sa Cabinet at nandito kami sa kabila. Ganoon 'yan. And all of them or most of them, as a matter of fact, all except for one, puro mga Ilocano ito at mahuhusay. Iyan ang masabi ko sa inyo.

As we venture into our several projects nationwide, let me reiterate the importance of completing all infrastructure projects on time, and if possible, within my administration, with the least inconvenience to the public and with strict adherence to the highest standards of honesty and integrity to prevent corruption.

You know, hindi naman ako nagmamagaling. Ordinaryo lang ako na tao. Wala akong --- I do not have the credentials like most of the guys here in front of you. Ako, ordinaryo lang, 75, 75 lang talaga ako. But itong lahat na mga Cabinet members ko including the military, mga valedictorians iyang mga summa cum laude 'yan. Nakakaawa nga kasi utusan ko lang 'yan sila lahat. [laughter]

At alam nila 'yong... Well, hindi naman --- they do not need to be reminded but 'yong corruption ayaw ko. Iyong lahat ng nasa airport naka-itim na immigration, I fired all of them, 43; Customs, 73; DPWH, karamihan diyan 'yong mga district engineer. And I am gunning for more.

Kaya sabi ko sa kanila, hindi naman ako nagmamakalinis, pero corruption sa pera... Sabi ko sa kanila na --- noon pa pag-umpisa pa --- do not blame me. I told you in the beginning that I hate corruption. Kung mag-corrupt kayo, pati ako madale. And that's a problem.

Eh naumpisahan ko na, I've been mayor for 23 years sa Davao City. Four years ako congressman. Four ata --- ah three years akong congressman, three years ako vice mayor ng anak ko, si Inday. Then wala akong talo sa politika since 1988, diretso na hanggang ngayon. Kaya ako mahiya sa tao. I mean the confidence and trust that the people have reposed on me, maski 'yon na lang ang anohin ko.

But in anyway, sa Davao, sa awa ng Diyos, wala talaga. And look what is Davao today. It's in a far place called Mindanao. It's a troubled land but we are thriving. That's because walang corruption doon. Magaganda 'yong daan. Ayaw --- ayaw ko. Iyong mayor ngayon lalo na.

As we gradually reopen our society and economy to recover from the pandemic, I would like to remind the transportation sector and the traveling public to continuously observe public health and safety protocols, especially in the public transportation facilities.

Ito nga ang nagkaproblema eh, I am in a quandary really insisting on the observance of protocols. Pero makita mo naman sa Quiapo, sa mga bus, hindi masusunod eh. Lisod kaayo sundon kay daghang tao (It's hard to implement because there are so many people) and... But 9 million also people are there in the urban areas. Paglak --- maski maglakaw (walk) lang.

Even if the --- the mere fact of just walking, you have to navigate to swerve through a throng of people. Pero kayo na lang ang magintindi niyan because that is really the advice also of the WHO, galing man ito sa kanila. Kamo nala'y magtimpla-timpla og unsaon ninyo. (You should decide how to implement it.)

Iyang mask --- actually, face shield, maski magkatabi kayo, it is sufficient gadget to protect you. Ako, dili ko naga-mask og nagasulti kay (I don't wear a mask while talking because) --- [garbled] [laughter] --- mura ka'g buang... (You sound like a fool). Time is the... Kaya tinatangal ko talaga.

We have yet to fully implement our national vaccination program. Prior to this, increased mobility must be done with utmost caution and responsibility.

Now, this is the devil and the deep blue sea tayo, but I have to reopen the economy. I have given a timetable of just weeks. We cannot forever be in the strict protocols because we have to open the economy. People are hungry, people --- they have to work, to eat, to survive.

So, hindi ko malaman kung saan ako pumunta, but I said, the economy must be opened in a short while. It cannot be... Kaya kung paspasan 'yang bakuna tatal umabot na, kung makita ko na mag-abot na ng milyon ang na-vaccinated, then probably especially around the towns and big cities, okay na 'yan. But at... Hanggang ngayon, I am, I said, in a quandary of what to do.

It is only with everyone's full cooperation that the nation can effectively contain the spread of COVID-19 and triumph against the pandemic. With these concerted efforts, I am confident that we will emerge a strong nation.

Walang ibang sikreto diyan - swabbing, so that you would know. The problem is I have to talk to the medical... Kasi hindi ko malaman kung --- if there is something that is really stupid going around kasi 'yong iba magpa-swab ka, positive ka. But just to confirm, people go to another swabbing station at magpa-swab, negative, and that is contributing to the --- parang ano ng tao.

They are not comfortable with the system that we are having now. So I have to get to call these people again and sabihin ko, ano ba talaga itong p***** --- ? Kasi false positive, false negative, hindi mo malaman ano ba ito totooan o iba 'yan diyan peke o... So, I will have to order the police again. Wala akong ibang mauutusan, hindi mo naman mauutusan 'yang mga doktor. I have to order the police and the military to find out and arrest these people.

At saka 'yang nagpapabili ng bakuna. Nako, huwag ka sanang mahuli. 'Pag nahuli ka, ipatawag kita sa Malacañan.

Dalawang pages pa pala. Itong navy, navy 'yan eh.

Mayor Jorge Reyes, sir, I am sorry, dalawang pages pala ito; Mayor Fritz Diaz; Mayor Galicano Truita, yes sir good afternoon; Mayor Ike Amorganda, gwapo gyud diay (He is really good-looking.); Mayor Janice Degamo, ma'am; Mayor Susano Ruperto; mga kasama sa gobyerno; and the Negros Oriental 3rd District Representative (tsk) Arnolfo Teves po, sir.

Sorry ha duha ka pages ni. Ikaduha pa nag-stop nako ani. Ikatulo --- naa pa koy tulo sa Davao. So I have three here then I fly back and... Ganoon ka tight ang schedule ko.

(TRANSLATION: Sir, please accept my apologies. My speech is two pages and this is my second stop. The third --- I have to make my third stop in Davao. So I have three here then I fly back and... Ganoon ka tight ang schedule ko.)

Daghang salamat sa inyong tanan (Thank you very much to all of you). [applause]

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