

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE INAUGURATION OF SEVERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
WITHIN THE DUMAGUETE-SIBULAN AIRPORT**

[Delivered at the Dumaguete Airport in Sibulan, Negros Oriental | 11 March 2021]

Kindly sit down. Salamat po.

Isang Cabinet pa na... Nandiyan pala si ano --- ang pogi namin na spokesman, Sal Panelo. Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade; Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Lloyd Dino and other members of the Cabinet; Senator Bong Go; Governor Arthur Yap --- idol, naa ka man diay di ha (idol, I didn't notice you); Negros Oriental Governor Roel Degamo; Pamplona Municipal Mayor Janice Degamo, maayong hapon, ma'am (good afternoon, ma'am); mga kauban nako sa gobyerno (my fellow workers in government); akong mga minahal na kapwa Pilipino.

Ah kadyot ra man ni. (This is just short.) Mga siguro two pages lang ang akong basahon. (I will read only two pages.) But before I read the prepared speech I just would like to say that I'm happy that you have a good airport now and it was through the effort really of Arthur Tugade.

Si Arthur Tugade pati si Villar, Secretary, si Bebot, ito 'yong naglalaban sa achievements sa kanilang pagkaopisyal. Arthur Tugade, well, sinabi ko sa inyo hindi naman --- di naman nato makatingad-an kay ang kugi sa tao gisabayan sa iyang utok (It's not surprising anymore because the person is both hardworking and smart.)

You know Tugade was our valedictorian sa law school. At that time he was already working for the Delgado Shipping. He was already an exe --- dako na'g posisyon (he held one of the big positions there).

But we were not surprised that pag-graduate namo (when we graduated), he went on to become a billionaire. Billionaire ho itong Tugade na ito. So ito 'yong airport niya. And he is a slave driver in a matter of people really working hard to achieve an objective on time.

Mao na'y akong ikapanghambog ninyo (Those are the things that I am proud to share with you.) Naa pud si Secretary Andanar (Secretary Andanar is also here); si Bebot Bello, ang atong tigbantay pud intawon sa OFW (who is in charge of our OFWs); si Michael Dino; ang atong spokesman na kuyaw kaayo (our great spokesman), si Harry Roque; ug kani si Bong ba (and Bong), padulong mi ngari ingon siya, "Hangyua ang mga tao, ingna sila na gusto ko mudagan pagka-Presidente. [laughter] So Bong... (When we were on our way here, he said, "Please talk to the people, tell them that I want to run for president." So, Bong...) [applause]

Ug si Sal Panelo and debonair. Mao ni abugado sa mga artista. Abugado nagbulag, nagkaliwaay, nag-away, nag-ganoon, mao ni siya. He is the celebrity lawyer for the kanang mga high-profile

na mga artista, mga celebrity. (And Sal Panelo, the debonair. He's a lawyer for the celebrities who have gone through separations, break-ups, fights, cases like that. He is the celebrity lawyer for the high-profile artists, celebrities.)

I am glad to join you here today as we formally inaugurate the development projects here at the Dumaguete Airport.

The 252-million-peso rehabilitation projects that we inaugurated today will include the expansion of the existing Passenger Terminal and Administrative Buildings, asphalt overlay of the runway, as well as shoulder grade correction and construction of additional taxiways to allow the airport to accommodate heavier aircraft and increase its passenger volume capacity.

I commend the Department of Transportation, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines and all our partners who contributed to the completion of this project despite the sudden lockdown due to the pandemic.

I hope that this project will inspire us further to provide better services and opportunities for our people and harness the potential of trade and tourism as the catalyst for economic recovery, particularly in the provinces.

I assure our people that we will remain committed to finish all infrastructure projects on time, if possible, within my administration, with the least inconvenience to the public and with strict adherence to honesty and integrity. Corruption has no place here.

As we do our best to revive our economy and give our people the opportunity to recover and lead better lives, I appeal to everyone to please continue observing the prescribed health and safety protocols, whether in our homes or in public places, especially transport.

It is only with everyone's cooperation that the nation can effectively contain the spread of COVID-19 and triumph against the pandemic.

In solidarity, let us take further strides towards a better, more dynamic and prosperous nation for everybody.

Ako lang binisay-on. Kaning tanang protocols di gyud ni masunod. For example, kanang makit-an nimo sa Manila, Quiapo. (I'm going to say this in Bisaya. All these protocols can't always be followed. For example, the situation that you see in Manila, Quiapo.) How --- how can you?

It's because there are so many Filipinos that are crammed in the urban areas. Gamay raman ang tua sa gawas (Only few are living outside) Eh nandiyan lahat eh. (Everything is there).

Maski sa sakyanan (Even inside the car), you cannot insist on --- kawawa 'yong tao. So pag-isa-isahin mo lang, tag-tatlong pasahero, mamahal 'yong pamasaha. Hindi naman kaya ng tao.

So at the very least mask o face shield for the maximum protection. But other --- especially social distancing, I do not think that we can force our people really to --- because it's impossible. There are too many Filipinos in the urban areas than in the rural areas.

And second, which is really the farthest of all reason, is that we have not been able to implement the family planning program. As I can remember, it was only President Ramos, who was a Protestant, who really insisted on family planning. I am the second. Katoliko ako noon pero one of the irritants sa amin was really the dynamics of family planning lalagyan mo ng mga contraceptives.

Eh ayaw ng simbahan eh. Kaya collision course talaga and one word led to another. Sabi ko if you cannot honor the separation of state and church, then we will not be able to really to understand each other. So 'yan lang po ang iiwan ko sa inyo.

It's not because I want to fight the church. It's not my business fighting churches. But it's something to do with a higher policy of family planning sana. We are the second fastest sa increase in population.

We are now 110 million and I really hope that we can do something about this in the future. Sabagay wala na ako. I will be freed of that worry. But you know, we'd pass it on to the generation, sobra talaga. It's high time that we review and...

Maski sabihin mo kung social distancing, paglabas pa lang ng tao ng bahay niya hirap na siya. He can hardly have the space to move around. So hindi naman sa kukulangin tayo ng tao. But sana we can match the family planning programs of government at least with our GDP. Ang ano ng --- ang laka (gap) natin sa --- makaya ba natin.

Well, that is another matter but that is one of the things that I have passionately pursued dito. I insist that itong mga sa gobyerno they must follow the government regulation.

If your religion does not allow you to participate in the program, then get out and find another space there in the office. Umalis kayo because there is a higher, a more crucial reason for a... Tamang-tama lang na tao na kaya natin pakainin.

We are not rich and we are not that productive because of the climate. Dito banda sa taas, wala. It's only Mindanao. Mindanao promises really mo --- matapos lang 'yong giyera. But that's another matter. I need a more time to elaborate what I'm saying.

Let me just finish it by saying that I'm happy that you have a new airport. It's a nice one and that I hope that it will promote the image, at least, and the tourism industry here or hereabout the Visayas.

Salamat po. [applause]

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