

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3926



Introduced by **HON. RENE L. RELAMPAGOS**
First District, Bohol

EXPLANATORY NOTE

National symbols represent its country, its people, its history and its culture. In the Philippines, there are around twenty national symbols being taught in school. However, of these symbols, only ten (10) are "official," that is, with basis either in the Constitution (for the national language), Republic Acts (for the national flag, coat of arms, anthem and motto as well as the national martial arts and sports), and Proclamations (for the national flower, tree, bird and gem).

That leaves the other national symbols "unofficial" or blatantly, "colorums," for having no basis for their declaration. Rizal now becomes the unofficial national hero, carabao the unofficial national animal, mango the unofficial fruit, *bangus* the unofficial fish, the *baro't saya* as the unofficial national costume and so on.

This bill, hence, primarily seeks to lay the basis for the declaration and recognition of the Philippine national symbols. In addition, this bill aims to develop and instil nationalism and unity; to ensure respect, promotion and preservation of the national symbols; to correct the "unofficial" status of these symbols as taught in schools; to provide guidelines for their use, care and conservation; and to promote Philippine tourism through these symbols, among others.

Further, the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) will be tasked to come up with the implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this proposed measure. In doing so, they shall give primordial consideration to the respect, promotion, preservation, conservation, cultivation and usage of these national symbols, as appropriate, including proper information dissemination through the quad-media.

For the above considerations, the immediate passage of this law is earnestly sought.


RENE LOPEZ RELAMPAGOS

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**“AN ACT
DECLARING THE NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE PHILIPPINES”**

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

SECTION 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the “Philippine National Symbols Act of 2014.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to inculcate patriotism, nationalism and appreciation of the role of national heroes and symbols in the historical development of the country. Furthermore, the State must give priority to education, science and technology, arts and culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

SEC. 3. Philippine National Symbols. – The following shall be the national symbols of the Philippines:

- a. National Flag – the flag of the Philippines shall be blue, white and red with an eight-rayed golden-yellow sun and three five-pointed stars, as consecrated and honored by the people. The other specifications and regulations for the national flag shall be those under Republic Act No. 8491.
- b. National Capital – the City of Manila shall be the capital of the Philippines. It is located in Luzon and is part of the national capital region. It houses the national seat of government and many of the historical sites in the country including Intramuros.
- c. National Seat of Government – shall be the Malacañan Palace. Situated in the old Manila City district of San Miguel, this is the official residence and office of the President of the Philippines. This is also where formal state functions are held.
- d. National Language – the national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages.

- e. National Anthem – is entitled *Lupang Hinirang* and shall always be sung in the national language within or without the country. The following shall be the lyrics of the National Anthem:

*Bayang Magiliw
Perlas ng Silanganan
Alab ng puso
Sa Dibdib mo'y buhay.
Lupang Hinirang,
Duyan ka ng magiting,
Sa manlulupig
Di ka pasisiil
Sa dagat at bundok,
Sa simoy at sa langit mong bughaw,
May dilag ang tula
At awit sa paglayang minamahal.
Ang kislap ng watawat mo'y
Tagumpay na nagniningning;
Ang bituin at araw niya,
Kailan pa ma'y di magdidilim
Lupa ng araw, ng luwalhati't pagsinta,
Buhay ay langit sa piling mo;
Aming ligaya na pag may mang-aapi,
Ang mamatay nang dahil sa iyo.*

The rendition of the National Anthem, whether played or sung, shall be in accordance with the musical arrangement and composition of Julian Felipe.

- f. National Song – “Bayan Ko” shall be the national song. This Tagalog song was composed in 1928 when Filipinos were campaigning for independence from America under the leadership of President Manuel Quezon. The lyrics are based on a poem by Jose Corazon de Jesus. It was set to music by Constancio de Guzman who likened that Motherland to a bird set free, the land returned to the rightful people, the true heirs of the islands. “Foreigners are intoxicated with your beauty, my country, my nest of tears of poverty. My steadfast wish is to set you free.” Originally written in Spanish by Filipino General José Alejandrino, this *kundiman* is often considered the unofficial second national anthem.
- g. National Motto – shall be “Maka-diyos, Maka-tao, Makakalikasan at Makabansa.” (“For God, People, Nature and Country”).
- h. National Coat-of-Arms – shall have paleways of two (2) pieces, azure and gules; a chief argent studded with three (3) mullets equidistant from each other; and, in point of honor, ovoid argent over all the sun rayonnant with eight minor lesser rays. Beneath shall be the scroll with the words “REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS,” inscribed thereon.
- i. National Seal – or the Great Seal shall be circular in form, with the arms as described in the preceding section, but without the scroll and the inscription thereon. Surrounding the whole shall be a double marginal circle within which shall appear the words “Republika ng Pilipinas.” The Great Seal shall bear the National Motto.

- j. National Currency – the Philippine Peso shall be the national currency. It is divided in 100 centavos. As far as practicable, the design of the peso shall feature famous Filipinos, historical events, prominent places and landmarks, iconic natural wonders, endemic wildlife and animals and national symbols. The smallest amount of legal tender/bank note in wide circulation is 20 pesos and the largest is 1000 pesos while in coins the smallest is 5 centavos and the largest is 10 pesos. The Philippine Peso sign shall be ₱, Php, or simply P.
- k. National Hero – shall be José Protacio Rizal Mercado y Alonso Realonda, born at Calamba, Laguna on June 19, 1861 to Francisco Engracio Rizal Mercado y Alejandro and Teodora Morales Alonso y Quintos. Rizal was a nationalist, novelist, poet, ophthalmologist, journalist and revolutionary. He is the most well-known advocate for reforms in the Philippines during the Spanish Colonial Era. December 30, 1896, his date of execution, is remembered as the Rizal Day. And his monument now stands in Rizal Park. He wrote the poem *Mi Ultimo Adios* and the books, *Noli Me Tangere*, *El Filibusterismo*, which books remain an integral part of the secondary school curriculum. A study of his life and works is mandated by law to be part of the tertiary level school curriculum.
- l. National Martial Arts and Sport – shall be the Arnis, also known as Eskrima, Kali, Garrote and other names in various regional languages, such as Pananandata in Tagalog; Pagkalikali, Ibanag; Kabaraon and Kalirongan, Pangasinan; Kaliradman, Bisaya; and Didja, Ilokano, is an indigenous Filipino martial art and sport characterized by the use of swinging and twirling movements, accompanied by striking, thrusting and parrying techniques for defense and offense. This is usually done with the use of one (1) or two (2) sticks or any similar implements or with bare hands and feet also used for striking, blocking, locking and grappling, with the use of the same principle as that with the canes.
- m. National Dance – shall be the Cariñosa, a Philippine folk dance of Hispanic origin. The word *cariñosa*, in Spanish, means the affectionate one – characteristic of most Filipina women. This is a courtship dance that portrays acts of flirtation between a man and a woman. The dancers perform steps resembling hide-and-seek movements. The woman holds a handkerchief or sometimes a fan.
- n. National Bird – shall be the Philippine Eagle or the Philippine monkey-eating eagle with scientific name *Pithecophaga jefferyi*. It is also referred to as *Haribon* or *Haring Ibon* (Bird King). It is considered as one of the largest, strongest and most powerful eagle in the world. It is also one of the rarest with less than 500 birds in the wild. The *Haribon* is only found in the rainforests of the Philippines, along steep mountain sides.
- o. National Animal – the “Kalabaw,” Carabao or the Water Buffalo shall be the national animal. With scientific name *Bubalus bubalus*, these gentle but hard-working animals are largely used by farmers to pull plows in the ricefields and/or pull transportation carts and have been domesticated since the pre-hispanic times. A Philippine Carabao Center was established for research and development of carabaos including carabao-products.

- p. National Fish – shall be the “*Bangus*” or Milkfish. With scientific name *Chanos chanos*, it is often found along continental shelves and islands. Milkfish aquaculture originated in the Philippines, 800 years ago, and spread over the Indo-Pacific rim. *Bangus* is a naturally strong and flexible fish capable of adapting and thriving where they are raised – in saline ponds, in fish ponds, in fish pens and in cages even at sea. *Bangus* is a popular table fare among Filipinos and is prepared and cooked in various ways.
- q. National Tree – shall be the Narra or the *Pterocarpus indicus*. This indigenous tree is a symbol of resilience. Its hardwood is the favorite timber for the manufacture of fine furniture, cabinetry, cart wheels, carving, construction, and musical instruments. Apart from these, the Narra – from its bark and resin extracts, fruit, leaves, flowers – are used for medicinal as well as aesthetic purposes.
- r. National Gem – the Philippine Pearl, internationally known as the South Sea Pearl, the oldest valued gem is the national gem of the country. This hard and ideally round and smooth object is naturally produced and is cultivated or harvested. It is composed of calcium carbonate in tiny crystalline form, which has been deposited in concentric layers. The largest pearl in the world, the Pearl of Allah or the Pearl of Lao Tze (length: 9.4 inches / weight: 14 pounds) was found in Brooke’s Point, Palawan. It has a value of \$40 million dollars according to Guinness Book of Records.
- s. National Flower – shall be Sampaguita or the *Jasminum sambac*. Philippine Sampaguita flower is a white, star-shaped blossom which has a sweet fragrance. It opens at night and droops in less than a day. Symbolizing purity, simplicity, humility and strength, the small white flowers are popular garlands and used as leis, corsages and crowns. The garlands may be used to welcome guests, or as an offering or adornment in religious altars. But other than its use for garlands, these flowers are also known for their scent and are often used as perfumes. In addition, Sampaguita has known medicinal use.
- t. National Leaf – shall be the Anahaw leaf with scientific name *Livistona rotundifolia*. The Anahaw leaf is large, round fan-shaped and is glossy green in color. It is considered a strong leaf weathering high heat from the sun as well as the brutal rain and wind. It is often used in awards and medals to represent high achievement, strength and loyalty. Considered as one of the most beautiful plants in the Philippines, it is a common landscaping plant. Its most common uses are as fan during the hot days, roof for the nipa hut and food wrapping.
- u. National Fruit – shall be the mango or the *Mangifera indica*. This delicious and aromatic tropical fruit is available in different shapes, colors, sizes, and weight. It may be oval, round, elongated, kidney- or heart-shaped. It may be green, green-yellow or even orange to red in color. Mango is regarded as the queen of Philippine fruits. The country has different varieties of mangoes like kalabaw, piko, indiyon, paho, and supsupin. The Philippine mangoes of the Kalabaw variety are labeled internationally as Philippine Super Mangoes and are considered as one of

the delicious fruits in the world and are reputedly, in the Guinness Book of World Records, as the sweetest in the world. Green, unripe mangoes is popular among the Filipinos. This delicious fruit is best eaten as a ripe fruit but it can be canned, and dried. Other usual preparations for mangoes include shakes, juices, jam, jellies, cakes, and sauces. Mangoes make an exotic addition to fruit salads and can be pureed to make sorbets and ice cream. Raw mangoes can be made into pickles and chutneys, and serve as accompaniment for fried fish.

- v. National Food – shall be Adobo. Although it has a name taken from the Spanish, the cooking method is indigenous to the Philippines. When the Spanish colonized the Philippines in the late 16th century and early 17th century, they encountered an indigenous cooking process which involved stewing with vinegar, which they then referred to as *adobo*, the Spanish word for seasoning or marinade. Dishes prepared in this manner eventually came to be known by this name, with the original term for the dish now lost to history. The most common table fare among Filipino families, nothing beats adobo for its versatility and variety. Whether using chicken, pork, fish, squid, kangkong, sitaw, puso ng saging and others as the main ingredient, there are many ways to cook adobo – adobo sa gata, adobong matamis, adobong tuyo, adobong masabaw, adobo sulipan, adobo sa pinya, and adobo sa kalamansi, adobong malutong, adobong puti, adobo flakes, spicy adobo, just to name a few. Adobo can also fill the pandesal, siopao, and puto, can be a pizza topping and pasta sauce, among others.
- w. National Costume – For male, the *Barong Tagalog* (or simply *Barong*) is the national costume. It is an embroidered formal shirt, very lightweight and worn untucked over an undershirt. It is usual attire especially in formal occasions and important public engagements. The finest Barongs are made from a variety of indigenous fabrics. They have a sheer appearance and the best are custom embroidered in delicate folk patterns. It is usually paired with dark formal pants.

For female, the national costume shall be the *Baro't Saya* ("collarless blouse and long skirt"). From the original half-naked style of Filipinas, the upper torso was slowly covered with a short-sleeved, collarless blouse called "*baro*." It has since developed into a many-layered collection: the kimona or inner shirt; the *baro* outershirt with its usually gauzy materials, fine embroidery and wide sleeves; the *pañuelo* or piano shawl, starched to achieve a raised look. On the other hand, the *saya*, an all-purpose brief wrap-around skirt metamorphosed and now have layers of petticoats decorated with eyelet patterns visible underneath the *saya*, the *saya* proper, laid over the starched petticoat and the *tapis*, a wrap covering the upper half of the *saya*.

- x. National Slippers – *Bakya* shall be the national footwear, the traditional wooden clogs usually worn with the national costume, the *baro't saya*. The *Bakya* has reference to the Filipinos humble beginnings.
- y. National House – *Bahay Kubo* or the Nipa Hut shall be the national house. It is a shelter made out of bamboo and palm leaves, usually the *anahaw*.

- z. National Vehicle – the Philippine jeepney. Originally, the military jeeps left by the Americans after World War II, the Filipinos extended its body to accommodate more passengers and put a roof to give shade. Now it is the most accessible mode of transportation throughout the country.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act. In doing so, they shall give primordial importance to the respect, promotion, preservation, conservation, cultivation and usage of these national symbols, as appropriate, including proper information dissemination through the quad-media.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act not otherwise affected shall be valid and subsisting.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule and regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall be effective fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,