

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5708



Introduced by Reps. JOEL G. VIRADOR, SATUR C. OCAMPO, TEODORO A. CASIÑO, LIZA L. MAZA, CRISPIN B. BELTRAN, RAFAEL V. MARIANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A century after one of the darkest moments in our country's history, the victims of the infamous Bud Dahu Massacre remains largely ignored by the Philippine State.

The massacre took place on March 5 to 8, 1906. The American colonial government preferred to call it a battle — a legitimate armed confrontation between the military forces and a group of lawless fanatics. United States President Theodore Roosevelt even commended the American Army for “a most gallant and soldierly feat” in the fight at Mount Dahu.

But many American personages quickly pointed out the contrary. American literary luminary and social critic Mark Twain called the encounter a massacre, the US troops uniformed assassins, and the Moros “helpless and weaponless savages in a hole like rats in a trap.” American historian Vic Hurley said “by no stretch of the imagination could Bud Dahu be termed a ‘battle.’ The Americans troops stormed a high mountain peak crowned by fortifications to kill 1,000 Moros with a loss to themselves of twenty-one killed and seventy-three wounded! The casualty reflects the unequal nature of the battle.”

Indeed, some 1,000 Moro men, women, and children were massacred inside the 50-foot crater of Bud Dahu – a dormant volcano six kilometers off Jolo, the capital town of Sulu Province in Mindanao.

They were caught unprepared when, from the edges atop the crater, 800 American soldiers fired down into the crater. Our Muslim brothers and sisters fought desperately but their wavy-edged swords called *keris*, hunting spears, and rifles were simply no match against the Americans’ artillery. Some of them, including women and children, were mowed down by as many as fifty bullets while others were impaled with bayonets. Only six survived the four-day assault.

The victims were a community of Tausugs who fled to Bud Dahu in defiance of the United States’ occupation of Mindanao. Spain ruled the country for 333 years but the Moros never recognized its authority. The Moros isolated themselves in the southern islands of Mindanao. When the Americans came, they were ready to defy the new colonizers just as they defied Spanish colonization.

Today, the Bud Dahu massacre continues to inspire the Bangsamoro people in their struggle for self-determination. They invoke the same spirit in resisting the presence of US forces who are presently conducting military exercises in Mindanao through the Visiting Forces Agreement.

They are still trying to make sense of the peace agreement signed by the national government and the Moro National Liberation Front more than a decade ago.

Indeed, one hundred years after the Bud Dahu massacre, the Bangsamoro people are faced with virtually the same issues: resistance to US intervention, the quest for peace, and the desire for self-determination.

This Bill ultimately wants to correct a government error by omission on an important historical event in our past. The victims of the Bud Dahu massacre should be included in our country's list of martyrs of freedom. Our government should hold commemorative activities of this atrocity so that the nation can better appreciate our history in general, and our Muslim brothers and sisters in particular.

Thus, it is only fitting and proper that the entire nation, most especially in the regions, provinces, cities and municipalities where our Muslim compatriots are, commemorate Bud Dahu Day on March 6 of every year.

Immediate approval of this proposed legislation is therefore earnestly sought.



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AN ACT
DECLARING MARCH SIX OF EVERY YEAR AS BUD DAHU DAY IN
COMMEMORATION OF THE BANGSAMORO PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE TO
FOREIGN OCCUPATION, THEIR CONTINUING QUEST FOR PEACE AND
SELF-DETERMINATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Bud Dahu Day Act of 2006.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policies and Objectives. – In recognition of the need to establish a comprehensive campaign for national consciousness on an important historical event of the Bangsamoro people, March 6 of every year is hereby declared as “Bud Dahu Day.”

SECTION 3. Activities. – The following activities shall be undertaken in observance of this occasion:

(a) Heads of government agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned and -controlled corporations, local government units, together with their employees, shall organize, engage or participate in activities designed to raise public awareness on events in Bud Dahu, Jolo, Sulu, on March 5 to 8, 1906 and its continuing significance to the Bangsamoro people and the Philippines; and

(b) The Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, National Historical Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine embassies and Consulates in Islamic countries, in coordination with the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) advocating for human rights and the Bangsamoro people shall lead public and private school communities at all levels in the country, and in Muslim Filipino communities abroad, in organizing consciousness raising activities on Bud Dahu Day.

SECTION 4. Compliance and Monitoring Team. – A compliance and monitoring team headed by a duly designated representative of the OMA shall be created to coordinate and monitor the implementation of this Act. Said team shall be composed of one representative from each of the following agencies:

- (a) Office of Muslim Affairs;
- (b) Department of Education;
- (c) Commission on Higher Education;
- (d) Department of Interior and Local Government;
- (e) Department of Foreign Affairs; and
- (f) Three representatives of non-government human rights organizations, Bangsamoro people, and overseas Filipino workers.

SECTION 5. Funds. – Funds for the implementation of the aforesaid activities, programs and projects shall be taken out of the General Appropriations Act allocations in the budget of the Office of Muslim Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education and Department of Interior and Local Government.

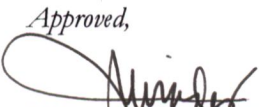
SECTION 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations – The Office of Muslim Affairs, within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act, in consultation and coordination with the agencies and organizations indicated in Section 4 hereof.

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause. – All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations or part thereof, contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

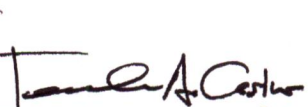
SECTION 8. Separability Clause. – Should any provision of this Act be found unconstitutional by a court of law, such provision shall be severed from the remainder of this Act, and such action shall not affect the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Act.

SECTION 9. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in any two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

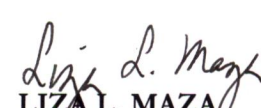

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