

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

16th Congress

House Bill No. **2237**



Introduced by: HON. OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On May 22, 1992, Republic Act 7552 was enacted declaring May 7th of every year as a special non-working holiday in the province of Pampanga in commemoration of the death anniversary of the former Chief Justice and war hero, Jose Abad Santos. This law was subsequently amended by Republic Act 8815, to include the City of Angeles in its coverage.

At that time of the enactment of the two laws, the sources of information produced by researchers specifically indicates May 7, 1942 as the actual date of the execution of Jose Abad Santos. It was only later that issue as to actual date was raised. Fortunately, the dispute as to actual date of execution encouraged further in-depth research. And eventually correct inadvertent mistakes especially in public records and documents.

Based on the book written by Justice Ramon C. Aquino entitled, "Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos, 1886-1942, A Biography", the following is the true account of the last days of the late Chief Justice:

"On April 11, 1942, Jose Abad Santos and his son, Pepito, were captured by the Japanese in Carcar, Cebu. When ask to cooperate with the Japanese he refused. Hence they imputed to him destruction of bridges and other public works in Cebu. The Japanese High Command took them to Parang, Cotabato. The next day they were brought to Malabang, Lanao. After three days confinement at the Constabulary barracks, he was called to the Japanese headquarters. Before he was shot to death, he was able to talk to his son. His parting words to his son were "Do not cry Pepito, show to these people that you are brave. It is an honor to die for one's country, not everybody has that chance." He was executed at 2:00 p.m., on May 2, 1942."

Justice Aquino further clarified why there are several accounts that stated May 7 as the actual date of execution, "It was thought that Abad Santos was killed on May 7, 1942. This was the date given by Pepito himself during his testimony at the trials of Generals Hayashi and Kawaguchi. But on the basis of Fukui's (Japanese interpreter present at the time of execution) testimony supported by notations in his diary, the date of Abad Santos' execution was definitely ascertained to be at two o'clock on the afternoon of May 2, 1942.

This date May 2, 1942, is now being observed not only by the descendants of the great patriarch but also the whole of Pampanga, including the City of Angeles and the City of San Fernando.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. R. Rodriguez".

HON. OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ

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

16th Congress

House Bill No. 2237

Introduced by: HON OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT 8815 CHANGING THE DATE OF
CELEBRATION OF "ABAD SANTOS DAY" FROM MAY 7TH TO MAY 2ND OF
EVERY YEAR TO CONFORM WITH THE ACTUAL DATE OF HIS
EXECUTION.

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

Section 1. Section 1 of Republic Act 8815 is hereby amended to read as follows:

**"SECTION 1. MAY 2ND OF EVERY YEAR IS HEREBY DECLARED AS A
SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA
AND THE CITY OF ANGELES TO BE KNOWN AS "ABAD SANTOS DAY".**

Section 2. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official
Gazette or in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved: