

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 7424

Introduced by Hon. Antonio B. Legarda Jr.

AN ACT
PRESERVING THE INDIGENOUS GAMES AND SPORTS OF THE PHILIPPINES
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 22 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall recognize and promote the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development. Furthermore, Article 31.1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples enjoins all State signatories to take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of the indigenous peoples' rights, which include the maintenance and development of their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional expression, oral traditions, literature, designs, sports, and traditional games, among others.

Pursuant to the mandates above, it is incumbent upon the State to lay down specific policy directives to promote the interest of our indigenous peoples and strengthen our cultural heritage and historical roots. Indigenous sports and games, such as *piko*, *arnis*, *tumbang preso*, *patintero*, and *tagu-taguan*, have been part of the traditional life of Filipino communities. Even before the introduction of modern and organized sports, these activities were commonly played by children and youth using locally available materials.

In recent years, however, the practice of indigenous sports and games has steadily declined. The growing use of digital technology, changes in lifestyle, and the increasing emphasis on commercial sports have displaced traditional indigenous sports and games. Existing efforts to preserve indigenous games have often been limited to

occasional school activities or cultural events,¹ resulting in short-term implementation that is insufficient to ensure their continuity.

The preservation of indigenous sports and games is therefore a matter of public interest. These traditional activities form part of the country's intangible cultural heritage and contribute to the continuity of indigenous cultures and community life. The State is mandated to recognize and promote the rights of indigenous cultural communities², and to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions, including sports and games.³ Moreover, as a State Party to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, the Philippines recognizes the right of indigenous peoples to protect and develop their cultural heritage, including their sports and traditional games.⁴ These obligations call for concrete and coordinated measures.

This bill seeks to address these concerns by establishing a clear framework for the preservation and promotion of indigenous sports and games, including their integration into appropriate educational, cultural, and community-based activities. By institutionalizing State support, the measure aims to ensure that indigenous sports and games remain a living and accessible part of Filipino culture for present and future generations.

In view of these reasons, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought. This bill also serves as the counterpart measure to that filed in the Senate by Senator Loren Legarda.


HON. ANTONIO B. LEGARDA, JR.

¹ Balay-as, Pelila, Busbus, 2023, Boosts and Setbacks of Implementing Indigenous Filipino Games: Perspectives from Curriculum's Stakeholders, accessed at: <https://ijpefs.org/index.php/ijpefs/article/view/518/380>.

² Section 22, Article II, 1987 Constitution.

³ Section 17, Article XIV, 1987 Constitution.

⁴ Article 31, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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20 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
21 *Congress assembled:*
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23 Section 1. **Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Indigenous Games
24 Preservation Act."

25 Section 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to recognize and
26 promote the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of
27 national unity and development. Towards this end, the State shall take the necessary
28 steps to promote the interest of indigenous peoples and preserve the intangible
29 cultural heritage. The State shall take the necessary steps to preserve the indigenous
30 peoples' games which serve as an avenue of self-expression and promote peace,
31 harmony, goodwill, and camaraderie among them.

32 Section 3. **Indigenous Games.** – The term "indigenous games" refer to the
33 traditional sports and games or activities inherent to the different indigenous cultural
34 communities that reflect the rich cultural heritage, traditions, or customs handed down
35 from generation to generation, such as tribal archery, blowpipe, *sibat*, dug-out canoe
36 race, rock balancing, sumpit, *sungka*, *patintero*, *tumbang preso*, *siato*, and other
37 games distinct to the indigenous communities, usually accompanied by indigenous

1 materials in observance of their rituals, celebration of cultural festivals, expression of
2 socialization, entertainment, and competition.

3 The determination and validation of indigenous games for purposes of this Act shall
4 be undertaken by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), in
5 consultation with the concerned indigenous cultural communities.

6 Section 4. ***Annual Regional and National Indigenous Games.*** – The Philippine
7 Sports Commission (PSC), in coordination with the Philippine Olympic Committee
8 (POC), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the local
9 government units (LGUs), shall conduct annual regional and national indigenous sports
10 competitions.

11 The host LGU, in consultation with the concerned indigenous cultural communities,
12 shall have the prerogative to choose which sports shall be included in the regional and
13 national indigenous sports competitions.

14 Section 5. ***Other Means of Preserving the Indigenous Games.*** – The NCIP and
15 the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the National Commission
16 on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), in coordination with the Department of Education
17 (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Philippine Information
18 Agency (PIA), shall initiate measures to preserve indigenous games in the country,
19 such as the inclusion of games as part of the curriculum in the basic and higher
20 education system of schools, the production of documentary or other similar means,
21 and the conduct of regular demonstration of such games in the Palarong Pambansa,
22 and in other national sports events and appropriate school activities.

23 The NCIP and NCCA shall likewise conduct research on the various sports and games
24 traditionally played by different indigenous groups, in consultation with the concerned
25 indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples, to ensure their preservation
26 and development.

27 Section 6. ***Appropriation.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
28 this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the PSC, NCIP, NCCA
29 and DepEd . Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued
30 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

1 Section 7. **Monitoring and Reporting.** – The PSC shall establish a Monitoring and
2 Reporting Framework for the implementation of this Act, in coordination with the NCIP,
3 NCCA and indigenous people representatives. An annual report on the implementation
4 of this Act shall be submitted to Congress, including the number of indigenous games
5 documented and preserved, competitions held, and indigenous communities
6 consulted.

7 Section 8. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The PSC, NCCA, NCIP and
8 DepEd, as the lead agencies, in coordination with CHED, POC, and PIA shall
9 promulgate the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within
10 sixty (60) days after its effectivity.

11 Section 9. **Separability Clause.** – Any portion or provision of this Act that may be
12 declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or
13 provisions hereof as such remaining provisions can still subsist and be given effect.

14 Section 10. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
15 letters of instruction, proclamations, or administrative orders, rules or regulations or
16 parts thereof that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed
17 or modified accordingly.

18 Section 11. **Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
19 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,