

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**TOAST REMARKS OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE STATE BANQUET IN HONOR OF
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA RAM NATH KOVIND**

[Delivered at the Rizal Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 18 October 2019]

His Excellency Ram Nath Kovind; Ms. Savita Kovind; House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano and the other members of the House of the Representatives; His Excellency Gabriele Giordano Caccia, Dean of the diplomatic corps; Excellencies of the diplomatic corps; honorable members of the Senate; ladies and gentlemen.

Good evening. *Namaste*.

Two years ago, I had the honor of first meeting President Kovind during my visit to India in the company of my fellow ASEAN Leaders.

Tonight, it is my pleasure to return the hospitality [to] Your Excellency and Mrs. Kovind as the most honored guests of our Republic and the Filipino nation.

We have common challenges to face. And the Philippines and India have a long history of contacts and friendship.

Long before the Europeans appeared over the horizons, our ancestors [had] had dealings with yours, mediated by the vast empires of [the] Majapahit [and] Srivijaya.

Indian blood runs in the veins [of] over a million of our countrymen. Words of Sanskrit origin fill our lexicon. And the Indian influence persists in our arts and, perhaps, even in our [world view].

[Your] Excellency's visit celebrates these deep-rooted bonds [at a] most auspicious time: the 70th Anniversary of the formal diplomatic relations between the Philippines and India.

Indeed, seven decades [on], our [amity] and partnership remain strong and enduring with [infinite] possibilities for further growth and expansion.

From the economic to the political-security spheres, [the] destinies of our two nations are intimately linked. For we belong to one region immutably connected by the vast expanse of the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The Philippines holds India in high regard being the world's largest democracy and one of the fastest growing economies today.

As it continues [its] rise, India has shown fealty [to] international law and adherence to international commitments. It is [a] responsible and also a respective member of the international community.

Excellency, your country has shown to us that nation-building means embracing diversity and staying true to one's heritage, while welcoming change and adapting [to] the realities of the present.

Two years ago, Your Excellency stated that India has "*achieved a lot as a nation, but the effort to do more, to do better and to do faster should be relentless*".

The same kind of resolve, I believe, holds true while advancing bilateral ties. Today, we have strengthened our commitment to see a more vibrant and multi-faceted ties between our countries and peoples.

I have no doubt that we will succeed in this noble endeavor.

Allow me, Excellency, to take this occasion to thank you, a great nation for your unswerving support to my country. Whether it be in rebuilding Marawi or international arena [when] our sovereignty is challenged --- India was with the Philippines.

So from a [grateful] nation, let me say, "*Danyavad. Thank you, India.*"

On this note, may I propose a toast:

To the continued good health and success of President Kovind,

To the continued prosperity of the Filipino and Indian nations,

To the enduring friendship between the Philippines and India.

Mabuhay to Filipino-India relationship. To your success, Your Excellency.

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