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PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE DOJ RULES ON CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION**
[Delivered at Kalayaan Hall, Malacañan Palace | 10 July 2024]

Thank you, Chief Luc, the Executive Secretary; of course, the lead actor in achieving this change in our procedures, the Justice Secretary, Justice Secretary Boying Remulla; the NBI Director Jaime Santiago, who I watch almost every day on television now [laughter]; Prosecutor General Benedicto Malcontento; and all my fellow workers in government; ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

We mark today one of the significant reforms in our country's justice system.

It's no secret that our [court] dockets have been heavily burdened with the volume of cases, causing delays in the administration of justice.

Today, we address this problem by introducing reforms that are a product of the strong collaboration between the Executive and the Judiciary.

With the signing of the 2024 Department of Justice-National Prosecution Service or DOJ-NPS Rules on Preliminary Investigations and Inquest Proceedings, we are moving towards our shared goal of a more robust and responsive legal system.

The 2024 DOJ-NPS Rules are transformative as they institutionalize the executive and inquisitorial nature of preliminary [investigations], bringing them in line with historical and legal precedents that reinforce the authority of the Department of Justice.

Through this, all prosecutors are now empowered to take the lead in criminal investigations, ensuring that there is proper and sufficient case build-up before filing in court.

These new rules and procedures ensure fairness and due process as we protect all of our citizens, including the accused, and hold the guilty accountable.

The new rules [elevated] the quantum of evidence from probable cause to *prima facie* evidence with a reasonable certainty of conviction. This means that only strong cases are brought to trial, reducing frivolous suits and malicious prosecution that clog our courts.

Veering away from the procedures that were more rigid, the new procedure now allows the submission of additional documents, enabling a more comprehensive examination of the case.

The inquest proceedings also improved, providing a detailed process for handling warrantless arrests, including the filing of referral letters, submission of required evidence, provisional determination of arrest validity, and submission of lacking evidence. This ensures that the rights of the accused are protected, even in urgent situations.

The 2024 DOJ-NPS rules also make use of our technology. Adopting e-filings and virtual hearings are a testament to our commitment to digitalize government services throughout the country.

And through this, we aim to make our justice system more efficient by streamlining processes, cutting down delays, [and] making justice more accessible to everyone.

At the crux of these reforms is instilling accountability of the prosecutors to the public. The period set in resolving preliminary investigation complaints will guarantee that cases will be evaluated and resolved within a reasonable time.

Our prosecutors are vital to the administration of justice. Given this role, we recognize the threats that you face in this line of duty.

I direct the DOJ and the PNP to recommend ways to help ensure the safety and protection of our prosecutors.

I want to take this moment to acknowledge the efforts of everyone who has worked tirelessly to make this historic day possible. We thank the Supreme Court for granting the executive branch the authority to craft the rules on criminal investigation.

I am reliably informed by the Secretary, Secretary Remulla that this has been nine and a half years in the making.

And in that time, each of you has played a crucial role in making this a reality, whether through meticulous legal research, drafting, [or] advocating for these much-needed reforms.

To our prosecutors, you have your work now cut out for you. You are not just gatekeepers but also the shepherds of the highest integrity, ethics, and impartiality in the administration of justice.

We are all stepping into a new era of law enforcement and prosecution, and knowing that—from here onwards—every case we handle, every decision we make, [and] every reform we champion will impact the lives of every single Filipino and it will shape the future of our country.

So, guided by the principles of justice and our unwavering belief in the rule of law, let us strive to bring a better and a just future for our people and our nation.

Mabuhay kayo, DOJ-NPS! *[applause]*

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! *[applause]*

Maraming salamat at magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat.

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