

Philippine Sports Commission To Lead Implementation Of Arnis Law | AHN

By marppio



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Manila, Philippines (AHN) – The Philippine Sports Commission will get P5 million to lead the implementation of a law declaring the martial art of arnis, a form of stick fighting, the national sport.

President Gloria Macapagal signed into law earlier this month Republic Act 9850 sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Miguel Zubiri and Rep. Pryde Henry Teves. The legislation requires the Commission to work with the Department of Education in increasing awareness about the sport. The Education Department will create a physical education course to teach arnis to students.

The law declaring arnis the national sport would bring recognition to a popular pastime outside the Philippines that was also used by Filipinos to fight invaders during the pre-Spanish period. The measure will be promulgated by inscribing the symbol of arnis into the seal of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Arnis adds to the four official national symbols, none of which, contrary to popular belief, include a national sport or national hero. Sipa, a traditional sport similar to sepak takraw that involves kicking a rattan football, has been called the official sport of the nation despite no law declaring it so.

Apart from the national anthem, flag, official seal, coat-of-arms, and motto prescribed by the Flag and Heraldic Code of the Philippines, the nation only has four other official symbols: the sampaguita as the national flower, the nara as the national tree, the Philippine Eagle as the national bird and the Philippine Pearl as the national gem.

And while Jose Rizal is listed in a number of reference materials and even taught in some schools as the national hero, there is in fact no law or proclamation declaring anyone as such, according to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

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