


20 OCT -7 P3:37

SENATE

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P.S. RES. No. 537



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Introduced by **SENATOR RONALD "BATO" DELA ROSA**

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED SERIES OF KILLINGS AND PROLIFERATION OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING OPERATIONS AND DRUG TRADE IN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS ORIENTAL, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF RECOMMENDING MEASURES THAT WILL PROTECT PUBLIC WELFARE AND MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY**

WHEREAS, under *Article II, Section 5 of the 1987 Constitution*, it is the declared policy of the State that "the maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy."

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, vested every local government unit the authority to exercise powers necessary, appropriate, or incidental for its efficient and effective governance, and those which are essential to the promotion of the general welfare including the maintenance of peace and order, and preserving the comfort and convenience of their inhabitants.

WHEREAS, on August 27, 2019, the Senate Committee on Public Order conducted a hearing on the Proposed Senate Resolution No. 47 and 65 authored by Senators Risa Hontiveros and Leila De Lima, respectively. The said resolutions seek to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the spate of killing in Negros Island.

WHEREAS, Committee Report No. 33 reported out the abovementioned Senate Resolutions and was submitted to Senate Plenary for adoption. One of the recommendations under the Committee Report is to deploy additional forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to better address the security needs of the people of Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental.

WHEREAS, during the implementation of community quarantine due to COVID-19 pandemic, there were series of reports of killing incidents, rampant illegal gambling activities and continued drug trade in the province of Negros Oriental.

WHEREAS, Provincial Police Director Col. Julian Entoma asserted that even with the drop of crime rate in the province because of the imposition of the enhance community quarantine, illegal drug trade continued.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the Philippine National Police (PNP) Negros Oriental boosts its anti-illegal gambling operations due to reports that the cash subsidy from the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) was being used in illegal gambling.<sup>2</sup> The operations of the PNP includes illegal cockfighting raids and crackdown on cara y cruz, "suertres"/jueteng.<sup>3</sup>

WHEREAS, it will be recalled that on February 2, 2017, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Executive Order No. 13, s.2017 which orders the PNP, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Information and Communications (DICT) to intensify the government's fight against illegal gambling.

WHEREAS, on September 24, 2020, this representation received a letter from Mayor Janice Degamo of Pamplona, Negros Oriental, alleging that the increasing number of murder and drug cases and illegal gambling activities in the province of Negros Oriental are linked to Rep. Arnolfo A. Teves, Jr. It was further alleged that Rep. Teves is the "operator" of the illegal gambling and other related activities, which includes

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1099847>

<sup>2</sup> <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1039486>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1086492>

online cockfighting, in Negros Oriental. The author of the letter claimed that some members of the PNP were involved in the illegal activities and receiving *payola* from Rep. Teves.

WHEREAS, more than the illegal gambling and illegal drugs, Mayor Degamo in her letter associated the deaths of Virgelio "Beyok" Diango, Sr., Rex Cornelio Pepino, Bayawan Councilor Alex Diamante Tizon, Dindo Generoso, Board Member Miguel Dungog, Edmund Sestoso, Ann Rose Fe Bernadette Neri, Brgy. Capt. Samuel Ragay and Brgy. Capt. Harry Gonzales to Rep. Teves.

WHEREAS, one of the alleged architect of the criminal activities in the Negros Island is a member of the House of Representative, our co-equal legislative branch.

WHEREAS, there is a time-honored inter-parliamentary courtesy among lawmakers. However, pursuant to the declared principle under the Constitution, it is the prime duty of the government to serve and protect the people. Based on news report and allegations of the incumbent local elective officials of the Negros Oriental province, there is a grave and pressing grounds to conduct an investigation to ensure the maintenance of peace and order in the province.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported series of killings and proliferation of illegal gambling operations and drug trade in the province of Negros Oriental, with the end in view of recommending measures that will protect public welfare and maintain peace and order in the country.

Adopted,

  
**RONALD "BATO" DELA ROSA**