

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

P. S. Res. No. 392

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE/S TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF URGENT REMEDIAL LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED POWER OUTAGE AND TECHNICAL ISSUES IN THE NINYO AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NAIA) ON JANUARY 1, 2023 WHICH RESULTED IN THE CANCELLATION OF HUNDREDS OF FLIGHTS, INCONVENIENCE OF THOUSANDS OF PASSENGERS, AND THE SHUTDOWN OF PHILIPPINE AIRSPACE, THEREBY FURTHER ADVERSELY IMPACTING THE IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY AS A TOURISM DESTINATION, AND HURTING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

1 WHEREAS, January 1, 2023, the supposedly joyous celebration of New Year's
2 Day, was marred with chaos, inconvenience and traumatic experience for many
3 foreign and local airline passengers following the cancellation of more than 300
4 flights at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), the Philippines' main
5 international gateway;

6 WHEREAS, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) reported that
7 there was a "technical issue" at the Air Traffic Management Center (ATMC). In a
8 statement, CAAP said that "the safety of the passenger is the priority of the agency
9 and it is better to secure the aircrafts on the ground to avoid any airborne accident";

10 WHEREAS, CAAP explained that "the air traffic management system suffered
11 a power outage, and although there was a backup supply, it failed to supply enough
12 power for the system".¹ However, Meralco clarified that it did not monitor any power
13 outage;

¹ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/business/01/01/23/naia-flights-put-on-hold-in-new-years-day-crisis>

1 WHEREAS, the incident caused the cancellation, diversion and delay of
2 hundreds of inbound and outbound flights to and from NAIA. For some hours, there
3 were no movements in the Philippine airspace. The problem in the country's premier
4 airport also caused disruption of flight schedules and congestion in other regional
5 domestic and international airports throughout the Philippines;

6 WHEREAS, some 56,000 to 65,000 passengers who were looking forward to a
7 cheerful celebration of the holiday season were gravely inconvenienced and were
8 plunged into confusion and exasperation. Meanwhile, at least 3,000 overseas Filipino
9 workers (OFWs) were affected by the New Year aviation crisis, with some leaving
10 their chances of being employed abroad in limbo;

11 WHEREAS, the issue which was detected at around 10:00 am of even date,
12 lasted up to 4:00 pm when the air navigation was "partially restored" allowing
13 limited flight operations, and until 8:00 pm when the traffic management system
14 was "fully restored". Nonetheless, it would still take around 72 hours before the
15 airport operations can go back to normal;

16 WHEREAS, the incident aggravates the already unpleasant image of the NAIA,
17 following the same being regularly labelled as one of the "worst" and "most
18 stressful" airports in the world, thereby necessitating remedial legislation and urgent
19 action from the authorities, to save it from becoming a national disgrace or
20 *pambansang kahihyan*;

21 WHEREAS, the latest mess becomes yet another stumbling block for the
22 recovery and revitalization of the tourism industry, which is among the most severely
23 affected sectors during the onslaught of the novel Coronavirus pandemic;

24 WHEREAS, the ten-hour technical glitch spells massive losses for the national
25 economy, not limited to the immediate aftermath of the fiasco, but hurts the overall
26 image of the country as a viable tourism destination, commercial and investment
27 hub;

28 WHEREAS, the country's main gateway being paralyzed by "technical issues"
29 and "power outage" highlights the need for the installation of more sophisticated
30 technologies, setting up of effective backup mechanisms, and the hiring of
31 competent manpower and experts to man them, to ensure uninterrupted airport

1 operations and to defend it against cybersecurity attacks, sabotage, disasters, and
2 other threats;

3 WHEREAS, there is a need to properly and comprehensively identify the
4 needed infrastructure and government- and/or private sector support to modernize
5 and fully equip the country's main gateway at the soonest possible time to ensure
6 the highest quality of service for all its users and transform it as one of the world's
7 best;

8 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate,
9 to direct the appropriate Senate Committee/s to conduct an inquiry, in aid of urgent
10 remedial legislation, on the reported power outage and technical issues in the Ninoy
11 Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on January 1, 2023 which resulted in the
12 cancellation of hundreds of flights, inconvenience of thousands of passengers, and
13 the shutdown of Philippine airspace, thereby further adversely impacting the image
14 of the country as a tourism destination, and hurting the national economy.

Adopted,


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA