

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 443 RECEIVED BY: [Signature]

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, ON THE FLUVIAL PARADE TRAGEDY IN SOUTHERN LEYTE

WHEREAS, last 15 January 2006 at around 10:00 a.m., the fluvial parade in honor of the feast of the Holy Child Jesus claimed the lives of 20 people who drowned after the MB Sun Jay capsized in the bay at San Ricardo, Panaon Island, Southern Leyte;

WHEREAS, the MB Sun Jay was leading 15 small pump boats in the procession and carried an estimated 100 people including the Drums and Bugle Corps of the San Ricardo Elementary School; it was designed to carry a maximum of only 70 people;

WHEREAS, according to boat operator Efren Sandiesa, most of the passengers occupied only the right side of the pump boat despite his warning to occupy both sides of the vessel; after sailing about 200 meters from the port, the vessel made a turn to the left and some passengers transferred to the left side causing it to tilt and then overturn;

WHEREAS, according to San Ricardo police chief SPO4 Benjamin Alterado, the boat tilted easily because the cargo area located at the lower portion of the pump boat was empty and there was nothing to pull it down;

WHEREAS, members of the Southern Leyte Emergency Rescue Team, the Pintuyan and San Ricardo police and the Philippine Air Force rushed to the site in order to rescue the passengers;

WHEREAS, the police report revealed that the mishap was allegedly due to the overloading of passengers and the failure of the boat operator to coordinate with the Coast Guard before sailing;

WHEREAS, there was no representative from the organizer of the fluvial parade to marshal the passengers aboard the vessel;

WHEREAS, boat accidents are common in the country because many ferries used in inter-island travel are old and poorly maintained and there is weak enforcement of sea safety regulations;

WHEREAS, the government has the duty to strictly enforce the rules and maritime regulations which govern fluvial processions involving huge masses of people;

WHEREFORE, be it resolved that the proper Senate committee shall conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the fluvial parade tragedy in Southern Leyte.

Approved,

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
agf