

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 387

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED LACK OF PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES IN IDENTIFYING DEAD BODIES LEFT IN THE WAKE OF TYPHOON YOLANDA

WHEREAS, the *Manila Bulletin*, in its 18 November 2013 issue, reported that, as of press time, only three pathologists worked on identifying the dead bodies collected in Tacloban, Leyte from the wake of Typhoon Yolanda (international code name Haiyan), estimated to have left 3,900 people dead and four million displaced, when the storm hit the country on 8 November 2013;

WHEREAS, it was reported that it was only on the tenth day after the disaster that the meticulous process of identifying the corpses on the mass grave of bodies collected from the debris of Tacloban started, and that there were 300 bodies lined up for processing as of press time;

WHEREAS, the three pathologists, identified to be from the University of the Philippines, were reportedly working with three morticians to identify bodies;

WHEREAS, the pathologists reportedly worked at a rate of 15 bodies-an-hour since sunrise with no shelter from the sun;

WHEREAS, according to the article, the pathologists said that identifying all victims would be impossible without more staff and facilities;

WHEREAS, the pathologist interviewed for the article said that their operations is very difficult given the resources they have, and they were hoping to start a system of examining and identifying bodies, and not just dump the bodies in a common grave;

WHEREAS, Mayor Alfred Romualdez of Tacloban reportedly said that the city lacked the facilities and expertise for responses like identification of bodies, and admitted that it is a process not studied or thought of despite strong typhoons hitting Eastern Visayas every year;

WHEREAS, as part of honing the country's disaster preparedness and response systems from the experience of Typhoon Yolanda, Congress should also ensure that there would be enough personnel and facilities, especially in disaster-prone areas, to handle identification the bodies of the departed in order for the country and loved ones to properly honor their dead;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate to direct the proper Senate committee, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the reported lack of personnel and facilities in identifying dead bodies left in the wake of Typhoon Yolanda.

Adopted,

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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