

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



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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 847

RECEIVED BY:

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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 ILLEGAL LOGGING IN THE PROTECTED  
PALAUI ISLAND IN CAGAYAN PROVINCE

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16 states: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, the Inquirer.net, in article dated 10 August 2014, reported that, as confirmed by environment officials, illegal logging is taking its toll on the protected Palaui island in Santa Ana town in Cagayan province, following the discovery of about 10,000 board feet of felled hardwood trees deep in the island's forests;

WHEREAS, Benjamin Tumaliuan, chair of the Protected Area Management Board in Cagayan Valley and also Cagayan Valley regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), reportedly said a task force composed of representatives of the DENR, the Philippine Navy, the Philippine National Police, the Philippine Coast Guard and the Santa Ana government has started an investigation of the logging operations;

WHEREAS, He added that the probe hit a snag after officials allegedly bickered over the handling of the seized logs and began blaming each other for the logging activities on Palaui, a 2,439-hectare island, which was declared a terrestrial and marine protected area under Proclamation No. 447 issued on Aug. 16, 1994;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that Navy men found in late July a still undetermined volume of felled narra (*Pterocarpus indicus*) and kamagong (*Diospyros blancoi*) trees in a part of the forest in the sub-village of Aguab;

WHEREAS, Sources said the investigating team found 30 cut narra and kamagong trees, with an estimated volume of 10,000 board feet, or a haul big enough to fill two 18-wheel trucks;

WHEREAS, the report said, local politicians blamed Santa Ana Mayor Darwin Tobias and DENR officials for tolerating illegal logging and maneuvering the sale of the confiscated forest products to a favored local trader of construction materials;

WHEREAS, Mayor Tobias in a telephone interview said that people on the island know who are behind the illegal logging activities, but they are afraid to speak up because they know the perpetrators have strong backing but he did not identify the alleged loggers;

WHEREAS, Tobias said a portion of the total volume of felled trees, were supposed to have been sold to recoup expenses for cutting, retrieval, hauling and transporting the logs from the island to the DENR office in mainland Santa Ana;

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the legislature to review steps taken by concerned government agencies in increasing the awareness of the public on the ill effects of illegal logging;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to create stricter guidelines, tougher sanctions and review existing laws with regard to illegal logging in order to prevent recurrence of flooding like what happened in Quezon years ago and to deter further erosion and undue exploitation of our environment;

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 illegal logging in the protected Palaui Island, Sta. Ana in Cagayan Province.

Adopted,

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MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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