

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 1294

Introduced by Senator MARK A. VILLAR

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE UNRESTRICTED TRADE OF ROGUE COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES, WITH THE END VIEW OF STRENGTHENING EXISTING REGULATIONS TO PREVENT FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

1 **WHEREAS**, no less than the Constitution recognizes the vital role of
2 communication and information in nation-building, and this State policy is further
3 enforced through laws such as Republic Act No. 10175 or the "Cybercrime Prevention
4 Act of 2012", Republic Act No. 10173 or the "Data Privacy Act of 2012", and Republic
5 Act No. 11934 or the "SIM Registration Act";

6 **WHEREAS**, these measures, along with Republic Act No. 12010 or the "Anti-
7 Financial Account Scamming Act (AFASA)," are among several initiatives designed to
8 address the alarming increase in fraudulent activities that have emerged through the
9 use of technology;

10 **WHEREAS**, on 21 January 2025, a joint operation by the Cybercrime
11 Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC), Philippine National Police – Anti-
12 Cybercrime Group (PNP-ACG), Bureau of Immigration (BI), and National
13 Telecommunications Commission (NTC) resulted in the arrest of Malaysian national
14 Thiang Choon Wee for supplying International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI)
15 catchers;

1 **WHEREAS**, the recent arrest of Thiang Choon Wee, who is accused of leading
2 a syndicate involved in supplying IMSI catchers, came after the discovery of his
3 advertisement for these devices and SMS Blaster Machines (Octopus 5G) on a
4 Facebook page titled "SMS Machine Broadcast Asia" last October 2024;

5 **WHEREAS**, IMSI catchers—also known as rogue or fake cell towers,
6 "stingrays," cell site simulators, or drop boxes—are devices used to mimic legitimate
7 cell towers, which enables the interception of mobile phone communications by
8 tracking locations and intercepting calls, messages, and other data;

9 **WHEREAS**, officials noted that the IMSI catchers retrieved from Thiang Choon
10 Wee were compact enough to fit inside backpacks, making them easy to deploy and
11 harder to detect;

12 **WHEREAS**, the proliferation of these devices is directly linked to modern scams
13 such as "smishing," which involves text messages impersonating legitimate financial
14 institutions to trick recipients into providing sensitive financial information such as
15 account numbers and passwords, resulting in reported losses of about ₱460 Billion to
16 Filipinos;

17 **WHEREAS**, while the arrest represents a crucial step in curbing the root causes
18 of scam-related activities, it highlights the need to review existing laws, the sufficiency
19 of regulations on rogue technologies, and enhancement of law enforcement's ability
20 to detect and monitor these illicit activities devices;

21 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the
22 appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the
23 unrestricted trade of rogue communication technologies, with the end view of
24 strengthening existing regulations to prevent fraudulent activities in the Philippines.

Adopted,


MARK A. VILLAR