

Monthly News – Philippines

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Foreign columnist pokes fun at RP aviation after EU ban



According to Wikipedia, Vittachi is a Ceylonese journalist and author based in Hong Kong. His columns are published daily, weekly in a variety of newspapers in Asia as well as on his Web site. He is best known for the comedy-crime novel series *The Feng Shui Detective*, which published in many languages around the world.

The portion of the *Reader's Digest* column of Nury Vittachi poking fun at Philippine aviation industry.GMANews.TV In his *Reader's Digest* article titled

"I'd rather be chained," Vittachi told of an "enterprising captain" aboard an early morning flight over the Philippines who randomly pressed an unmarked button on the flight deck.

When security forces ordered the pilot to dump 50,000 kilos of fuel and land at a remote airstrip, everything was supposedly forgiven when the pilot explained there was no hijacking. "(The) pilot explained that there were no hijackers – he had just pressed a button randomly. No doubt everyone had a laugh and went back to work," Vittachi's article read. Vittachi also said that when the pilot's action supposedly triggered a silent alarm to the nearest Philippine airport, "control tower staff snapped into action, dropping their adobo breakfasts." His article even poked fun at the name of Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) deputy chief for security Angel Atutubo. "Only in the Philippines can tough guys bristling with guns have names like 'Angel,' 'Innocent' and 'Baby,'" he said.

Vittachi's article came out only a week after the European Union imposed an operating ban on Philippine air carriers that took effect April 1. The EU ban followed an audit of the Philippines carried out by the International Civil Aviation Organization in October 2009, after Philippine regulatory authorities could not verify that these airlines comply with international safety standards.As a result of the ban, the United Kingdom has advised its nationals to avoid flying Philippine carriers in visiting the Philippines. - KBK, GMANews.TV