

QC backs DILG drive against local corruption

By Rio N. Araja

QUEZON City Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte on Wednesday backed the Department of the Interior and Local Government's nationwide drive to combat corruption by educating citizens to guard against corrupt practices at the local level.

"Since the DILG under Secretary Eduardo Año has highlighted that P30 billion is being lost every year to corruption in the local government sector and that most cases filed at the [Office of the] Ombudsman are at the local government unit level, we really need to work on changing the culture of corruption in our city," Belmonte said.

DILG's "Bantay Korapsyon" drive is a pilot program to promote transparency and good governance to fight corruption among local government officials and staff.

"One of the biggest social sins is corruption because you are stealing from the people, and that's why we must all be vigilant when we see signs of corruption," Belmonte said.

She called on the city's residents to watch out for developments on infrastructure especially for frequent road repairs, overpricing of purchased items, and "ghost" employees and projects.

"It is high time that we are aware. We have to be critical and see what they really did," Belmonte said.

"As taxpayers, we have to see if the projects are worth the money. We need to ask questions of our leaders and public servants," she added.

The vice mayor said the 37-member city council is working out to pass the first local Freedom of Information Ordinance in the country for greater transparency.