

Drug-cleared barangays in Quezon City now at 30

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by **Rio N. Araja**

The Quezon City government on Tuesday said five more barangays have already been declared drug-cleared.

Vice Mayor **Joy Belmonte** said the five villages brought the city's total to 30 drug-free barangays. As of March, District 3's barangays Dioquino Zobel, Escopa I, Camp Aguinaldo, Blue Ridge B and Ugong Norte were declared drug-cleared by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Last December, there were only 25 drug-free villages, said the vice mayor, who also heads the city's anti-drug abuse council.

She said such was the result of continuous drug clearing operations and government intervention programs for the surrenderers. "We have been enhancing our efforts to combat illegal drugs in our city and the number added to our drug-cleared barangays is the result of that. The next step for these barangays is to help them become drug-resistant so that they can maintain their being drug-cleared," Belmonte said.

Some of the parameters of the Dangerous Drugs Board to declare a drug-clear barangay included the non-availability of drug supply, absence of drug transit, absence of clandestine laboratory and warehouse, absence of drug dens and drug pushers, and active involvement of the government.