

# MMDA TO APPEAL QC COURT RULING VS PROVINCIAL BUS BAN ON EDSA

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Transport regulators will appeal a **Quezon City Regional Trial Court (RTC)** decision ordering them to stop the implementation of the highly controversial provincial bus ban on Edsa, while still eyeing whether they could proceed with the scheduled Aug. 7 dry run for the shelved proposal.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Edsa traffic chief Bong Nebrija said they would still consult with the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) on whether the preliminary injunction issued by **Branch 223** Judge Caridad Walse-Lutero also covered the pilot test set for next week.

In her decision, Lutero found that there was no sufficient basis to justify the proposed bus ban, which would prohibit provincial buses from coming to Metro Manila via Edsa. The dry run would still require provincial buses to end their trips at the designated interim bus terminals in Valenzuela and Sta. Rosa as they should if the actual ban had prevailed amid this legal hurdle.

It was scheduled shortly after the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) issued in July Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 2019-31, which amended both provincial and city buses' routes.

The MMDA has been planning the dry run for over a year—haggling with the interim terminals to accommodate the influx of buses, convincing the operators of the ban's benefits, wrangling out the MC with the LTFRB—until the court ordered them to temporarily stop its rollout, Nebrija said.

It's why they're eager to at least pilot-test the policy, especially since the MMDA is under a five-month deadline to drastically reduce travel time along Edsa.

"We're trying to do everything we can," Nebrija said. "We're worried that if we don't at least pilot-test the policy, it would ruin our pacing [to meet] President Duterte's December deadline."

The LTFRB, on the other hand, said they would appeal the decision within the 15-day prescribed period by the court.

The preliminary injunction would only take effect once the plaintiffs—bus operators affected by the policy—pay P1,000,000 in bond to the court.