

QC court stops prov'l bus ban

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A Quezon City Regional Trial Court has ordered transport regulators to stop the implementation of the provincial bus ban.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board yesterday said it will seek help from the State legal counsel in appealing the decision. "The LTFRB will comply with the injunction order, however, we will ask the Office of the Solicitor General to seek the court to reconsider its order," the LTFRB said.

The Quezon City RTC Branch 223 issued a writ of preliminary injunction halting the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the LTFRB from implementing the provincial bus ban on EDSA. The court also imposed a bond of ₱1 million on the petitioners, composed of at least 18 transport groups and provincial bus lines.

The injunction effectively stopped the implementation of LTFRB Memorandum Circular 2019001 which requires all provincial buses to end their routes at any integrated terminal exchange, prohibiting them from traversing or passing through EDSA, as well as the MMDA Regulation No. 19002 which revokes the issuance of business permits to all public utility vehicle terminals and operators along the major road.

The court order stemmed from an appeal filed by provincial bus transport groups who argued that the ban would severely affect their livelihood.

In a 25-page order dated July 31, Quezon City RTC Branch 223 Presiding Judge Caridad WalseLutero said the court found that the memos issued by the two agencies affect the property rights of transport groups and bus companies and have "far-reaching effects" not only to their businesses but also to their employees and other sectors.

"While as a rule, the right to income or earning does not prevail over public welfare, in this case, the court has not yet been presented with a clear basis or sufficient justification for the issuances," it said.

It also noted the lack of meetings and consultations between the two government agencies and the stakeholders which involved the petitioners.