

Belmonte backs renaming ecopark after Lopez

The Philippine Star · 6 Sep 2019 · 12 · – Janvic Mateo

Quezon City Mayor **Joy Belmonte** has expressed support for proposals seeking to rename the La Mesa Ecopark after the late environment secretary and green advocate Gina Lopez.

“We support the move of our city council to rename the La Mesa Ecopark after the late Gina Lopez. Her legacy deserves to live on in that park,” she said in a statement on Wednesday.

“She will always be one of my greatest role models of a crusader who stopped at nothing to see her dreams for a better Philippines come to fruition,” she added.

Belmonte earlier paid tribute to Lopez, who passed away on Aug. 19 at the age of 65.

“We worked with her on cleaning up our waterways and in deputizing environmental warriors in our city,” she said, citing their plan to rehabilitate the Salam Compound in Barangay Culiat and transform it into a tourist destination.

“We hoped to provide livelihoods to the women and educational opportunities to the children. Sadly, we never finished the project we started because she was stricken with illness,” she added.

The mayor said she has already requested the city council, led by Vice Mayor **Gian Sotto**, to expedite the proposed resolutions that will rename the public park after the late philanthropist.

Two councilors, **Winston Castelo** and **Candy Medina**, filed separate resolutions seeking to rename the public park as Gina Lopez Ecopark.

Lopez, former chairperson of ABS-CBN’s Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, established Bantay Kalikasan in 1999 as the foundation’s environmental arm to aid victims of natural calamities.

Through the project, she championed the rehabilitation of the 2,700-hectare La Mesa Watershed and the development of the 32-hectare La Mesa Ecopark, which reopened to the public in 2004.