

Do not deal with fixers, QC mayor warns public

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte warned the public on Friday against dealing with fixers to expedite the processing of their tax obligations because measures are now in place to ensure that transactions are done lawfully. She noted that the city government is always alert to prevent fixers from roaming city hall grounds that prey on the hapless taxpayers.

In issuing the warning, Belmonte emphasized that corruption has no place in her administration vowing to impose the most severe sanctions against city hall personnel with links to the fixers. Belmonte also appealed to the public not to deal with fixers. She said tax payments are now made easier with the current measures implemented by her office.

Belmonte said that fixers charge exorbitant fees for their services and in worse scenario, run away with their money without fulfilling the desired results.

Belmonte also lauded the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) for the arrest of an alleged fixer last Wednesday at a fast food restaurant near Quezon City Hall.

"We laud the QCPD for its quick response against the alleged fixer. This should serve as a warning to those who want to prey on unsuspecting victims that illegal acts have no place in our city," said Belmonte.

The QCPD arrested and charged Adelfa Andres after being caught in an entrapment operation following a complaint by Elmer Garcia, operations manager of ARAW Transport Service Cooperative. In his complaint before the QCPD Criminal Investigation and Detention Unit (CIDU), Garcia said he approached a woman who presented herself as "Zenaida Balingit" who claimed that she had a "right connection" with the city's Business Permits and Licensing Department (BPLD).

The suspect then asked Garcia for 25,000 in exchange for the processing of the cooperative's business permit which was actually exempted from local taxes and fees. The CIDU charged Andres with robbery extortion.

BPLD head Margie Santos warned local residents against tapping fixers to process permits and documents at the City Hall.

"Sa ngayon, pinadali na natin ang proseso ng pagkuha ng permit at mga dokumento dahil mayroon na tayong totoong Business One Stop Shop (At present the processing of obtaining permits and documents have been shortened since we already have the Business One Stop Shop)," Santos concluded.