

Crowds seen in stores as QC lifts liquor ban

Tempo · 18 May 2020 · 2 · Chavez) (Chito A.

As crowds formed long queues in retail stores and supermarkets to buy alcoholic beverages following the lifting of liquor ban in Quezon City, concerned citizens have expressed fears of possible second wave of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases due to violations of quarantine protocols.

Retired Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) and college basketball standout Aurelio Jalmasco said another round of COVID-19 cases will most likely sweep Metro Manila and nearby areas “if the trend continues”.

He noticed that the public got a little too excited when the relaxed quarantine protocols were implemented in the said areas.

Jalmasco scolded the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine National Police (PNP) and Mayor Joy Belmonte to impose the needed measures to prevent a second or third wave of COVID-19 cases.

Jalmasco stressed that it seems better if malls remained off limits and liquor ban is imposed in Quezon City anew.

Police Lt. Gen. Guillermo Eleazar, commander of the Joint Task Force on COVID-19, reiterated his call for the public to observe quarantine rules at all times.

He also insisted that quarantine protocols specifically social distancing should be followed even with the relaxed quarantine rules in some areas.

For her part, Belmonte urged the public to report erring establishments violating the restrictions on the sale of liquor to proper authorities.

She assured that these cases will be dealt with accordingly, saying she will ask the Business Permit and Licensing Department (BPLD) to revoke the business permits of unscrupulous variety stores, groceries and supermarkets.

However, many sari-sari stores mostly located in the city’s depressed areas, have been operating without business permits ever since.

Signed by Belmonte, Executive Order (EO) 31 series of 2020 regulates the sale, distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages under the existing Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ).

The EO stipulates that the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages are allowed only from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

In the same order, the consumption of any liquor, wine, beer or other alcoholic or intoxicating beverage shall only be allowed within private residences for the duration of the MECQ.

The liquor ban in Quezon City took effect on March 26, 2020 after Belmonte signed Executive Order 24 Series of 2020 when the city was placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ).