

## QCPD denies permit for SONA protesters

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The **Quezon City Police District (QCPD)** has denied the request of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan to hold a protest along Commonwealth Avenue during the final State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Duterte on July 26.

Elmo San Diego, who heads the city's **department of public order and safety**, said the request for a rally permit was denied due to the threat posed by the more infectious Delta variant of COVID-19.

The city government had endorsed the group's application to the QCPD for decision. Last year, city hall denied requests for rally permits following an advisory from the Department of the Interior and Local Government, which restricted mass gatherings due to the pandemic.

Protesters during last year's SONA instead gathered in freedom parks such as the Liwasang Diokno in front of the Commission on Human Rights office along Commonwealth Avenue. Under the law, demonstrations and meetings may be held at any time in freedom parks without permits from local governments.