

BJMP inaugurates new jail in QC

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The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has a new detention facility in Quezon City. BJMP chief Director Allan Iral yesterday led the inauguration of the Quezon City jail building on a 2.4-hectare lot along Payatas Road in Barangay Payatas.

Iral said the detention facility is a fulfillment of the BJMP's goal of improving the living conditions of inmates.

The new building will ease congestion rate at the Quezon City jail male dormitory in Kamuning by 55 percent.

The jail currently has 3,184 inmates for a congestion rate of 1,066 percent.

"The new facility offers our wards more than enough space to move around and breathe. We can now spare inmates from a lot of physical, mental and emotional problems that arise from overcrowding," Iral said.

He said the detention facility is one of the best designed jails of the BJMP.

"We count on the support of all sectors in ensuring that the living condition of inmates is continuously improved, that self-worth for each of the lives therein be restored, with each one becoming a significant member of society, as prisoners or as free men," Iral said.

BJMP spokesman Chief Insp. Xavier Solda said the jail was completed two years after the Quezon City government and the bureau signed a deed of usufruct of the property for 25 years and renewable for another 25 years.

Meanwhile, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Tuesday welcomed the construction of a three-story school building inside the Manila city jail to give inmates access to education.

CHR spokesperson Jacqueline de Guia said the construction of the facility is in line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which provides that the period of imprisonment should "be used to ensure the reintegration of inmates in the society upon release so that they can lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life."

"Providing inmates an opportunity to learn gives them a sense of purpose. It also contributes to their rehabilitation, growth, and prevents recidivism or relapsing into criminal behavior, which are essential elements of restorative justice," De Guia said.

Prior to the construction of the school building, detainees at the city jail adopted modular learning in their cells.

With the new facility, classes will now be held in an actual school setup, supervised and monitored by officers of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology who have teaching backgrounds.

Manila city jail warden Supt. Elena Rocamora said the learning facility would have a "school-feel" mode that includes proper uniforms and free school supplies for those enrolled.