

QC mayor, ambassadors join Pride March

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte joined several members of the diplomatic corps in celebrating Pride Month with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA+) community in Quezon City yesterday.



Belmonte participated in the Pride March held at the Quezon Memorial Circle as part of the “Alab for Love: Pride PH Festival.”

She was joined by Ambassadors Peter MacArthur of Canada, Michael Parys of Belgium, Juha Pyykko of Finland, Laure Beaufils of the United Kingdom and Michèle Boccoz of France.

Also joining the Pride March were representatives from the European Union and embassies of Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the United States.

Alab for Love was one of several pride activities simultaneously held nationwide in celebration of Pride Month.

It was organized by Pride PH, a network of LGBTQIA+ organizations and individuals in the country, in partnership with the Quezon City government.

In addition to the march, the day-long event included a Pride Expo and featured performances and solidarity speeches from various stakeholders.

Belmonte earlier underscored the city government’s commitment in ensuring the welfare of members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

“We in the local government of Quezon City stand in solidarity with our LGBTQIA+ community as they live their truth. Beyond tolerance, we advocate for acceptance, respect and the promotion of the rights and defense of the inherent dignity of all human beings,” she said, during the flag raising ceremony at the city hall last Monday.

“Quezon City is one of the first local government units to pass a gender fair ordinance to protect LGBTQIA+ rights, even ahead of our national legislature,” Belmonte added, referring to the anti-discrimination bill pending in Congress for 22 years.

She also cited several initiatives launched by the city government for the community, including free HIV testing at sundown clinics, gender education and mechanism for anti-discrimination at the workplace and a safe haven for victims of gender-based abuse.

“Here in Quezon City, we envision a safe, progressive and inclusive community where the individual’s rights are protected,” Belmonte said.

She recalled the commitment ceremony organized by the city government for LGBTQIA+ couples during Valentine’s Day.

“We believe that love is love and love is universal, and everybody has the right to love. Commitment to a single partner, that is not exclusive to heterosexuals. Even LGBTQIA+ couples can be committed to one another,” Belmonte pointed out.

In organizing Alab for Love, she said they hope to deliver a message of hope to members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

“We are constantly inspired by the colors of the rainbow as they deliver the symbolic message of diversity, inclusivity and all-encompassing love. After every storm of hate, we raise our flags of pride, we brandish our true colors and we sing our message of hope,” Belmonte said.

“The local government is one with the LGBTQIA+ in removing the obstacles so that everyone can be fully proud of their true selves,” she added.