- SONA—President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Romualdez Marcos Jr.

6,500 police deployed for SONA

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MORE than 6,500 policemen from the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) and hundreds OF PUBLIC ORDER AND TRAFfiC PERSONNEL WILL be deployed for the State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said on Monday.

The President will deliver his third SONA when Congress starts its session on July 22.

Belmonte reaffirmed her administration's commitment to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly as she gave assurances that pro and anti-administration demonstrators could gather in designated areas provided they secure the proper permits from the city government.

"Quezon City remains a bastion of democracy and free speech as we uphold every Filipino's right to peacefully assemble. However, all rallyists are encouraged to police their ranks and mandated to follow the law," she said.

The mayor said the city's Law and Order Cluster has laid out security and safety measures for the President's SONA.

Complementing the police presence are hundreds of personnel from the city's Department of Public Order and Safety, Task Force Disiplina and communities in the vicinity of the Batasang Pambansa, the traditional SONA venue.

To reduce traffic disruptions on major thoroughfares, the city government will deploy additional traffic enforcers from the local Transport and Traffic Management Department, Belmonte said.

Along with barangay service vehicles, the QCity Bus will offer free rides to commuters affected by the event.

The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office is prepared to respond to any emergencies, with the Emergency Medical Services, Search and Rescue teams, and Barangay Health Emergency Response Teams prepositioned to provide immediate medical support and assistance.

The city is expected to release a traffic rerouting plan in the coming days to guide motorists on areas to avoid and alternate routes on July 22.