

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

QC suspends classes, bans liquor for SONA

To ensure public safety and security during the third State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Marcos, the Quezon city government ordered the suspension of classes in all public and private schools today.

The Philippine Star · 22 Jul 2024 · 7 · By MARK ERNEST VILLEZA

It also imposed a liquor ban from midnight to early evening to reduce the risk of alcohol-related incidents in the city.

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said in a statement that the suspension of classes is for all grade levels and includes the Brigada Eskwela activities in public schools.

“The suspension aims to minimize the impact of road closures and anticipated heavy traffic on residents and students,” Belmonte said.

The Quezon City Police District also announced yesterday the implementation of public security and safety measures, including the nationwide gun ban and the citywide liquor ban. QCPD Director Brig. Gen. Redrico Maranan urged the public to “cooperate and adhere to regulations for the benefit of all.”

He noted that, while the gun ban is in effect, all permits to carry firearms outside residence are suspended. However, members of the Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines and other law enforcement agencies on official duty and in prescribed uniforms are exempted from this rule.

This ban aims to prevent firearm-related incidents and ensure the safety of the public during the SONA.

Number coding remains

Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority announced yesterday that the number coding scheme would not be suspended today.

MMDA acting Chairman Romando Artes explained that suspending the number coding scheme could lead to an increase in vehicles on the roads, causing heavier traffic congestion.

“The number coding scheme will remain in effect to help manage traffic congestion in Metro Manila, especially in areas surrounding the Batasan Complex,” Artes said.

Only SONA guests and those who were given a gate pass would be exempted from the number coding scheme.

Then MMDA previously announced alternative routes and the deployment of approximately 1,300 personnel to manage the expected heavy traffic flow, particularly in Quezon City where the SONA activities will be centered.

Vic Nuñez, MMDA traffic enforcement group director, said they conducted last-minute clearing operations in areas near the Batasan Complex and Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

He added that they would be using a new high-tech mobile command center to monitor the SONA. The command center features the latest surveillance monitoring technology, smart-enabled devices, advanced multi-display video walls system, graphics and display controllers, 360-degree cameras and a satellite system.