THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS SINCE 1900
2 MANILA BULLETIN
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Quezon City to close fun spots employing minors

The Quezon City government warned yesterday that establishments found employing minors for prostitution and those showing obscene or lewd shows will be ordered closed.

Concerned citizens have reported that these minors are working as guest relations officers in KTV bars and nightclubs in Quezon City.

The city officials said they will closely monitor minors working in hazardous and exploitative conditions and those engaged in commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution.

Among the nightclubs and entertainment spots now being monitored are those on Timog Avenue and Quezon Avenue.

Officials said charges will be filed in court against nightclub owners who are found violating Republic Act 9231.

The law provides that establishments found employing minors will be dealt with immediately and closed permanently if the violation of any provision of RA 9231 resulted in the death, insanity or serious physical injury of a child employed in such establishments.

Establishments found employing children for prostitution or obscene or lewd shows will be ordered closed inmmediately. (Raul V. Gonzales)

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LOCAL HISTORY

QC / child labor

The Philippine STAR METRO
FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2006
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QC gets grant for anti-child labor program

By PERSEUS ECHEMINADA

The Quezon City's campaign to promote children's rights has received a big boost after the International Labor Organization (ILO) granted the local government a P1.7-million grant for the implementation of programs to eliminate child labor.

The City Council earlier approved a resolution authorizing Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. to enter into a contract with the ILO and accept the grant for the implementation of anti-child labor programs.

Council Majority Leader Ariel Inton said the program is expected to benefit 300 domestic helpers and at least 50 disadvantaged children in the city. They will be provided with assistance and opportunities to pursue their studies through the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System.

Inton and Councilor Francisco Calalay are the main proponents of the newly approved resolution.

The city government will provide capital assistance to families of rescued children through its Sikap Buhay program, a microfinancing scheme being implemented in the city.

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LOCAL HISTORY

Manila Standard TODAY

MONDAY
March 13, 2006 | A5

QC accepts ILO fund to help stop child labor

THE Quezon City government has authorized Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. to accept a P1.8 million donation from the International Labor Organization in a bid to stop child labor.

The funds will be used to finance the campaign against the employment of children and exploitation of minors as prostitutes, considered to be the worst forms of child labor, according to District 1 Councilor Francisco Calalay and District 4 Councilor Antonio Inton Jr.

The two councilors are the principal authors of the resolution that allowed Belmonte to receive the donation of $35,052 from the labor watchdog.

Calalay identified 300 minors working as domestics and 50 children engaged in the flesh trade. He said these minors will first undergo psychological treatment before being given scholarships, particularly from the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Minors who have fallen prey to child labor will be given the opportunity to complete their elementary and high school studies through ALS.

Calalay added that the city government will also provide financial assistance to families of rescued children through a microfinancing program.

The District 1 councilor is also the principal author of "Kasambahay Ordinance," which is geared toward the protection of the rights of maids.

Kasambahay has earned international recognition and is now considered a model piece of legislation that is being replicated in South Asian nations such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

In a related development, the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) closed down eight clubs employing 16 minors working as guest relations officers in Makati City.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said DoLE-National Capital Region padlocked Michael's Bar Pub House, Ronel's Bar, Aliwan Pub House, Meeting Place Bar, Lovely Rose, Wines and Roses, Edith's Pub House and Jing-Jing Karaoke Bar along A. P. Reyes Street.

At least 16 girls ages between 16 and 17 were rescued.

DoLE's Sagip Batang Manggagawa, in coordination with a US-based nongovernmental organization, the International Justice Mission and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and National Bureau of Investigation conducted a surveillance and rescue operation after receiving information regarding the nightspots' violations.

Sto. Tomas said the bar owners violated Republic Act 9231 for employing and engaging 16 minors in acts detrimental to the morals and normal development of children.

The minors were placed in the custody of DSWD's Marillac Hills for rehabilitation and counseling.

Jaime Pilapil and Rio N. Araja

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LOCAL HISTORY

MANILA BULLETIN
Saturday, March 11, 2006 5
METRO

ILO grants QC ₱1.7 M for its anti-child labor program

The Quezon City government's continuing effort to address the problem of child labor got its needed boost when the 26-member city council approved a resolution authorizing Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. to enter into a contract, with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and accept the amount of US$35,052 for the implementation of the organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor.

The measure, authored by Councilors Ariel Inton Jr. and Francisco A. Calalay Jr., is expected to further strengthen the capacity of the city government to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in QC.

Under the ILO Convention 182 and Philippine Republic Act 9231, children in domestic labor and those engaged in commercial sexual exploitation are considered to be the worst forms of child labor.

If implemented, ILO's action program will directly benefit some 300 domestic workers and 50 children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation, who will be provided with appropriate services, including the necessary psychosocial services and opportunities to pursue education, particularly through the Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Those who decide to pursue education through the alternative learning system will go through the learning process guided by well-trained instructional managers, where rescued children will be given a chance to complete their primary and secondary education.

The ALS is best described as a parallel and equivalent learning system that provides an alternative to the school-based system of learning.

The ILO-IPEC program also covers the masterlisting of children engaged in domestic labor and conduct of rescue operations for children in domestic labor and those caught in commercial sexual exploitation.

Rescue operations shall be intensified by the city government following the formation of a strong alliance with different partner agencies to eliminate the worst of child labor in Quezon City.

The city government is also set to provide capital assistance to the families of the rescued children through the city's micro-financing scheme.

The Industrial Relations Office-Public Employment Service Office (IRO-PESO) will take the lead in implementing the program, in close coordination with members of the Program Implementation Committee (PIC), in particular the city's social services development department.

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LOCAL HISTORY

THE PHILLIPPINE STAR
METRO/PAGE 14
FEBRUARY 6, 2006

The Supreme Court (SC) has upheld a Department of Justice (DOJ) resolution to file homicide and child abuse charges against a teacher in Quezon City.

In a 16-page decision penned by Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, the SC's third division junked the petition for *certiorari* filed by the accused, Laila De Ocampo, who sought to reverse the Sept. 15, 2000 resolution of the DOJ which found probable cause in filing homicide and child abuse charges against her.

The case against De Ocampo stemmed from the complaint filed before the Women's Desk of the Central Police District Station in Batasan Hills that she banged the head of her nine-year-old pupil Ronald Dacarra against the head of his classmate Lorendo Orayan.

Ronald reportedly complained of dizziness upon arriving home. His mother, Magdalena, said there was a woundless contusion in her son's head and he continued vomitting, prompting her to bring the child to a quack doctor and later to the East Avenue Medical Center, where Ronald was found to have a fracture in the head.

Ronald died on Dec. 9, 1999. His death certificate showed that the immediate cause of his death was "cardio pulmonary arrest" and the underlying cause was "cerebral edema."

The autopsy report, obtained by the investigating prosecutor from the Philippine National Police (PNP) crime laboratory in Camp Crame, stated that the cause of death of Ronald was "intracranial hemorrhage secondary to traumatic injury of the head."

In her defense, De Ocampo claimed that there was insufficient evidence against her.

De Ocampo said Ronald's death was caused not by the head-banging incident but by failed medical attention or medical negligence.

In upholding the DOJ's resolution indicting De Ocampo for homicide and child abuse charges, the High Court said De Ocampo's single act of allegedly banging the heads of her pupils had two distinct victims, namely Ronald and Orayan.

"However, the ruling does not diminish in any way the constitutional right of petitioner to be presumed innocent until the contrary is proven" the High Court said.

Meanwhile, Orayan's mother, Erlinda, told the DOJ panel headed by Assistant Quezon City prosecutor Lorna Catris-Chua Cheng during the preliminary investigation on Jan. 6, 2000 that De Ocampo offered her P100,000, which Erlinda accepted, for her and her son's non-appearance at the preliminary investigation.

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LOCAL HISTORY

child labor

Child labor and the local government

Suddenly, we found ourselves riding a jeepney bound to barangay Payatas with the mission to investigate child labor in the dumpsite.

Along the way, we saw what would seem to be the everyday life of the people living nearby and around the dumpsite *(tambakan)*. We reflected on the kind of living they have and discovered the people's means of earning.

Junk shops were flourishing on the streets. Some children could be seen happily tramping on roads, some scavenging on the trashes, some pulling humble pushcarts *(kariton)*, and some selling fishball and squidball.

The driver stopped his jeepney on Tres, one of the three roads stretching to Payatas from Litex, Commonwealth and one of the most densely populated areas in Quezon City. The community was dressed with the traditional banderitas and people were busy preparing for their coming fiesta. On our way to the dumpsite, we passed by the Catholic Chapel, which was under construction. In front of the wooden and cement houses were women selling *"samalamig"*. Two children whom we met in a *sari-sari* store took us to the dumpsite, Mountain B (for *Basura*) as the children called it. The road was slippery and uncemented. We struggled our way to the dumpsite.

It was a mountain, indeed. In front of us was a huge pile of garbage, as big as a mountain. We stayed on a store facing Mountain B and witnessed the passing of garbage trucks coming from the different parts of the National Capital Region, the scavengers on the mountain, the houses on its surface and the working children.

We came to Payatas because of the children. We wanted to know how children live in Payatas. We saw many of them under the burning sun, with their ragtag get-up and haggard faces. They furled patched sacks where they put their collected stuff. Some barefooted children shoveled the muddy road of the garbage mass sliding from the crater of Mountain B. Some were playing and teasing each other.



UP Manila students interview Ricky Comentan, head of the Kamalayan Development Foundation, an organization which conducts rescue campaigns on victims of child labor.

A man eating in the store, named Joel became our informant. According to him, Mountain B was just a compost pit a decade ago, but due to the huge amount of garbage thrown on the site from Quezon City and its metropolitan area, the pit turned into a huge mountain, which to Joel, was a better source of income. We believed him when he said that he used to work three months ago as an accountant in a branch of the Philippine Commercial and Development Bank (PCDP) earning at most P8,000 a month. Hesitant at first, he confided his ownership of a junk-shop on the mountain of garbage. He hinted that he has been earning P1,000 to P3,000 a day or about P10,000 to P30,000 a month from his junkshop. Joel was proud to say that now, life is much easier for him.

The children play a very important role in Joel's business. They collect articles which Joel buys at his marked price. Piece rate and kilo system is the basis of pricing for various articles. Children would commonly get P0.50 per bottle, P7 per kilo of carton, P2.50 for a kilo of junk food plastics, P3.50 for a kilo of plastic cup and P.050 for a kilo of broken glasses *(bubog)*. They would earn as much as P100 to P300 each day, a hundred times less than what Joel earns. The articles that Joel buys are then discharged to the trucks of factories of softdrinks, paper, and junk foods which visit the site everyday. These articles are sold at prices higher than what he pays the children.

The full protection of Filipino children does not depend solely on the laws for children the government enacted but also on the extent of political will every local government unit should uphold.

We observed that most of the scavengers were children ranging from 8 to 15 years old. Joel said they still study. During school days, they would spend half of the day in school and half would be spent in the dumpsite. During summers, their number increases because children from nearby provinces would go to the dumpsite to work. We were convinced because we met a boy from Quezon province who shyly said that he would get back home when classes open.

For the children, scavenging is a voluntary task. Virtually, a help they can offer to augment the family's income in meeting the basic necessities of life. A form of child labor, it might be, but their families need to survive. No work means hunger and starvation.

Protection of children is articulated in various laws and declarations such as the Child and Youth Welfare Code (PD603), Special Protection on Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act (RA7610), Act Prohibiting Employment of Children Below 15 years of Age (RA7658), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Philippine Labor Code. Yet the lack of concrete legislation to aid such laws and declarations has not deterred the increasing number of child labor. In 1991 there were only an estimated 2.2 million child workers in the country. This rose to five million in 1994.

The Local Government of QC, since 1940, has enacted two laws on child labor, the QC Child and Youth Welfare Ordinance of 1977 and an Ordinance Penalizing the Owner/Operator of Any Business and/or Entertainment Establishment Operating in QC for Hiring/Employing Children and Minors (1999). The former punishes any kind of child abuse but not specifically on child labor. The latter penalizes owners of business establishments who are found guilty of employing, exploiting and discriminating children. The punishment merely consists of a fine of P5,000, cancellation of business permit and a month imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

The Department of Interior and Local Government, moreover, mandated every barangay to have a Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC). To esure the full implementation of the children's right. But after a decade, only 14,000 out of 44,000 barangays have their BCPC. According to Kamalayan Development Foundation (KDF) and NGO concerned with child labor, the existing BCPCs are inactive. UNICEF, on the other hand, reported that General Santos City, Southern Leyte, Pandacan and Olongapo have active BCPCs.

The full protection of Filipino children does not depend solely on the laws for children the government enacted but also on the extent of political will every local government units should uphold, will remain weak instrumentalities unless implemented properly by local government units through solid mechanism at the barangay level.

(This article was jointly written by J. Mendoza, A. Roxas, H. Somera and F. Sta. Ana. They are all U.P. Manila students under Prof. Robert Reyes. They were assigned to look into the child labor situation in areas such as Payatas, as a requirement of their internship program in March with SENTRO. This article was the result of their first hand observation and interviews.)

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