- Air quality monitoring

UNHEALTHY AIR QUALITY LEVELS OBSERVED IN PARTS OF QC

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The Quezon City government on Monday advised residents, especially those with respiratory illnesses, to mask up when going out due to the poor air quality index monitored in some parts.

Susano Road, Maligaya Elementary School, Kaligayahan Elementary School, Lagro High School and Road Payatas controlled disposal facility were identified by the city government as having "very unhealthy" air quality.

On the other hand, "unhealthy [air quality] for sensitive groups" was observed in the Novaliches wet and dry market, P. Dela Cruz Street, Korphil Quezon City University, Pearl Drive footbridge, Payatas Super Health Center, Quirino Highway corner Mindanao Avenue, Tandang Sora Barangay Hall footbridge, Barangay Sauyo Baluyot satellite hall, FEU Diliman and Jose Rizal High School.

Some parts of Quezon City, including Fairview and the Commonwealth area, have been shrouded in smoke and pollutants since Sunday but the city government did not identify the source.

But it urged those with respiratory illnesses to avoid going out if possible and to mask up if they do.

The Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for its part, said the "hazy skies" observed over Metro Manila could be attributed to fires that broke out at a sanitary landfill in Montalban, Rizal, and at a warehouse in Commonwealth, Quezon City.

Artistic protest

As this developed, environmental group 350 Pilipinas conducted an "artistic protest" in Mandaluyong City to call for an update in the country's air quality standards.

The protest featured actress Mercedes Cabral who was encased in a large, transparent "bubble" while holding an oxygen tank containing fresh air.

She was surrounded by people wearing face and gas masks to represent "ordinary pedestrians" who are constantly exposed to air pollution during their daily commute.

Jheny Dabu, 350 Pilipinas clean air and sustainable transport campaigner, said the performance was part of the group's "Life in a Bubble" campaign, which pushes for amendments to Republic Act No. 8749, also known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999.

"What we need to update now is to include the smoke coming from the transport sector," she added.