

- Human trafficking

QC shuts down 2 hotels over child trafficking

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The **Quezon City government** has shut down two lodging establishments as part of its intensified campaign against trafficking and exploitation of children.

Local officials ordered the closure of Blazingwood Apartelle in Barangay San Agustin for violating the city's revenue code.

Police have rescued six minors and arrested two people for violating the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act.

The Quezon City Revenue Code authorizes **Mayor Joy Belmonte** to close any business that can be a "public nuisance or being used by criminals."

"It is disheartening to see children, who should be in school, are falling prey to abusive people," Mayor Joy Belmonte said. "We will not stop until these people are held liable. We will comb through all our establishments if needed."

Last week, the city's **Business Permits and Licensing Department** shut down MC Hotel in Novaliches for violating the liquor ordinance.

The hotel allegedly allowed minors to consume alcohol on its premises.

Twenty minors were rescued during a raid on the hotel by police and personnel of the city's **Social Services Development Department**.

"Social workers confirmed that some of the children engaged in sex work and had been staying in the establishment for more than two weeks," the city government said.

Several minors said they frequently visited the hotel to swim and engage in vices such as drinking. The rescued minors are under the care of the Quezon City Processing Center and Bahay Kanlungan while their families are being contacted.

Belmonte has ordered the police and other relevant local government offices to intensify surveillance of motels, inns and other lodging facilities that may be used as fronts for human trafficking and exploitation.

City hall is also working with barangay officials, police station commanders and non-government organizations to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts.

In 2024, Quezon City passed its tourism child protection policy to ensure the protection of children from abuse and exploitation.

Establishments are required to report incidents of adults being accompanied by unrelated minors. Hotels are also mandated to require adult guests to present valid proof of identity, proof of relationship for any accompanying minors and prohibit the entry of children who are not relatives of the guest.

"As a child-friendly city, it is our duty to protect our children. Do not turn a blind eye to suspicious activities. If you know something, report them immediately to authorities," Belmonte said.

Residents are encouraged to report suspicious activities by calling Helpline 122 or messaging the official Facebook page of the city government.