



Republika ng Pilipinas
Komisyon ng Karapatang Pantao
(Commission on Human Rights)

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY
CHR-A2005-003

“ON THE MMDA’S ‘WET-RAG’ POLICY”

Chairman Bayani Fernando of the Metro Manila Development Authority has ordered MMDA Traffic personnel to implement the so-called “wet-rag” policy to contain pedestrians within the sidewalks. Under this scheme, pedestrians who go beyond the sidewalks while waiting for jeepneys and buses will be doused with wet rag which is a large-sized blanket attached to an MMDA vehicle through a wooden pole.

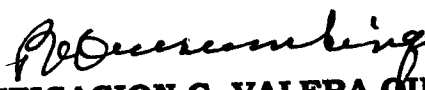
While the “wet-rag” scheme may have a laudable motive, the Commission on Human Rights expresses its adverse effects on the dignity of the human person.

Dousing pedestrians with wet-rag may inadvertently hurt the hapless pedestrian as well as expose him to humiliation. It is degrading punishment which is proscribed under the Constitution.

Violation of traffic laws and/or municipal or city ordinance falls under the Rules on Summary Procedure. Corollarily, those caught violating it should be charged in accordance with the law or ordinance and meted the proper penalty if found guilty. Dousing with “wet-rag” is not one of the penalties provided by law or ordinance, hence, the wet rag scheme is a violation of penal laws and therefore unconstitutional.

Anything short of this will be considered a human rights violation.

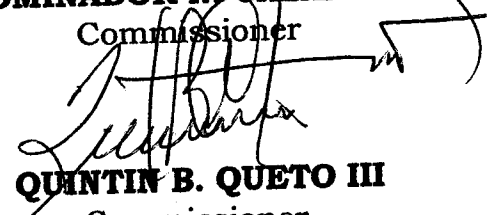
Done in Quezon City on this 2nd of February 2005.


PURIFICACION C. VALERA QUISUMBING
Chairperson


ELIGIO F. MALLARI
Commissioner

(On Official Travel)
WILHELM D. SORIANO
Commissioner


DOMINADOR N. CALAMBA II
Commissioner


QUINTIN B. QUETO III
Commissioner

Ang Karapatang Pantao ay para sa lahat. Panindigan natin ito.
Commonwealth Avenue, U.P. Complex, Diliman, 1101, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 927-0172 • 928-2018