



Outgoing RDC XI Chair Rodolfo del Rosario delivers the 2016 State of Davao Region Address before the members of the Regional Development Council XI and representatives of government and private sectors and the media.

SORA Hails Big Drop in Davao Region's Poverty

Davao City – Regional Development Council (RDC) XI Chairperson Rodolfo P. del Rosario, in his State of the Region Address or SORA delivered on 7 June 2016, declared that the substantial drop in Davao Region's poverty incidence from 28.6 percent of families by first half of 2012 to 20.5 percent in 2015 may be an indication that the Region is moving closer to achieving inclusive growth.

“Certainly, we can surmise that Davao Region's high economic growth levels of 6.8 percent and 9.4 percent in 2013 and 2014 have benefitted more households and are translating into low poverty incidence,” del Rosario declared. “Slowly, but steadily, we are moving closer to our goal of inclusive growth.”

Speaking before members of the RDC XI, local chief executives, government and private sector representatives, del Rosario cited the major gains of his three-year RDC XI tenure of office, foremost of which were big strides in human development, such as access to specialized health services; lower infant mortality ratio of 4.0 deaths per 1,000 livebirths; 90 percent availment of 4Ps by target sectors; and 96 percent elementary education participation rate. Employment levels were at a high 94 percent, surpassing targets.

For global competitiveness, the Chair cited the boom in ICT industry with P18.9 billion revenues in 2014, remarkable tourism receipts at P34.2 billion pesos in 2015, high investors' confidence as evidenced by proliferation of industries and property development with 3.17 billion pesos investments in 2013.

Del Rosario shared that Davao Region is among the safest in the country after making headway in winning the peace, especially the suppression of insurgency

affectation in barangays from 36 percent in 2010 to 6 percent in 2015. Very significant, he said, was the declaration of all the Region's provinces as Conflict-Manageable and Development-Ready Areas (CMDRAs).

On infrastructure, about 772 kilometers or 92 percent of the Region's national arterial roads and 668 kilometers or 84 percent of the Region's national secondary roads have been paved as of 2015. The remaining roads in both categories are targeted for completion by 2016. The Region's two main gateways, the Davao International Airport and the Sasa Port are pipelined for major upgrading to greatly improve physical connectivity and boost development.

RDC XI Vice-Chairperson Maria Lourdes D. Lim, for her part, stated that what the Region has achieved so far is the result of the collective efforts of all the region's development stakeholders in pursuit of inclusive growth.

Meanwhile, the Chairperson mentioned that the Region had its share of major setbacks such as its high maternal mortality ratio of 122 deaths per 100,000 livebirths in 2015 vis-a-vis its target of 52; low performance of CARP land distribution at 31 percent; sluggish agriculture that contracted due to Typhoon Pablo; and the low rice sufficiency levels at about 50 percent vis-a-vis the 60 percent target.

Looking forward, the Chairperson cited positive scenarios, such as the implementation of the Industry Cluster Roadmaps; proposals for PEZA accreditation of MTS, Megaworld, IT Park, Kopiat Island, Astorga Business and Industrial Park and Tubalan Cove; modernization of the Davao International Airport and Sasa Port, construction of Davao Bypass Road, Samal Bridge and Davao Food Exchange Complex. The aggressive advocacy and implementation of two recently signed legislations, namely the Foreign Ships Co-Loading Act and Philippine Competition Act are expected to boost the country's inclusive growth. For public higher education, the establishment of the Davao Regional State University System shall be strongly pursued through continuing advocacies with state/local university and college stakeholders, and with Congress for the immediate passage of the DRSUS law.

With the incoming President of the Philippines hailing from Mindanao, particularly from Davao, Chairperson del Rosario said that prospects of a better Davao Region have become even brighter in terms of resource allocation for project implementation.

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