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DTI, NCC hold 5th Ease of Doing Business Summit



DTI Secretary Ramon M. Lopez expresses his commitment to improve and streamline the country's business processes during the 5th Annual Ease of Doing Business Summit held last 28 June 2017 at the PICC.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in collaboration with the National Competitiveness Council (NCC), convened stakeholders from the public and private sectors to discuss recent improvements in the country's business regulatory procedures during the 5th Ease of Doing Business (EODB) Summit held last 28 June 2017 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), Pasay City.

The summit emphasized the importance of applying technology to streamline government processes. It also highlighted the reforms accomplished by the Task Force on Ease of Doing Business and future plans to make business regulatory processes in the Philippines more efficient.

This interagency task force, created by Administrative Order No. 38, s. 2013, is mandated to work on reforms in government processes in line with indicators tracked by the World Bank's Doing Business Survey.

Chaired by DTI, the task force members include NCC, Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Bureau of Customs (BOC), Land Registration Authority (LRA), Credit Information Corporation (CIC), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Social

Security System (SSS), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF), and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC). It was created to ensure efficient implementation of the country's Gameplan for Competitiveness and to improve the Philippines' ranking in the said survey.

"It is really automating that could catapult and leapfrog us to where we want to be. And that is in the top 20 [of the Doing Business Survey] by 2020," DTI Secretary Ramon M. Lopez said.

"To consistently ease doing business in the country, let us start a revolution to push the government online," NCC Private Sector Co-chair Guillermo M. Luz seconded.

During the summit, three local government units (LGUs) and one national regulatory agency presented their recent innovations to expedite government procedures, making doing business easier.

Sta. Maria, Bulacan Municipal Administrator Reslyn M. Yambao discussed their experience in automating their business permits and licensing system (BPLS). At present, filing applications for permits up to its assessment can already be done online in the municipality.

For his part, **Valenzuela City Mayor Rexlon T. Gatchalian** presented the features of their 3S+ Electronic Terminal System, which was recognized as the country's first fully automated building and construction permit application system. He noted that they made sure to remove human interaction in their application processes as to avoid corruption.

Likewise, **Makati City Mayor Abigail Binay-Campos** introduced their Makatizen card and app, which may serve as platforms for digital transactions for government services.

LRA Deputy Administrator for Operations Ronald A. Ortile also presented their Online Tracking System, an Internet site where the public can track the status of their permits applications. He also talked about their *Aksyon Agad* Center which is an interactive support system that receives inquiries, concerns, and complaints.

Representatives from the private sector also shared initiatives that assist the government in streamlining its processes. **Mynt President and CEO John Rubio** underscored the essential role of financial technologies in making business processes more convenient.

Moreover, **Mr. Emmet McElhatton** from New Zealand G2G Know-How and **Creative HQ CEO Stefan Korn** shared the best practices they observed in New Zealand and its possible applications to the current business regulatory processes in the Philippines.

"As we further aim for a more globally competitive Philippines, I encourage our partners from both the government and private sectors to ensure that these reforms continue beyond 2017," Lopez said.

"We want to take this big leap, not for us, not for our government, but really for the people and make lives a lot easier," he added.

The Doing Business Survey aims to provide objective measures of business regulations affecting small- and medium-sized enterprises in 190 economies. For the recent survey, the Philippines went up by four places from 103rd in 2015 to 99th in 2016.