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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
East ASEAN Growth Area (Special Committee)	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Davao del Sur Rep. Mercedes "Didi" Cagas, adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee, which is presently composed of 11 Members, has general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to social, political and economic policies affecting the countries within the area (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines), and the promotion of trade and investment among these countries.</p>
	Briefing by the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) on its plans and programs for FY 2017	<p>MinDA Assistant Secretary Romeo Montenegro III presented the agency's plans and programs for FY 2017.</p> <p>Montenegro gave a brief historical background of MinDA saying that it was created by virtue of Republic Act 9996 or the Mindanao Development Authority Act of 2010 to promote, coordinate and facilitate the active and extensive participation of all sectors to effect the socioeconomic development of Mindanao. He added that MinDA also acts as the Philippine Coordinating Office for the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines – East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) that ensures the active participation of Mindanao and Palawan in the sub-regional economic cooperation.</p> <p>The BIMP-EAGA, which is one of the growth triangles in Asia, has adopted five strategic pillars for 2012 to 2016 to effectively facilitate trade, tourism and investments among the countries within the area. These are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the sub-regional connectivity through maritime and aviation transport linkages; • Establish the BIMP-EAGA as a "food basket" for ASEAN and the rest of Asia; • Promote the BIMP-EAGA as a premier regional tourism destination; • Ensure sustainable management of the environment; and • Promote socio-cultural heritage and education development among the countries within the sub-regional level. <p>Being the coordinating office of BIMP-EAGA in the Philippines, MinDA's current initiatives include the revival of the Davao-Manado air connectivity, Davao-Gensan-Bitung sea linkage, and the Brooke's Point-Kudat/Kota-Kinabalu sea linkage. These projects, according to Montenegro, will increase tourism arrivals and trade activity within and beyond the sub-region.</p> <p>Montenegro also informed the Committee of MinDA's priority infrastructure projects, which include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development/improvement of regional roads; • Implementation of the Roll-On/Roll-Off facility in Mindanao; and • Expansion of ports in various parts of Mindanao and Palawan.