

PHILIPPINE SMART CITY SUMMIT PROMOTES LIVING IN INTELLIGENT CITIES

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As people become smarter, so should the cities that they live in. Smart individuals, after all, will find it hard to be happy in an environment that does not serve their needs to the fullest.



In other words, smart people deserve to live in equally smart cities.

This was the principle behind the recently concluded Philippine Smart City Summit, held last week in Quezon City. The two-day event, meant to promote principles and benefits of living in intelligent cities, discussed concepts, theories and best practices that will advance digital capacity and social innovation.

The summit aimed to initiate conversations with the country's smart city leaders and advocates on the appreciation, development and implementation of smart cities in the Philippines.

With the theme "Advocating for Smart Sustainable Cities through Innovation and Collaboration," the summit gathered government executives from Russia, South Korea, Malaysia China, Indonesia, Turkey, and several other countries and other stakeholders in public administration. Quezon City Mayor **Herbert Bautista** delivered the keynote address during the opening ceremony at the ABS-CBN Tent in Vertis North, North Avenue.

"Cities of the past only serve certain sectors of the public. Smart cities should serve people without discrimination and alienation. On the global level, [building smart cities] is virtually a smart ecological evolution," said Kyong-yul Lee, WeGO secretary general, who is one of the speakers during the summit.

A smart city, Lee said, is owned by its people, and ownership should be reflected in people who build it.

Now the richest city in the Philippines in terms of assets and revenue, Quezon City has become a model of good government practices and was chosen to host this year's summit for its exemplary performance in governance, competitiveness, infrastructure development and economic dynamism.

The Philippine National Competitiveness Council has bestowed on Quezon City the distinction of being the most competitive highly urbanized city in the country for three straight years.

"We're still playing catch up, particularly with Seoul, when it comes to smart city solutions," Bautista said, but added that they are doing their best to turn QC into a truly smart city. "The evolution of technology has taught us that there is always something new to learn and discover [to improve the lives of the people]."

During the summit, speakers shared knowledge and good practices in e-governance and promote policies and programs that will advance digital capacity in public administration, facilitate civic involvement and establish cooperation towards developing smart cities in the country. The event also included workshops that tackled affordable and sustainable services of smart governments developed on the basis of shared platforms and frameworks, as well as small and low-cost social innovations in developing countries.