

Surigao logs more tourist arrivals

Written by WOWSURIGAO .com
Saturday, 07 May 2011 23:44

SURIGAO CITY, Philippines – Mayor Ernesto Matugas of this city reported Saturday a “remarkable increase” in tourist arrivals here, based on figures of 2010 visitors released last Thursday.

In his first State of Local Governance Report, Matugas cited that a total of 145,739 tourists arrived in 2010, substantially higher by 27.48 percent from the 114,324 visitors recorded in 2009.

“Foreign tourist arrivals posted a much higher increase of 31.21 percent,” he said.

Matugas said the number of meetings and conferences also increased by 10.47 percent and 24.61 percent, respectively.

He said the significant growth in tourism was driven by many factors such as the aggressive tourism marketing and promotion, the introduction of scuba diving as a new tourism product, and the resumption of regular flights to Manila and Cebu.

With this fast growth, the city is eyeing more infrastructures for tourism destinations.

“We need to build more infrastructures that can cater to the needs of tourists who keep coming to our city,” said the mayor.

Matugas said the estimated income from tourism last year totaled more than P4.372 billion.

Matugas thanked the private sector for helping transform the city into a more tourist-friendly locality.

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“I am thankful that our major hotels like Tavern, Gateway and Almont have responded and undertaken the necessary improvements.”

Latest data from the City Tourism Office revealed that the total number of rooms grew by 8.86% from 598 in 2009 to 651 in 2010 with the opening of new tourist inns like E.Y. Pensionne, RSY Pensionne, among others. “Occupancy rate continued to rise with the average of 33.72 percent compared in 2009 with only 27.61 percent,” Matugas added.

He said the tourism sector is expected to further grow this year with the aggressive promotion of private sector investments for commercial and industrial development and with the entry of major names in business like Gaisano Capital, Citi Hardware, Unicity, and Davao Central Warehouse in the city.

Because of this trend, the city government mobilized all division chiefs, especially the planning and tourism divisions to map out strategies to add more infrastructures such as roads and other structures in identified tourist destinations.

Matugas said these projects which will hopefully be completed or further improved this year include the full operation of the sanitary landfill.

He also announced the full operation of the recently completed Meat Processing Laboratory at the city slaughterhouse in Barangay Poctoy here.

He also vowed to continue the improvement and development of the City Boulevard and water supply systems especially in the island barangay. (PIA)