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DepEd Region 10 spearheads 4th Northern Mindanao Youth Peace Village

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus today lauded DepEd Region 10 as it took the lead in fostering peace and respect for a diverse cultural society among the Mindanao youth with the 4th Northern Mindanao Peace Village held on October 27-30, 2008 at the Mindanao Civic Center in Tubod, Lanao del Norte.

"This village opens an opportunity for the Muslims, Christians and Lumads to live in harmony with each other and experience peace to the fullest," Lapus said. Participants in the Peace Village included high school students and elementary pupils aged 10-12 years old from Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, CARAGA and ARMM.

"Teaching peace education without giving the students a chance to experience peace for themselves means nothing. "It is in a well-conceived and well-organized activity like this that our students learn better about the ways of peace and unlearn the ways of violence," Lapus added.

The Peace Village supported Executive Order No. 570, which mandates the DepEd to promote a culture of peace in the educational system, by incorporating peace education concepts, skills and values in the learning content of basic education.

Lapus commended the leadership of Regional Director Estrella Abid-Babano of DepEd Region 10 for "bringing together people from different regions and nationality for the cause of peace."

He also noted the contributions of Lanao del Norte Governor Mohammad Khalid Dimaporo and Schools Division Superintendent Ma. Luisa Mutia for steering the activities and construction of peace huts.

As Lapus keynoted the event's closing ceremonies, he marked the Department's continued commitment for peacemaking, peace building and peacekeeping.

"The Peace Village is a welcome and creative way of understanding human diversity. And that even in the midst of diversity, unity is always a big possibility," he added.

Among key activities in the Peace Village were Peace Art/Peace Wall, Peace Reflections, and the Peace Congress, which allowed youth participants to solve problems and think critically on issues of peace, conflict and violence.

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Peace-learning hubs from each school division were also installed in the village. These hubs combine learning and fun with facilitators integrating peace concepts. Participants highlighted their rich cultures and traditions in a form of dance, drama, songs, and rituals.

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