

Brazilian economist: Rio slum poised for growth

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RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A leading Brazilian economist says a recent police takeover of Rio de Janeiro's biggest shantytown provides an opportunity for financial growth.

FGV think tank economist Marcelo Neri says that if the peace achieved following the takeover is lasting, it could provide an opportunity for better services, access to jobs and education for residents.

The Rocinha slum was taken over by heavily armed police and military units Sunday, ending decades of control by drug traffickers.

Neri says the community has little access to state services even though it straddles some of Rio's wealthiest neighborhoods. He says only 5 percent of Rochinha's residents receive welfare and only 21 percent have running water indoors.

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