

BARMM OPENS Ramadhan Trade Fair 2023

By Johaira Sahidala

Festive spirit of Ramadhan is felt at the Bangsamoro Government Center (BGC) in Cotabato City as creative decorations and colorful lights yet again illuminate in front the Office of the Chief Minister (OCM) for this year's celebration of the Holy Month of Fasting.

Visitors of the BGC will enjoy capturing photos of a tunnel of bright yellow lights, colorful butterflies embellished on some trees, thousands of artificial lighting roses adorning the lawns, and light decorations bearing resemblance of a Holy Qur'an and mosques, among many others.

The OCM officially turned on the lights display Tuesday night, March 21. It will be open for the public every night from 6:30pm-10:00pm for the whole month of Ramadhan.



Photo by Marhom Ibrahim and Hamdarul Badrudin

COTABATO CITY—To promote the spirit of unity and bringing people together during the sacred month of Ramadhan, the Bangsamoro Government, led by the Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism (MTIT), officially opened the month-long Ramadhan Trade Fair Tuesday afternoon, March 21, inside the Bangsamoro Government Center (BGC) in this city.

Anchoring on this year's theme "Ramadhan brings people together towards love, peace, and unity", the program focuses on sustaining the strong faith and the prosperous life of the Bangsamoro people.

In collaboration with various BARMM ministries and trade-fair enthusiasts, the month-long expo serves as

an avenue to continue finding opportunities for business sustainability and growth with the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

MTIT Minister Abuamri Taddik underscored some of the significant impacts of opening this trade fair.

"This Ramadhan fair will be our chance to help our local producers and entrepreneurs by providing them a venue for showcasing, promoting, and selling their respective halal food products and services," Taddik said.

"It is seen that the majority of businesses see an increase in profits during Ramadan. Also, it enables people outside the region to perceive and understand a group of diverse

cultures working together towards economic recovery and solidarity," Taddik added.

The Minister also noted that aside from fasting, Ramadhan is also the time to pray, support charities, remember those less fortunate, and spend time with families and friends. Participated by local entrepreneurs, the annual event features a total of 50 exhibitors, showcasing both traditional halal food and non-food items in the Bangsamoro region.

Meanwhile, Asnaira Lidasan, one of the owners of Frontage Coffee Shop, who took part in the said trade fair, said: "As one of the Micro enterprises, it is important for us to participate in this kind of event. It will give opportunities

for the entrepreneurs and business experts to showcase the region's unique local products."

She further thanked the Government of the Day for this initiative, not only to celebrate the essence of Ramadhan but also to gather Bangsamoro people through trade-fair. "Malaking tulong ito para saamin, dahil maraming pamilya ang dumadayo rito na kung saan pwede makilala ang aming mga produkto since kaka-one-month lang namin sa larangan ng businesses," Lidasan added.

Moreover, part of the fair is the "MAFAR Ramadhan" spearheaded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR), which serves as a venue for the local producers to showcase their agricultural products.

RAMADHAN IN PH BEGINS MARCH 23, SAYS BANGSAMORO DARUL IFTA

By Aisah Abas

COTABATO CITY—The Bangsamoro Darul Ifta (BDI) has announced that the holy month of Ramadhan will commence on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

Bangsamoro Jurist and Deputy Mufti Abdulrauf Guialani announced this on Tuesday night after receiving reports from regional moon-sighting committees across BARMM.

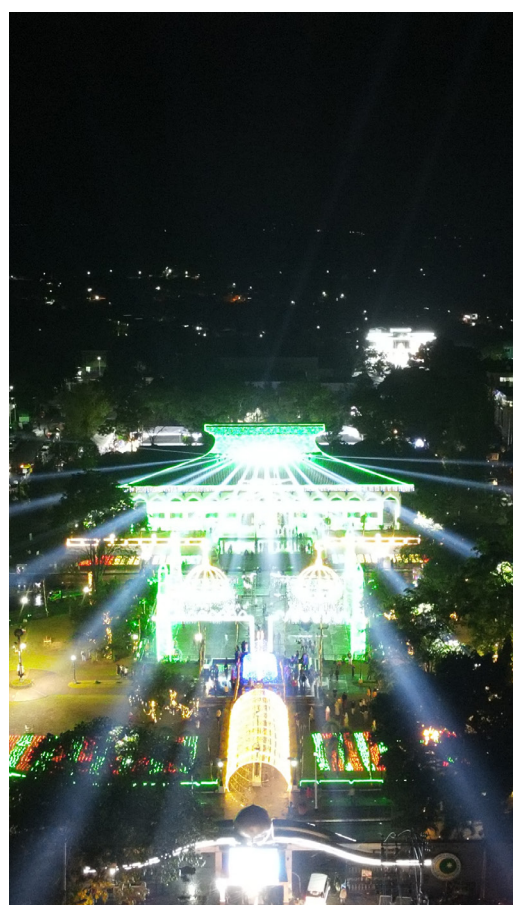
"They (the said groups) have performed what they were assigned to do, and then finally, the result of the moonsighting is that the moon-crescent has not been sighted.

Based on this, the Bangsamoro Darul Ifta' has decided that the beginning of Ramadhan will be on Thursday, 23rd of March, 2023 In sha Allah," the Deputy Mufti said.

Accordingly, the date of the start of Ramadhan varies in different areas or regions, as the Hadith of Allah's Messenger says, "Fast when you see it (the crescent of Ramadhan) and break the fast when you see it (the crescent of Shawwal)."

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, and reflection. During this period, Muslims abstain from food, drink, and other physical needs from dawn until sunset. Ramadan is also a time for self-discipline, spiritual reflection, and acts of charity.

The Darul Ifta encourages all Muslims in BARMM to observe Ramadan in accordance with Islamic teachings, and to use the holy month as an opportunity to deepen their faith, increase their acts of charity, and seek forgiveness from Allah.



BARMM ADJUSTS WORK DURATION DURING RAMADHAN

By Aisah Abas

COTABATO CITY—Bangsamoro Government modified the working schedule of officials and employees in BARMM during the observance of the holy month of Ramadhan starting Thursday, March 23, 2023.

Through the Memorandum Circular issued by the Office of the Chief Minister (OCM) on Tuesday, March 21, flexible working hours from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM for the duration of Ramadhan shall be allowed for fasting employees during the period of Ramadhan.

This is in accordance with Presidential Decree (PD) No. 322 and Civil Service Commission Resolution No. 81-1277 dated 13 November 1981.

The regular working schedule in BARMM shall revert (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM) after the celebration of Eid'ul Fitir.

Chief Minister Ahod Ebrahim urged the Bangsamoro community to perform fasting with pure intentions, discipline, and kindness.

"Let us deeply dedicate ourselves to purifying our intentions, fostering the highest level of discipline, and emanating generosity and mercy in observance of this significant spiritual journey," the Chief Minister said.

"It is my fervent hope that as a community, we will collectively grow and prosper as we continue to strive to nourish our faith and translate the true message of this sacrifice into righteousness, peace, and mercy for the vulnerable members of our society," he added.

Ebrahim also hopes that this month of Ramadhan will connect all Muslims and would give enlightenment, especially to the Bangsamoro community.

"In this sacred month, may we, my fellow brothers and sisters be reminded to serve the less fortunate, extend iftar meals to the needy, and conduct religious activities such as reading the Qur'an and Islamic preaching—all of which remind us to unite together as one Bangsamoro family," Ebrahim said.