

Republic of the Philippines  
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao  
**BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY**  
Cotabato City

*Third Regular Session*

BTA Bill No. 144



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Introduced by **MPs AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL, SITTIE SHAHARA “DIMPLE” I. MASTURA**

Co-authored by **MPs ATTY. LAISA MASUHUD ALAMIA, ENGR. BANTAN A. AMPATUAN, ENGR. DON MUSTAPHA A. LOONG, ATTY. RASOL Y. MITMUG, JR., ATTY. SUHARTO M. AMBOLODITO, RASUL E. ISMAEL, ABRAHAM T. BURAHAN**

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AN ACT  
STRENGTHENING THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE  
BANGSAMORO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE, THROUGH AN ENHANCED  
CULTURAL POLICY, HERITAGE EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL MAPPING  
PROGRAM

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Section 24, Article IX of the Bangsamoro Organic Law declares that the Bangsamoro Government shall preserve the history, culture, arts, traditions, and rich cultural heritage of the Bangsamoro people and their Sultanates.

In fulfillment of this mandate, this measure mainly seeks to revise and enhance the scope of cultural preservation and education in the region, expanding its scope to include a particular focus on the rich cultural traditions and practices within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, as well as the individuals who actively preserve the knowledge and skills to pass on to future generations.

It is well-documented that the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region is home to distinct ethnolinguistic groups with unique traditions, cultures, and practices. Hence, traditional cultural heritage adopted and developed by these groups, whether tangible or intangible, represents an outstanding universal value from the point of view of Bangsamoro history.

However, part of the many struggles of these groups is the protection and preservation of their rich cultural heritage – their artistic expressions, traditional arts and crafts, among others.

It is important to note that the protection and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the Bangsamoro people is a vital right guaranteed under the Organic Law, which must be

continuously respected and protected by all, especially by the State. This is the objective of the proposed "Preservation of Cultural Practice Act".

This measure aims to further strengthen the conservation and protection of heritage in the region as well as promote cultural enhancement by taking heritage inventory, provide scholarly researches and documentation, and educate the people that our culture is uniquely diverse.

Through the Bangsamoro Commission for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and the local government units, this bill shall create a comprehensive cultural archive, which shall organize and provide an inventory of all Bangsamoro Cultural Living Treasures, as well as all intangible cultural properties and heritage of the different ethnolinguistic groups of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region.

This bill aims to fill the gap in the preservation and maintenance of the cultural significance of various practices, representations, expression, knowledge, and skills, as well as the instruments, objects, and artifacts associated with the rich cultural heritage of the Bangsamoro communities, groups, and individuals.

These practices include their oral traditions, languages, and expressions; performing arts; social practices, rituals, and festive events; traditional craftsmanship. Through this bill, the Commission shall also acknowledge, support, and incentivize the individuals within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region who will be classified as preservers of Bangsamoro intangible cultural properties, such as our skilled weavers, chanters, dancers, and other craftsmen.

In so doing, the Bangsamoro Government will further contribute to the preservation, restoration, and protection of the Bangsamoro heritage. In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

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**MAPPING PROGRAM**

**Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Preservation of Bangsamoro Cultural Practices Act of 2021*”.

**Section 2. Declaration of Principles and Policies.** – It is henceforth the policy of the State to recognize the aspirations of Muslim Filipinos and all indigenous cultural communities in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in the pursuit of securing their identity and posterity and to ensure the rights and well-being of the Bangsamoro with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions, and institutions. It shall further ensure the enrichment of the Bangsamoro cultural heritage based on the principle of unity in diversity in a culture of free artistic and intellectual expression.

To adhere to this noble cause, this Act shall aim to create a mechanism for the preservation and protection of the rich cultural heritage of the Bangsamoro people and their Sultanates, both tangible and intangible; preserve and protect their culture, traditions, and institutions; and to recognize and support traditional knowledge, traditional arts and artisans for their contribution to their cultures, cultural heritage, and social and economic development.

It shall endeavor to further recognize, as an integral component of regional development, the transcendental importance of collecting, preserving, reviving, protecting, and harnessing the cultural heritage of the Bangsamoro.

**Section 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) Bangsamoro cultural heritage – shall refer to the totality of cultural property preserved and developed through time and passed on to posterity which is of outstanding universal value from the point of view of Bangsamoro history, art, or science within the Bangsamoro region and all over the Philippine archipelago.

- (b) Commission – shall refer to the Bangsamoro Commission for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage.
- (c) Customary laws – shall refer to a body of written and/or unwritten rules, usages, customs, and practices traditionally and continually recognized, accepted, and observed by various ethnographic areas within the Bangsamoro region.
- (d) Heritage Conservation – shall refer to all the processes and measures of maintaining the cultural significance of intangible cultural properties and heritage including, but not limited to, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, protection, adaptation, or any combination thereof.
- (e) Intangible cultural heritage – shall refer to the practices, representations, expression, knowledge, and skills, as well as the instruments, objects, and artifacts associated therewith, that Bangsamoro communities, groups, and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage, such as: 1. Oral traditions, languages, and expressions; 2. Performing arts; 3. Social practices, rituals, and festive events; and 4. Traditional craftsmanship.
- (f) Intangible cultural property – shall refer to the Bangsamoro peoples’ learned processes, along with the knowledge, skill, and creativity that are developed by them, and aspects of social and natural context necessary for their sustainability.
- (g) Bangsamoro Cultural Living Treasures – shall refer to those individuals within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region as preservers of Bangsamoro intangible cultural properties, such as weavers, chanters, dancers, and other craftsmen.

**Section 4. *Regional Registry of Intangible Cultural Property, Heritage, and Cultural Living Treasures.*** – All Bangsamoro Cultural Living Treasures, as well as intangible cultural properties and heritage deemed important to the Bangsamoro heritage shall be registered in the Regional Registry of Cultural Property.

The Bangsamoro Commission for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, through close coordination with the appropriate cultural institutions and local government units, shall establish and maintain this Registry within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act. The guidelines in the registration of cultural property are as follows:

- (a) Local government units, through their cultural offices, shall likewise maintain an inventory of intangible cultural properties and heritage under its jurisdiction and shall furnish the Commission a copy of the same;
- (b) Local government units shall continuously coordinate in making entries and in monitoring the various cultural living treasures, and intangible cultural properties and heritage in their respective inventory;

**Section 5. *Research and Publications Division.*** – A Research and Publications Division shall be established within the Commission which shall be tasked with the conduct of scholarly

researches and documentation on customary laws, as well as Bangsamoro intangible cultural properties and heritage, publish important scholarly works on these practices, and provide research services to the public through the maintenance of the Regional Registry of Cultural Property.

**Section 6. *Regional Heritage Resource Assistance Program.*** - The Commission may provide financial assistance in the form of a grant to historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic organizations for conservation or research on intangible cultural properties and heritage.

**Section 7. *Incentives to Bangsamoro Cultural Living Treasures.*** – The Commission, with the goal of preserving important intangible cultural assets, shall hereby create a special annual grant of Five Million Pesos (Php 5,000,000.00) to Bangsamoro Cultural Living Treasures. In the case of groups, the Commission shall assist to defray the costs of public exhibitions and activities necessary to continue the group. The Commission shall likewise provide training programs to help train successors.

**Section 8. *Role of Government Agencies and Local Government Units.*** – All government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations, public educational institutions, and local government units shall endeavor to promote the Bangsamoro cultural heritage. For this reason, they shall endeavor to develop, produce, and publish information education campaign materials towards its preservation and development.

**Section 8. *Incorporation of Bangsamoro Cultural Heritage in the Basic Education System.*** - Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act, the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, in coordination with the Commission, shall formulate cultural heritage education programs to be incorporated into the formal, alternative, and informal education, with emphasis on the protection, conservation, and preservation of Bangsamoro cultural heritage.

The Regional Registry of Cultural Property shall likewise be incorporated into the formal, alternative, and informal education by the Bangsamoro component local government units

**Section 9. *Cultural Heritage Education Program.*** - Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act, the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, in consultation with the Commission, shall set forth in its teaching programs the following cultural heritage education programs with emphasis at the provincial, city and municipal levels:

- (a) Protection, conservation, and preservation of cultural heritage properties;
- (b) Instructional materials in print, film, and broadcast media on the cultural and historical significance of cultural properties; and
- (c) Visitation, public accessibility, and information dissemination on designated local cultural properties.

**Section 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The Commission shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

**Section 11. Separability Clause.** - Any portion or provision of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining provisions can still subsist and be given effect.

**Section 12. Repealing Clause.** - All regional laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and all other issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Section 13. Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of regional circulation.

*Adopted,*

AUTHOR/S:



**HON. AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL**  
*Member of the Parliament*

Certified correct:

**PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL**  
*Secretary-General*

Attested by:

**HON. PANGALIAN M. BALINDONG**  
*Speaker*