

EXPLANATORY NOTE

PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 03

The bill is requesting all members of the Parliament Bangsamoro Transition Authority to enjoin and agree with me that the Cotabato City must be fixed as the seat of the Bangsamoro government with herein after justifications, to wit;

Cotabato City had witnessed more history than any other place in Mindanao. Its history dates back to the fifteenth (15th) century when Shariff Kabunsuan, an Arab missionary, landed along the banks of the Rio Grande de Mindanao and introduced Islam to the natives.

Those that did not accept the arrival of the Muslims went into higher ground or the interior of the island. During the same year, the Sultanate of Maguindanao was formally established, with Kota Wato as its capital.

Islam was the faith that moved the early settlers to communal life, and to establish the Sultanate of Maguindanao with its golden age ushered in by Sultan Dipatuan Qudarat during the 17th century the time when Cotabato City developed as the capital town of Maguindanao.

In the nineteenth (19th) century, when Sultan Makakua ruled, roads and wharfs were constructed which gave rise to the birth of modern day of Cotabato. However, the then Municipality of Cotabato was first organized at the later part of the 19th century when the Spaniards established a military post at what is now Barangay Tamontaka, one of the earliest Christian settlements founded south of the Philippines. Cotabato was then officially founded in 1862 when the Pueblo de Cotabato was established; Christianity as introduced in the area in around the year 1870.

The city used to be part of the original Province of Cotabato and was its capital from 1920 until 1967, a year after the separation of South Cotabato; since then the city was the administrative center of the ARMM when Maguindanao was carved out in 1973. However, the city broke off administratively from Maguindanao as it rejoined Soccsksargen in the 1990s. Now many sources consider the city as part of the present Cotabato province, although geographically it is still considered part of Maguindanao.

Traditionally resisting efforts for inclusion to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanap despite serving as the government center of the ARMM, the January 21, 2019 Bangsamoro Autonomous Region creation plebiscite resulted in the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law and inclusion of Cotabato City as part of BARMM area. This means Cotabato City may serve as the capital of the region and the offices of the former ARMM may be retained for use by the Bangsamoro Regional Government.

Economy:

The City currently serves as the center for economic support activities (trade and finance), education and other support services such as social, physical, cultural and other basic services of Central Mindanao are offered in the city.

Commerce:

Cotabato City has one of the Highest Bank Deposits in Mindanao with total of Php18,736,523,000.00 deposits as of June 30, 2017 with 150,406 bank account, the city has 20 banks (Private and Government), due to high bank deposits and good economic dynamism. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas built its Central Mindanao branch in the city.

The city has local and national-based shopping centers. Local-based shopping centers like Superama, Sugni, Mall of Alnor, and South Seas Mall have been in competition with the national-based shopping centers like CityMall, Puregold, Robinsons Supermarket and Department Store, Centro Department Store, and SM Savemore. Cotabato City is one of the fastest growing economy in the Soccsksargen region.

KCC Malls have confirmed their interest to build a mall within the City's Downtown. Construction will start after the clearing operations are finished. NCCC Malls, a Davao-based mall corporation have also confirmed their interest to build their mall within the city.

Industry:

Cotabato City has a more or less 1,700 hectares of fishponds which has an annual production of 85,000 kg of mud crabs, prawn and milkfish.

Aiming to be the halal hub of the Philippines, the City Government and Malaysian Businessman built a Class AA halal slaughter house in Baranggay Kalangan II in the city primary serving the entire Central Mindanao, the Halal slaughter house generates a gross income of 4,642,135.00 pesos in 2018.

The city has different factories for cooking oil, coffee, corn starch, processed food and furniture operating within the city.

Tourism:

Recently the number of hotels, inn and pension houses increases, in 2015 the city post an all time high tourist arrivals growth of 241.01% highest on region 12, and Cotabato City has a 63.97% hotel occupancy rate, rank 1 in region 12.

Transportation:

Air

Cotabato City can be reached via Cotabato Airport in neighboring Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. Cebu Pacific and Philippine Airlines maintains connecting the city to Manila, Cebu and Zamboanga.

Airline Operators:

1. Philippine Airlines;
2. Cebupacific Airlines.

Land

The city is accessible by land from many parts of Mindanao. Buses, jeepneys and minivans link the city to Midsayap, Koronadal, Lebak, Pagadian, Tacurong, Kidapawan, Marawi, Iligan, General Santos, Davao City and to various points in Maguindanao.

Multicab and tricycle are the usual means of transportation around the city, minimum fare is P7. There are also Taxis roaming around the city and Habal habal. Two taxi operators are currently operating into the city, namely Alnor Taxi and Wow Taxi.

Bus operators:

1. Mindanao Star daily route to Midsayap, Kabacan, Kidapawan, Digos City and Davao City;
2. Husky Tours daily route to Shariff Aguak, Isulan, Koronadal and General Santos City.

Utilities:

Power is handled by Cotabato Light and Power Company, a private firm owned by Aboitiz who gets power resources from the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines. (NGCP). It also operates a bunker fuel-fired stand-by power engines to address emergency situations like power failures, trip-offs and fluctuations.

Metro Cotabato Water District is the main water supplier in the city. It has an active connection of 29,960. Its resources are located in Barangay Dimapatoy, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Telecommunications are handled by PLDT or Philippine Long Distance Company, Smart Communications, Globe Telecom, and Sun Cellular. Internet service providers in the city are PLDT, Smart, and Globe. Cable services are being handled by local-based Cotabato Cable^[38] and national-based Cignal and Sky Cable.

Hospitals and medical facilities:

The city has one government hospital and six private hospitals. Below is the list of current operating hospitals in the city.

- Cotabato Regional and Medical Center – Sinsuat Avenue.
- Notre Dame Hospital – Sinsuat Avenue
- Cotabato Medical Specialist Hospital – Quezon Avenue
- United Doctors Hospital of Cotabato City – Notre Dame Avenue
- Dr. P. Ocampo Hospital – De Mazon Avenue
- Cotabato Doctors Clinic and Hospital – Sinsuat Avenue
- Cotabato Puericulture Center and General Hospital Foundation, Inc. – Jose Lim Sr. St.
- Cotabato Polymedic and Diagnostic Center - Governor Gutierrez Avenue.

Education:

There are one public and 17 private educational institutions in the city, having a total of 14,228 enrollees for Higher Education (Colleges and Universities) in School Year 2017-2018.

Universities and colleges:

- Notre Dame University
- Cotabato State University formerly Cotabato City State Polytechnic College
- STI Cotabato
- St. Benedict College of Cotabato
- Notre Dame – RVM College of Cotabato
- AMA Computer College

- Coland Systems Technology
- Headstart College of Cotabato
- A.R Pacheco College
- Notre Dame Hospital and School of Midwifery
- Doctor P. Ocampo College
- Dela Vida College
- Computer Aided Design and Information Technology Institute, Inc. (CAD.It)
- Jamiat Cotabato - Cotabato City University
- Academia De Technologia in Mindanao
- Mindanao Capitols Colleges
- Shariff Kabunsuan College, Inc.
- Kutawato Darusallam College

It is therefore, my deepest feelings to recommend to the August body based on the above-mentioned justifications that the Cotabato City has met all the requirements, such as follows: as part of territorial jurisdiction of BARMM; accessibility of the City throughout, not only in Mindanao, but of the entire Philippines, via air, sea and land; and efficient enough to hold a government seat as it is shown it has enough resources and offerings to public to fulfill everyone's daily routine, of becoming the seat of the Bangsamoro government as enshrined in the provision of Section 1, Article VII of Republic Act No. 11054 also known as Organic Law for the BARMM.

References:

<https://philippinescities.com/cotabato-city-maguindanao/>
<http://Wikipedia.org>
 Republic Act 11054

(a) **Industry.** - Cotabato City has a more or less 1,700 hectares of fishfonds.

(b) **Commerce.** - The City has its local and national-based shopping centers. To date KCC malls have confirmed its interest to invest herein the City and build its shopping center. NCC malls also have confirmed its willingness to expand their branches herein the City.

(c) **Tourism.** - Recently the number of hotels, inns and pension houses increase, in 2015 the City posted an all time high tourist arrivals growth highest on Region 12, and Cotabato City has rank 1 in Region 12 in hotel occupancy rate.

(d) **Utilities.** - Electric power is distributed to households and commercial establishments in Cotabato City by Cotabato City and Power Company (CCPC), a private firm owned by Aboitiz. Metro Cotabato Water District (MCWD) handled the water supply of the entire City. Telecommunications in the city are mainly supported by three (3) major telecommunication organizations namely; Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), Globe Telecom and Smart Communications. Internet Service Providers are also handled by the said telecommunication companies. Cable Services are offered by Cotabato Cable Signal and Sky Cable.

(e) **Hospitals and Medical Facilities.** - The City has its well-equipped and can accommodate large number of beneficiaries government hospital, the Cotabato Regional and Medical Center (CRMC) and six (6) more private hospitals which are equally with high caliber services.

(f) **Education.** - The City has gone far in terms of producing excellent graduates which can be reflected by growing number of school institutions not to mention the newly acquired status of Cotabato City State Polytechnic College into State University as Cotabato State University. Further, the City has a distinct private educational institution Notre Dame University known to have offered quality education and a home of topnotchers in the field of Engineering. Furthermore, sixteen (16) private schools are also located in the city.

Section 5. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in newspaper of general circulation in the BARMM.

APPROVED, _____, 2019.