

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Muslims in the Philippines

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EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ In the 2000 Philippine Census 5.1% of Filipinos identify as Muslim. By 2030 the Muslim population is expected to increase to 5.7%. The Philippines are one of seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region with increasing Muslim populations. They are the most significant minority group in the Philippines.¹
- ❖ The Filipino Muslim population is expected to increase by 50% with an increase of 2.4 million Muslims in the Philippines. Current statistics show there are 4.7 million Muslims in the Philippines with the projected increase leading to 7.1 million.²
- ❖ Islam was introduced into the Philippines in the 1380s when Karim ul' Makhdum, an Arab trader, arrived on the Sulu Archipelago.³
- ❖ Mindanao, home to the majority of the Filipino Muslim population, is the second largest of the Philippine islands. Ten percent of Mindanao's population is Muslim. Mindanao is the agricultural capital of the Philippines, an estimated eight to ten percent of exported produce from the Philippines comes from the Mindanao region.⁴
- ❖ Muslims in Southeast Asia were identified as Moro during Spanish rule. After the Philippines gained independence from Spanish colonial rule, the Organization of Islamic Countries and Filipino Muslims identified as the Bangsamoro people. After the Filipino government passed the Muslim Organic Act in 1989, Bangsamoro became the official term for Muslims in the Philippines.⁵
- ❖ The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (AMMR) is comprised of five provinces, Basilan (with the exception of Isabela City), Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. The AMMR is the only region in the Philippines that has its own governmental system.⁶
- ❖ Muslim rebel groups have fought since the 1970s for independence and official recognition of their region as an autonomous homeland. Muslims recognize southern Mindanao as their ancestral homeland. They have inhabited the Mindanao region since the late 12th century, 300 years before the Spanish Christian colonizers.⁷

¹ Pew Research Center's Forum On Religion & Public Life, January 2011

² <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-asia/>

³ <http://web.archive.org/web/20100421200803/http://pewforum.org/world-affairs/countries/?CountryID=163>

⁴ <http://investvine.com/unearthed-gem-of-minda/>

⁵ <http://www.ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/articles-on-c-n-a/article.php?i=232&igm=4>

⁶ <http://armm.gov.ph/#>

⁷ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2014/01/philippines-army-kills-muslim-rebel-holdouts-20141284287381758.html>