

DTI stages a dialogue with halal industry experts



Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual is joined by officers and representatives from the DTI-Halal Industry Development Office (DTI-HIDO), Halal Certifying Bodies (HCBs), DK P.O Fulfillment Company Inc. (DKPO), and the Department of Tourism (DoT) during a halal dialogue held at the DTI International Bldg., Makati City on 15 February 2024.

The Department of Trade and Industry – Halal Industry Development Office (DTI-HIDO) held a forum entitled *Harmonizing Growth in the Halal Industry: A Dialogue with Halal Certification Bodies and Opportunity Sharing* at the DTI International Bldg., Makati City on 15 February 2024.

Distinguished Halal Certification Bodies (HCBs), esteemed guests from DK P.O Fulfillment Company Inc. (DKPO), and the Department of Tourism (DoT) had the opportunity for collaborative discussions on the development of the halal industry in the Philippines.

The discussions centered on the challenges faced by HCBs and opportunities for growth, guidelines for Muslim-friendly establishments in the country, and MSME-empowering initiatives.

Anchored on the Halal Friendly Philippines campaign of **DTI Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual** that calls for a more progressive, collaborative, and developmental approach in developing the Philippine halal sector, this was the first time that all HCBs were convened under one roof to discuss halal initiatives.

Secretary Pascual graced the event and acknowledged the pivotal role of HCBs and partners for their contributions in this sector.

“We hear you (addressing HCBs) and we want you to be onboard with us through partnership and collaboration. Together, we can grow this industry not only for the Muslim consumers but the rest of us who understand the beauty behind the halal principles – being organic, healthy, and hygienic,” Secretary Pascual said during the forum.

On the same note, **DTI Undersecretary and Chief-of-staff (COS) Ana Carolina P. Sanchez** said the forum served as a crucial opportunity to discuss insights on various aspects of halal industry and encourage active participation among the group. She emphasized that healthy collaboration is key to achieve the shared vision for the industry.

“The presentations from key players in Halal Certification Bodies will illuminate advancements, challenges, and opportunities. I encourage active participation and the sharing of valuable insights to contribute to strategic actions for industry growth,” said Usec. Sanchez.

“Consultations and discussions with industry key players is pivotal in advocating halal as sanitary, organic, and for everybody, taking into consideration the requirements of our Muslim brothers and sisters. DTI aims to explore the potential of halal products and services that will boost not only halal awareness but also tourism,” she added.

To further the commitment to fostering growth in the halal sector, DTI entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DKPO whose thrusts is to empower MSMEs through its Fulfillment Model, a proprietary system built for sustainable business performance. Through this, HIDO and DKPO may explore possible partnerships with HCBs’ clients who lack the capability to pursue halal certification.

Also, in the efforts to position the country as the top halal-friendly hub in Asia Pacific, the forum also touched on the possibility to partner with hotel establishments and become possible clients of HCBs. The DOT prepared a presentation on the general guidelines for Muslim-friendly establishment accreditation.

Likewise, **HIDO Project Manager Aleem Siddiqui M. Guiapal** stressed that the convening of HCBs is a step forward in establishing a premier halal friendly hub in the Asia Pacific.

“The government provides the platform to a collaborative, customer centric and competitive halal gateway. But it is our private sector, industries, SMEs, our HCBs and our joint collaboration who will make it happen positioning Philippines as Halal gateway and destination not just in the Asia Pacific but across the globe,” he said.

Joining Secretary Pascual in the forum included PM Guiapal, **DOT Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs and Mindanao Promotions (DOT-MAMP) Hon. Myra Paz V. Abubakar with James Rusell A. Sz, Philippine Accreditation Board – Management System Accreditation Division (PAB-MSAD) Chief Juanita Carpio, and DKPO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Antonio JP. Intal.**

HCBs who attended were **Alliance for Halal Integrity in the Philippines (AHIP) CEO Dr. Potre Dirampatan Diampuan, Halal Development Institute of the Philippines (HIDP) CEO Madrigal V. Sinsuat, Halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HICCIP) CEO Alexander M. Sultan, Islamic Da’wah Council of the Philippines (IDCP) CEO Atty. Abdul Rahman T. Linzag, Mindanao Halal Authority (MinHA) Chairman Engr. Mohammad Ali K. Suib, Philippines Ulama Congress Organization Inc. (PUCOI) Luqman L. Bin Usman Imam, and Prime Certification and Inspection Asia Pacific Inc. CEO Mary Jane Alvero – Al Mahdi.**