

Significance Of 'Araw Ng Dabaw'

...Makes a Person Feel Proud Of Being a 'Dabawenyo'

By GIL M. ABARICO
City Press Secretary

A city that has survived through the centuries does not have to struggle for an identity.

Its own history breathes with myth and legend; its moss-covered churches and ancient battlements are mute but eloquent witnesses to the grandeur of its past and also, perhaps, to the chaos of its present.

But for a city still in its formative years like the city of Davao it is not easy at once to attain the legendary status of Cebu, Manila or Zamboanga whose history is replete with romance and legends about heroes, kings and rajahs, conquistadores and

warrior-missionaries.

Beginnings

The beginnings of a city, which has barely reached its 33rd year of existence, is almost within the living memory of its pioneer inhabitants although it is already a misty past to the vast number of recent settlers who have transformed this veritable wilderness into a metropolis of the south.

Against the backdrop of colonial population influx and the diversity of the origins of its residents, it is perhaps quite understandable why Davao City should strive harder to attain unity and cohesion and thereby establish

down through the years, an identity distinctly its own.

Identification

This drive toward cultural identification started quite late.

It began when the incumbent mayor, youthful Elias B. Lopez, won the city mayorship more than two years ago. Then the idea was conceived for the annual celebration of "Araw Ng Dabaw".

The first celebration was the 31st anniversary of the foundation of Davao City.

Henceforth, every March 16th of each year is celebrated with appropriate week-long festivities, cul-



Governor LOPEZ
Davao Oriental



Governor DE LOS CIENTOS
Davao del Sur

minating on the last day which is proclaimed a special public holiday for the people of Davao City.

March 16, marks the 33rd foundation anniversary of this city—the melting pot of the south and the "world's largest city" area-wise.

Austerity

This year's celebration will be austere, considering the President's pronouncement against expensive festivities, but nevertheless it may attain greater significance and more variety as indicated by the number of events and various aspects revolving around the theme "Tayo'y Dabawenyo".

And this year, the Davao Jaycees are the active co-sponsors of the celebration.

It will be an occasion for assessing and demonstrating Davao City's capacity for growth and progress along economic, industrial, social and cultural endeavors encompassed within its 33 years of existence and within its 244,007 hectares of fertile soil and virgin forests.

Progress

But then one cannot talk of a city and its progress simply by citing figures and statistics.



Governor BOISER
Davao del Norte

One has to feel the throb of the community, the heartbeat of its people, and see, with the vision of its pioneers, the future rising from this conglomeration of the modern Filipino—working together to achieve a common destiny.

If celebration of "Araw Ng Dabaw" once a year makes a person feel proud of being a Dabawenyo—and a Filipino—then everything is worth the effort.

For it is here, more than anywhere else in this country, where dreams are transformed into reality.

Davao City Officials

Elias B. Lopez, City Mayor
Manuel C. Sotto, Vice-Mayor

City Councilors:

Cipriano Villafuerte, Jr., President Protempore
Filicilda Santos, Majority Floor Leader
Manue Garcia, Minority Floor Leader
Tomas Monteverde, Jr.
Benigno S. Bangey
Antonio S. Castillo
Domingo E. Vidanes
Bonifacio Tamayo
Pantaleon Pelayo, Jr.
Victorio Advincula
Napoleon Nida
Apolinario Cabigon
Gaudioso Tioingo
Ramon Morada

Other City Officials

Dr. Julian Rodriguez Jr., City Secretary; Atty. Gonzalo Latorilla, City Council Secretary; Maximino Asistoso, City Treasurer; Samuel Dumala, City Engineer; Vicente Albay, Public Services Officer; Raul B. Fichon, City Fiscal; Felix N. Pepito, City Auditor; Col. Lucio Dumapias, Chief of Police; Nicolas Catul, City Assessor; Pedro Sanvicente, Supt. of City Schools; Dr. Jose S. Quimpo, City Health Officer; Francisco Arlano, Supt., LSAT; Fabio Pinato, City Agriculturist; Dr. Armando Barbadillo, City Veterinarian; Salvador Francisco, City Electrician; Mrs. Emerita Rodriguez, City Librarian; Enrique B. Itling, City Judge; Gumerando Arella, City Judge, Vicente Dalang, City Judge; Bienvenido Amora, City Legal Officer; Rosendo Dacanay, Chief, Fire Department; Mrs. Merie M. Pacetes, City SWD in-charge; Conrado B. Gempesaw, Private Secretary; Atty. Antonio Fichon, Executive Assistant; Angelo M. Abarico, City Press Secretary.

Mayor Elias Lopez

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Lopez was born 40 years ago to a Bagobo couple—Diansig Lopez and Laya-gan Baguio—in what is now Barrio Baguio, Cayan, about 30 kilometers away from the city.

As a boy he was a loner. And like any other Bagobo, he was reared to be a tiller of land.

Could his parents possibly have imagined that their son was destined to be the leader of half a million Davaoenos living in over 200,000 hectares of urban environment?

Lopez was only 11 when he finished his elementary schooling. At the age of 18, he was already graduated from the Davao City high school.

He worked his way through the University of the Philippines and graduated with a law degree, and in 1956 he passed the

bar examinations.

Immediately after taking the bar examinations, he came back to Davao and was elected city councillor with the highest number of votes. He ran for reelection in 1960 and was again topnotcher.

He was elected vice mayor in 1964, against two official party candidates.

Two years later, he became the first Filipino to be awarded by the United Nations' Colombo Plan grant on Local Government Administration and Community Development. He attended the Group Training Course in Tokyo, participated in by 16 Asian and South American countries.

In 1967, he aspired for and won the city mayorship against a three-term incumbent.