

Chapter 1. General Information

History of Cavite

The Genesis of Cavite

Before the arrival of the Spaniards in the Philippines, Cavite was already a significant area of interest for foreign merchants and traders. The colonizers arriving in the late 16th century found importance to the unique tongue of land thrust and deep waters into Manila Bay. They perceived its value to become the main staging ground where they could launch their bulky galleons and later became the most important port linking the colony to the outside world through Manila-Acapulco Galleon Trade. Cavite became one of the significant areas of influence during the Spanish times.

The present location of Cavite City, formerly known as *Tangway*, played an essential part in trade with the settlements around Manila Bay wherein it was considered the mooring place for Chinese junks. In 1571, Spanish colonizers established the port in the said area. They also fortified the settlement as the first line of defense for the city of Manila. Ships were built and fitted at the port. Many Chinese merchants settled in Bacoor and Kawit, which are opposite the Spanish town to trade silks, porcelain, and other oriental goods. The vibrant mix of traders, Spanish seamen, and residents gave rise to the use of pidgin Spanish called *Chabacano*. However, Cavite labor, conscripted through polo or forced labor, bore the brunt of the burden in cutting and hauling timber from the mountains to the shipyards at Cavite el Puerto. Thus, behind each galleon built that gave huge earnings to highly placed Spaniards in Manila, was a tale of woes and sacrifices of Caviteños who welcomed the outbreak of the revolution.

In 1614, the politico-military jurisdiction of Cavite was established. It covers all the present territory of Cavite except for the town of Maragondon. Maragondon used to belong to the Corregimiento of Mariveles. In 1660, exiled Christians brought by the Jesuits from Mollucas established a settlement within Maragondon. This land was named Ternate after their homeland. Mariveles ceded Maragondon to Cavite in 1754 when it gained independence from Pampanga.

Considering that Cavite was a valuable asset due to its military importance, Cavite was attacked by foreigners in their quest to conquer Manila and the Philippines. In 1647, the Dutch unsuccessfully made a surprise attack on the city, pounding the port ceaselessly. Moreover, in 1672, the British defeated the Spaniards and occupied the port during their two-year interregnum in the Philippines. This sparked an idea to the Caviteños the possibility of overthrowing Spanish rule and be at the forefront of the Philippine Revolution against Spain.

The Seedbed of Revolution

The Philippine Revolution, carried by *indios* (*indigenous people*), was the first successful revolution by brown people in the history of mankind. Parenthetically, it was a revolution with a distinct Caviteño accent.

Before the outbreak of the revolution, friars from Spain acquired vast haciendas in Cavite, constituting more than a quarter of total friar land holdings in the Philippines. These haciendas became the source of bitter agrarian conflicts between the friar orders and Filipino farmers that pushed several Caviteños to live as outlaws. This opposition to the friar orders was an important factor later in the country's independence. Luis Parang led the agrarian revolt of 1828 and Eduardo Camerino in 1869. Parang and Camerino, the notorious bandits in the eyes of the government but patriots to their people, were under Father Mariano Gomez's tutelage and became the preliminary groundwork of Philippine Revolution in Cavite.

In 1872, a mutiny by disgruntled navy men in Cavite led to a large-scale crackdown of reformers and liberals. Three Filipino priests – Jose Burgos, Mariano Gomez, and Jacinto Zamora - were executed for alleged complicity in the mutiny of about 200 Filipino soldiers and workers in the Cavite arsenal. It has been described as "judicial murder ... that shocked the Filipino people in nationhood, as did no other single event in the nineteenth century. Indeed, February 17, 1872, has been called the birthday of the Filipino nation."

Prominent Caviteños were among the casualties of Cavite mutiny in 1872. Most notable were Carlos Aguinaldo, *gobernadorcillo* of Cavite el Viejo; Mariano Alvarez, founder of the Magdiwang Council of the Katipunan in Cavite; Jose Basa y Enriquez, a noted lawyer, educator, writer, and reformer; Silvestre Legazpi, general treasurer of the Revolutionary Government; and Emilio Aguinaldo.



Teatro Caviteño: Headquarters of the Philippine Army in Cavite Nuevo (Cavite City)

After the victory at Alapan, Aguinaldo unfurled the Philippine flag for the first time and hoisted it at Teatro Caviteño up front of Filipino revolutionaries, about 270 captured Spanish marines, and officers of the U.S. Asiatic Squadron.

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The Philippine Revolution started in 1896 and Cavite took center stage as thousands of Katipuneros liberated in most of the province's towns. On September 12, 1896, thirteen prominent Caviteños, ten Freemasons and three Katipuneros, were executed by a Spanish firing squad in Fort San Felipe, Cavite for the alleged connivance in the uprising. The execution of the thirteen influential Caviteños was aimed to halt the spread of upheaval that started in Cavite el Viejo (Kawit), San Francisco de Malabon (the City of Gen. Trias) and Noveleta, conversely, all municipalities in Cavite took arms and after the battles of Binakayan and Calero on November 9 – 11, 1896, Spanish sovereignty in the province is terminated except in Cavite Arsenal, the home base of the Spanish Far East Fleet.

The Cavite Mutiny of 1872 was the opening curt of the fray for the Filipino emancipation; however, the execution of the thirteen martyrs rang down the curtain for the Spanish regime in the Philippines.

The most prominent event in the history of the Philippines was the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898, in Kawit. General Emilio Aguinaldo, as the president of the First Republic of the Philippines, proclaimed independence after a successful revolution by the Filipino people without any foreign aid. Aguinaldo then issued a manifesto on August 6, 1898, under the international law to secure the recognition of Philippine independence. He played a prominent and decisive role in the most significant chapter of the national history and its legacy as the first successful revolution in Asia.

The Americans established civil government in the province in 1901. The naval station in Sangley Point became the principal American naval base in the country. As a consequence of the persistent struggles in Cavite between American forces and Filipino rebels, the province became depopulated leading to ratification of Public Act No. 947 of 1901 that reduced the municipalities of Cavite from 22 to nine.

During World War II, the Japanese targeted the naval base during the first wave of attacks on military installations in the Philippines. During the military conflicts and engagements against the Japanese Occupation, the general headquarters of the Philippine Commonwealth Army, active on January 3, 1942, to June 30, 1946, and the 4th Constabulary Regiment of the Philippine Constabulary, active again on October 28, 1944, to June 3, 1946, was stationed in Cavite. Colonel Mariano Castañeda of the Philippine Constabulary, a native from Imus, Cavite, led the Filipino - American Cavite Guerilla Forces (FACGF) against Imperial Japanese occupation in an attempt to recapture Cavite. Moreover, Iglesia Filipina Catolica, the first Philippine independent church, was established by Riego de Dios in Maragondon in early 1900.

The Philippines regained independence on July 4, 1946, when America hauled down its flag, and the Philippines

hoisted its own. The restoration of the Philippine independence was a boundless moral victory to the Filipinos and a great source of dignity to the Caviteños because Aguinaldo, as enunciated by Ferdinand Marcos, "mounded with his hands and watered with his blood the first Republic established by a brown people."

For centennial years, Cavite has portrayed an important part in the country's colonial past and eventual fight for independence, gaining the title "Historical Capital of the Philippines". Cavite and its people, what they are today, and what will be tomorrow will remain with their infinity as a place with a glorious history, and people fortified with the strength to live and die for a worthy cause.

History of Provincial Government of Cavite

The provincial government of Cavite has a colorful history. During the greater part of the Spanish regime the provincial administration was handled by the alcalde mayor who was the representative of the



governor and captain general in Manila. As alter ego of the Chief executive of the country, the alcalde mayor exercised over all executive, judicial, and legislative functions within his jurisdiction. He was in fact a petty captain general because he held under his orders the armed forces of the province for purposes of defense and maintenance of peace and order. By the Decree of June 25, 1847 the title of alcalde mayor in Cavite was changed to politico-military governor. He was also tripped of judicial functions.

The last Spanish politico-military governor of Cavite, with headquarters in the cabecera of Cavite (now Cavite City), was Col. Fernando Pargas whom Emilio Aguinaldo, as captain municipal of Cavite el Viejo (now Kawit), saw on the morning of August 31, 1896 to ask for a detachment of soldiers to protect his town from bandits. Aguinaldo's plan was to ambush the government troops on their way to Kawit and seize their arms which his Magdalo followers needed urgently to start the armed uprising against Spain.

While waiting for his turn to talk to Pargas in his office, Aguinaldo learned that only one company of soldiers was left in Cavite as all available infantry men had been sent to Manila upon urgent summons from Governor and Captain General Ramon Blanco, who had placed eight Luzon provinces (Manila, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Laguna, Batangas and Cavite) under martial law following the discovery of the Katipunan secret society.

With this valuable information, Aguinaldo returned post-haste to Kawit and with the help of two councilmen, Candido Trias Tirona and Santiago Daño, led the assault and capture of the town's tribunal (municipal building). Earlier that day the towns of San Francisco de Malabon (now General Trias) and Noveleta had risen in arms and taken over the control of the local government. It was this cry of Cavite on August 31, 1896, that signaled the beginning of the revolution that engulfed the whole country. Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines was overthrown by revolutionists. Historical documents show that during the revolutionary regime, Cavite had three politico-military governors: Mariano Trias, Emiliano Riego de Dios and Ladislao Diwa.

The revolutionary regime was succeeded by the American regime. Cavite had nine provincial governors from the start of the American regime until the establishment of the Commonwealth government in 1935. These governors were Mariano Trias (1901-1905); Louis J. Van Schaick (1906-1907); Leonardo R. Osorio (1908-1909); Tomas Mascardo (1910-1912); Antero S. Soriano (1912-1919); Luis O. Ferrer, Sr.; (1919-1921); Raymundo Jeciel (1922-1925); Fabian Pugeda (1925-1931) and Pedro F. Espiritu (1931-1934).

The Commonwealth regime lasted from 1935 to 1946. It was interrupted by the Pacific war and the subsequent Japanese occupation of the country. Three governors served during the first phase: Ramon Samonte (1935-1939); Emilio P. Virata, acting governor (1939), and Luis Y. Ferrer, Jr. (1940-1944). Ferrer was succeeded by Mariano N. Castañeda from May to November 1944. The Japanese-sponsored Second Republic under Dr. Jose P. Laurel was proclaimed in October 1943. Dominador M. Camerino was appointed governor from December 1944 to the early part of February 1945. On February 13, Castañeda was recalled as governor by the commander of the advancing Allied forces.

The Commonwealth government was re-established towards the end of February 1945 with Rafael F. Trias as the governor. He served for only a few months after he was succeeded by Francisco T. Arca.

The Third republic was established on July 4, 1946 by virtue of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. Manuel Roxas, the last elected president of the commonwealth, continued as president of the Third Republic. During that time, Dominador Camerino was appointed governor. During the end of his term, Mariano B. Villanueva and Horacio Rodriguez took turn of Camerino's position.

Camerino was elected governor in 1952, but again toward the latter part of his term, he was replaced by Dominador Mangubat who acted as governor from 1954 to 1955. Mangubat was followed by Delfin Montano who was elected governor for four consecutive terms (1956 to 1971). Lino D. Bocalan succeeded him in 1972. He was replaced by Dominador M. Camerino who served as

acting governor from October 1, 1972 until his death on July 24, 1979.

Juanito R. Remulla was appointed as acting governor on September 25, 1979. Under the Third Republic, he was elected governor on January 30, 1980. President Marcos proclaimed the Fourth Republic in 1981 and still, Remulla was in his service as governor until May 1986. Fernando C. Campos succeeded him in 1986 to 1987. Remulla was reelected for a long term (1987-1995). He was succeeded by Epimaco A. Velasco from 1995 to January 1998 and when he was given a position as Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Jr. was appointed in place of him. Bong Revilla served from February 2, 1998 to 2001. He was then replaced by Erineo "Ayong" S. Maliksi in 2001. Maliksi served for three consecutive terms (2001 – 2010).

Juanito Victor "Jonvic" C. Remulla took his oath as the new governor of Cavite on June 26, 2010 at Holy Cross Parish in Tanza, Cavite. During the turn-over ceremony on June 30, 2010 held at the Cavite Provincial Capitol's Ceremonial Hall, Gov. Remulla vows to continue the programs of the last administration and promise to prioritize public service to the Caviteños. His flagship program is to bring the province on a higher ground by making "Cavite: First Class, World Class". Gaining the trust of his constituents during his first term, he was re-elected in May 2013 for his second term of office.

In 2016 election, Gov. Jonvic decided not to run for Office and was substituted by his brother Atty. Jesus Crispin "Boying" C. Remulla, a three-term Representative of the Province. Governor Boying's administration started in June 30 of 2016 and will last until June 30 of 2019.

Governor Boying's administration focused on the needed road infrastructures and initiated programs and projects to remedy persistent issues and concerns such as traffic and water management. The Provincial Government enhanced its ISO Registration to ISO 9001:2015. His program thrusts centers on the battle-cry Cavite: One, Strong, Competitive.