

History of Calapan

The derivation of the name of Calapan cannot be traced with certainty. Some opined that it came from the word “**Kalap**” which means to gather logs. Thus “**Kalapan**” was supposed to be a place where logs were gathered. In the old records, however, there was never a mention of Calapan as a place where logs were produced or exported. Furthermore, huge forest trees where logs were produced certainly did not grow near the town, which was swampy. Another theory holds that Calapan was originally pronounced as “**Kalapang**” which, according to an old Tagalog dictionary, was a synonym for “**sanga**” or branch. It could then refer to the settlement of Kalapang as a branch of its mother town of Baco, an adjoining town. The name was later hispanized as **Calapan**.

Political and Cultural History:

The City of Calapan was founded as a parish in 1679 by a Spanish Augustinian Recollect priest, Fr. Diego dela Madre de Dios. Human settlements were established around the parish church which later became the beginning of a small town.

The District convent was transferred to Calapan in 1733 and began its jurisdiction over the Northern Mindoro Ecclesiastical Area.

In the early 18th century, the town occupied only a strip of land stretching from Ibaba to Ilaya in a cross – formed facing the present church and cut-off by a river. In the course of the century, succeeding barrios were founded.

In 1837, the capital of the province was moved from Puerto Galera to Calapan. When Mindoro became a part of Marinduque on June 13, 1902, under Act. No. 423, the capital of Mindoro was transferred to Puerto Galera under the Law. It was re-transferred to Calapan in 1903 for geographical and transportation purposes.

When Mindoro was detached from Marinduque on November 10, 1902, Baco, Puerto Galera and San Teodoro were annexed to Calapan in 1905 under Act. 1280, adding a total area of 843 sq. km. of land. In 1902, under Act 2824, the three (3) municipalities gained their independence.

In 1919, the boundary dispute between Calapan and Naujan was adjudicated by Presidentes Agustin Quijano of Calapan and Agustin Garong of Naujan over a portion of the territory of what is now known as the present boundary. The portion of agricultural area was awarded to Naujan, thus, making the area of Calapan much smaller as compared to that of Naujan which is now considered as the biggest municipality of the province.

The year 1998 was a landmark event for Calapan when it was converted from a municipality into a component city by virtue of Republic Act No. 8475. The law was authored in Congress by Rep. Renato V. Leviste and was signed by President Fidel V. Ramos on February 2, 1998 in Malacanang Palace. On March 21, 1998, the people of Calapan ratified the creation of the City of Calapan in a plebiscite. March 21, 1998 is therefore marked as the Foundation Day of the City of Calapan. Incumbent Mayor Arnan C. Panaligan became the last Municipal Mayor and the First City Mayor of the City of Calapan. Also, it is the first and only city in the province of Oriental Mindoro.

Since its creation as a city, Calapan has witnessed significant strides in commerce and industry, infrastructure and social services. New commercial establishments were opened providing employment and income opportunities for the residents. An expanded program on social services delivery, particularly in health care and education, were undertaken. The city's physical infrastructure was upgraded which includes the construction of new roads and drainage facilities. Tourism was boosted with the opening of inland resorts and new hotels.

Sixteen years after, the City of Calapan has been transformed from a newly created component city into creating its own identity as "Fly High as ONE CALAPAN: The City of Discipline and Good Character". A more resolute City's Vision states: "METRO CALAPAN 2026: MIMAROPA's Premier center of Investments and Agro-industry", while the Mission Statement is "The City of Calapan shall initiate and sustain programs to create an environment conducive to development and progress thru transparent and participatory governance."

The City Government of Calapan likewise initiates program under the City of Discipline and Good Character called the Eight Character Traits. These are godliness (doing what is pleasing to God), responsibility (knowing and doing what is expected of me), respectability (showing consideration and regard to yourself, others and the world around you), gratefulness (letting others know by my words and actions how they have benefited my life) honesty (being truthful and doing what is sincere and right before God and others), discipline (rejecting wrong desires and doing what is right), generosity (it allows us to give to others because God has given abundantly to us. It is the wise use of stewardship and the attitude that all I have belongs to God and knowing we are the caretakers for His purpose), and last is patriotism (showing love and loyalty for our country).

