

---

The

# INSIGHTS

of

# Bantay, Ilocos Sur

---

By: **Leonardo VC Dagdag**  
SB Secretary

📖 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2016)

---

---

## Table of Contents

Prefatory to this Edition (2016)	-	3
Preface (2011)	-	4
Foreword (2006)	-	5
<b>Introduction</b> (2006)	-	6
<b>I. The past existence of the Municipality</b>		
➤ Evolution and historical account	-	7 - 8
<b>II. Municipal Profile</b>		
➤ Brief Description	-	9
➤ History of “Bantay”	-	9
➤ Creation of the town	-	10
➤ Major and significant events	-	10-13
➤ Historical sites/tourist spots/places of interest-		13-16
➤ General Information	-	17
<b>III. Postscript: Bantay after 400 years</b>		
➤ Economic aspect	-	18
➤ Trade and Industry	-	19
➤ Educational and Social Institutions	-	19-20
➤ Religious and Civic organizations	-	20
<b>IV. Condensed background of the Image of Nuestra Senora de la Caridad</b>	-	21-24
<b>V. “<u>History</u>” (story) of the thirty four (34) Barangays</b>		
Alphabetically arranged (from Aggay to Tay-ac) -		25-58
<b>VI. From the Town Archives</b>		
A) Parish Priests (1752-2016)	-	59-60
B) List of Mayors (1911-2016) and elected officials (2004-16)-		61
C) Municipal Seal and Policy Statements	-	62
D) Ecclesiastical interventions (related to our Lady of Charity)-		63
E) Hermana Mayor (1957-2016)	-	64
F) Geographical maps	-	65-66
G) Pictorials, in a nutshell	-	67
H) <u>Readings and writings:</u>		
1. Town’s present features and situation -		68-70
2. Historical trace of <i>Ylocos</i> Province -		71
3. ‘Only in Bantay’	-	72-73
4. Backdrop of ‘Ladek’ recipe	-	74-75

VII. Welcome the era of <b>Dur-as↑BANTAY</b> , a glance	
A) Notes on LGU buildings, annexes, town plaza-	76-77
B) Political Chronicles and Highlights (from 2006 to 2016)-	78-84
C) Photos	85-90

## P R E F A T O R Y

(2016)

My 3<sup>rd</sup> time to remake and reproduce this paperwork. In order to compress its contents and have it compacted to limited pages, I have to exclude topics on the ✓evolution of our country’s local government units, ✓the terse origin of barangay government and ✓historical account of political governance that were still included in the 2011 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) copies of ‘The Insights’. Instead, highlighted and focused herein are the sequential administrative backdrop (‘**town chronicles**’ at pages 78-84) towards our quest for developmental progress attuned to the attainment of our battle cry and chant: **Dur-as↑BANTAY**.

Retained, however, are the most relevant and worthy reading materials, directly pertaining to our town’s travel onwards socio-economic growth. Thus, many of my ad libs, blab-blabs, personal side notes and comments were removed, while some subjects were merely recopied, reprinted and excerpted, but UPDATED.

So much more can be written of my town, but I want it reduced and not bulky because I have no expense for a book-type publication.

To AVPD & LJPD, my loving grandchildren, so far.

**The Author**  
Feast of St. Augustine, 8/28/2016



## **P R E F A C E**

(2011)

Time has arrived for me to revise ‘The Insights’ after five (5) years when it first came out in order to further enhance it and rectify its flaws. Unlike the first (2006 copy), the 2011 edition only now provides relevant matters pertaining all to the town, eliminating those of (my) general notes, topics and readings on ✓Philippine history on the factual relationship among Spanish colonizers, Ecclesiastics and Filipinos, ✓the evolution of early LGUs and ✓archaic conflicts (feudal) between the State and our Church. Among others, included herein instead are articles on “*Only in Bantay*”, “*Laddek delicacy*”, “*Ylocos Historical Trace*”, Articles and Chronicles, latest pictures and most recent landmarks, happenings and incidents onward the developmental growth and progress of Bantay. In its entirety, it is an ***improved and updated version*** in my aim to furnish a minuscule contribution to those seeking data regarding our town.

With all the tasks spread at my desk, it was not easy to squeeze office time for this humble paperwork, but I have to because I have made it a commitment and my personal vow. More so, I was inspired just by the thought of a student or stranger coming to our office researching for bits and pieces of information of Bantay and all we can offer is, of course, the INSIGHTS, its all there is, its all therein...*Sa sobrang gasgas, nagkapunit-punit na, kailangan na talagang palitan.*

To LAVCD, whom I inadvertently omitted, this one now for you...

**The Author**

Feast of St. Augustine, 8/28/2011



## **FOREWORD**

(2006)

Why this paperwork and the title – **The Insights**? As Sangguniang Bayan Secretary **supposedly** in-charge of the Municipal library and local archives, most often I am queried on significant data about Bantay. *Albeit* I lack the enthusiasm to undertake an intensive research, but confronted with such peculiar situation, I found myself responsible, nay obligated, in collating vital records for the comprehension of those who want to seek bits of background *vis-à-vis* **the historical saga of the town and events leading to it**. Little did anyone know that I am not *au fait* with such story tales, legends and chronicles (of the historical, political, cultural, ecclesiastical, parochial or ethnical account) of Bantay. Essentially, I would then lend the needed materials to those who come to my office for relevant topics and infos. Basically, the reading resources I supplied were those furnished or prepared by the DILG, published articles, contemporary writings and researches authored by known scribes that were already made available when I assumed position in 1992. Patently, the pieces of information I handed out were entirely foreign to me and I didn't care less as to the intrinsic validity and veracity of what were written, for I am not a historian nor an archivist and I leave to the user to decipher what he reads, and to the writer to vouch for what he writes.

After the 50<sup>th</sup> celebration (January 12, 2006) of the canonical coronation of Our Lady of Charity, I was tapped by our Parish to make a research on the historical backdrop of the Image, the statue itself, of *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad* for purposes of the yearbook (souvenir program) as a living memento of that grand event. In the process of my readings and collecting references for my assignment, I encountered interesting notes and my understanding on certain aspects of the history of Bantay broadened, or rather deepened, that aroused my keen curiosity. Indeed, it was a reawakening for me that even after finishing my task, remarkably, during my spare time in the Office, I continued reading other record of events *apropos* Bantay's past (and the rest of Philippine history), maybe, due to sheer passion or out of utter delight. And for the first time, I took time scrutinizing and reviewing the reading materials I provided to borrowers, linking and interweaving them with those I have researched... Then came the idea that there ought to be an abridged rewriting, an improved rewording and a simplified compendium that could be a compact guide to rectify, reconcile, expound or straighten contradictions and inconsistencies of the written past, which may have been erred by authors, typographically or inadvertently, trivial or crucial, as told or retold; for history can be rewritten but account of past events should not be altered.

Thus, I started collating and updating our **Municipal Profile** mid of May 2006 to keep abreast the academe, students, researchers, investors and, perhaps, the future generation, of a documentary that could be relied upon. My aim, therefore, is to present a broad but concise reference tool, weeding out uncertain areas or unnecessary concepts, while retaining those of utmost import and adding thereto my own impressions, without impairing the very foundation of ideas which are of probative value to Bantay's history. It is a misnomer to say that the contents of this work are authoritative nor am I claiming that '**The Insights**' is wholly of my own. To afford a relevant spring of knowledge, this is my illustrious attempt to account, digest and bind altogether those subject matters which I believed are perennially useful to the learner and the learned. Trifling conflicts, therefore, were not magnified, but instead harmonized, so I undertook a meticulous review, re-examination and **made a correlation**. Simply put, this is a derivative compilation and repository of the sum total data that I grasped and read from countless books, articles, commentaries and publications, adding to these my own version or contribution of historical pieces about Bantay, which I perceived are worth citing and knowing. Evidently, no bibliography, normally placed at the last page of a book, can be found because, principally, my sources are various. However, just to mention a few, my references include- ✓The Souvenir Program of 1956 [Coronation of Apo Caridad], ✓The Souvenir Program of 1981 [Yearbook, Silver Jubilee (25<sup>th</sup>) Nuestra Senora de la Caridad], ✓The Souvenir Program of 1996 [Ruby Anniversary (40<sup>th</sup>) of Nuestra Senora de la Caridad] ✓Symbols of Northern Provinces (Published by DILG, 1998) ✓Philippine History (by M.J. Enriquez, published by Phil. Book Company, 1949), ✓The Philippine Barangays (by J. Ortiz, 1992), ✓Philippine History, Encarta Encyclopedia, Premium suite 2005 and ✓several articles/writings researched by Fr. Roque Reyes, [Curator/Archivist of Museo Nueva Segovia (1994)], and ✓those of Mrs. Josefina C. Vizcarra.

INSIGHT means perception or awareness of something, an input of understanding, or of some things assumed or believed to be true that can be used as basis of an argument or a theory. Forthwith, it is a POSTULATE of information or the fruition of historical data passed-on through generations anchored on records and writings that are fundamentally acceptable but not necessarily authenticated. Though it may be mere hypothesis, it becomes beyond cavil through general acquiescence.

Much to my desire to have this presented in paperback type, however considering the cost it would entail, it was modestly reduced into tablet form, anyway what matters is the worthiness of its contents and not how classic it was prepared. To hear sometime it is appreciated for achieving well its purpose that, for me, would suffice as my reward and consolation.

To **JMLL** and **LBAP**, this humble work is proffered. "This *copyright* is not for sale"

'HOMER SOMETIMES NODS'

### **The Author**

/Feast of t. Augustine, 2006

"I made it my solemn vow to update this contribution every five years to further enhance it and rectify its flaws-



## INTRODUCTION

Echoing to my ears up to now were the very words that my grade school social studies teacher has taught me, who emphatically implanted that– “It was Ferdinand Magellan who discovered the Philippines in 1521 and that the main purpose of the Spaniards in coming to the Philippines is to spread Christianity.” Oh, oh, and my, my, but when I have come to reason, patriotically or paradoxically, it is most accurate to say that– “It was Ferdinand Magellan who placed the Philippines in the global map when the Spaniards set foot in our islands in its great malayan-asian expedition of 1519, purposely to conquer (colonize) our country under the guise of spreading the catholic faith”. Sounds radical, but, glaringly, this is a lucid illustration how our history as written, should be rewritten. For how could Magellan ‘discover’ (in its strictest sense) the Philippines when there were already ethnic and pagan tribes (the *tinguians, bontoks igorots, negritos, moros, etas, semangs, etc.*) occupying our country, long before he **invaded** our territory. The contribution of Magellan is the appellation and recognition that Philippines gained in the world community when it was included in the international world atlas map of nations. This was made possible because Spain, the most powerful State at the time, claimed the Philippine islands as part of its domain, a colony. If spreading Christianity was the purpose of the Spaniards, how come we were under their tutelage for almost four centuries? Their intentions became fully manifested when, for all those times we were under Spain, Filipinos were made second class citizens (*indios*) and subservient to the *castillas*. The Spaniards became interested more in gold and spices in the crusade of Christian Europe to recover the Holy Land from the hands of the Turks; in the process, they came in contact with the Oriental goods and products of the East, thus developed barter trade between the East and West. It is quite appropriate, more suitable to say, that, in order for Spaniards facilitate reaching down to the grassroots, to be acceptable and avoid confrontation with the aborigines (early settlers way ahead of them), a scheme of indoctrination must be laid down to serve as foundation or primer of obedience and adherence. This was *fait accompli* by preaching the Holy Gospel, by inculcating the existence of a supernatural being whom everyone must render reverence for fear of punishment and by spreading that the religious friars were the only blessed ones used as instrumentalities to teach the words of God and save mankind from the fires of hell. Through faith and religious values plus a spice of education (or lack of it) we allowed to be ruled, bigoted and indolent. Obviously, the cooperation between Spanish soldiers and the clergies (religious and seculars) was inevitable for the spread of Christianity (Roman Catholicism).

Undoubtedly, we owe our socio-cultural heritage to the Spaniards for they were responsible in grooming the Filipinos in their likelihood. They were responsible for our civilization, as most of our customs, traditions, beliefs, philosophies and practices were derived from them. Without Spain’s intervention, possibly, Philippines, lying in the Malayan peninsula, could have been an ISLAM country by now, of Moslem religion following the teachings of Mohammad, a colony of China or Britain (England). Oddly enough, without Spain, we may not have any recorded document to trace the history of the Philippines, as a people and as a nation; as well as the existence of Bantay as a Municipality and its ancestry...

Enshrined in our Constitution is the *‘inviolability of the separation between the State and the Church’*, but as our history reveals, **the Church can not be separated from the State!** Never! It is the accepted rule, rather than the exception, because the milieu of our country is intertwined and interlaced with the religious hierarchy for it played an extraordinary role in our conquest, development and to the very foundation of our being one race, one nation. Even by now, it could not be overemphasized the influence and power the Church (or of religion) yields upon our system of government.

As the dictum goes: History links our past, reflects our present and determines our future.



## **BANTAY, ITS PAST EXISTENCE**

In a glimpse, the evolution and historical account...

- Pre- A.D. c 400 - Migration into the Islands from China, the Malayan Peninsula, Indonesian archipelago and other south-east Asian countries like Borneo, Indonesia. A mixture of culture where Islam is predominantly the religious belief, more particularly in the southern islands, because of the influence of other neighbouring countries until 1200. In here coined the word '**balangay**', a Malayan word, referring to the boat people-settlers and tribal communities found in the islands;
- 1400 - Chinese people frequented the islands where commercial and diplomatic trade relations were maintained between chieftains (*datu*) with the Ming Dynasty;
- 1521 - Portuguese navigator **Ferdinand Magellan**, serving the Spanish royalty, rediscovered the islands, which was then occupied by its Asian neighbors hundreds of years before. After his occupation, a voyage report was made with the return of ship *Victoria* to Spain on 1522. Thereafter, the King of Spain commissioned naval explorations to the Islands;
- 1542 - A Spanish (Roy Lopez de **Villalobos**) expedition claimed the islands and named it Philippines (*Las Islas Filipinas*), in honor of King Philip II of Spain;
- 1564 - A major naval-military expedition led by **Miguel Lopez de Legaspi** began establishing permanent settlement and started conversion to Roman Catholicism. Cebu became the first organized town or as permanent settlement in 1565, followed by the founding of Manila in 1571;

- 1571-72 - After the establishment of Manila as administrative center, explorer **Juan de Salcedo**, (nephew of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi) moving farther north of Luzon, arrived in the **Yloko settlement** ('Samtoy' or '*sao ditoy*' also at p. 71, *ibid*) and began setting up tribunals that soon became the *municipios* (local seat of governance). But even before the arrival of Salcedo, some parts of Ilocos were already of Malayan civilization enjoying some barter and trading with the Chinese and Japanese races who brought with them jars, silk and cookeries availing its long stretch of coastline;
- 1572 - **Augustinian missionaries** followed who labored for the establishment of Manila as ecclesiastical center (as a diocese, then as an archdiocese in 1595), thereafter they worked for the creation of Cebu (Nueva Caceres) and Vigan (Nueva Segovia) as suffragan dioceses. Together with Salcedo, these Augustinian friars founded Vigan in 1574 as a **ciudad** (commercial city and trade capital of the North). After the exploration of the Ilocos Province by the Spaniards, the evangelization of the natives was pursued with relentless zeal and enthusiasm and started building convents or worship houses. **Bantay** used to be part of Vigan (**Ciudad Fernandina**) as its tributary, but due to the increasing population and demands for religious devotion, the **construction of the Bantay chapel and convent soon started;**
- 1590 -After almost 20 years of forced labor, the Bantay parish was established with the completion of its church and the bell tower;
- 1593 -With the inception in **1591** of the **Bantay Parish**, which is made a requirement prior to the creation of a *pueblo*, ***Municipio de Bantay*** was officially founded;
- 1893 - Given the status of a recognized *pueblo*, with the passage of 'MAURA LAW of 1893' as legal basis of its juridical existence, Bantay was constituted as a duly organized town.





## **MUNICIPAL PROFILE**

*(lvcdag2)*

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE LGU:

**BANTAY** is one of the Municipalities of the first District of Ilocos Sur, situated just northeast (or as a gateway) of Vigan City, the Provincial capital. It lies within the latitude 17°33' to 17°40' and longitude 120°23' to 120°31'. It is bounded on the North by Municipalities of San Ildefonso, Santo Domingo and Magsingal; on the South by Abra river and a portion of Vigan City; on the West by San Vicente and partly by Vigan; and on the East by the Province of Abra and by Santa. Traversed via the Manila North Road (MNR), Bantay is approximately 138 kilometers north of San Fernando, La Union, the regional center of Region 1, and 403 kilometers away from Manila, the capital of the Philippines. Based on the latest projected reports (2016), Bantay has a total population of 36,828 (supplied by the NSO), 7,452 total numbers of households (MHO data) and 18,951 registered voters (courtesy of COMELEC). Its total land area is 104.85 sq. kms. or 10,485 hectares with a network of 100.706 kms. of Barangay road, 5.33 kms. of Municipal road and 13.75 kms. of National road. With thirty four (34) component barangays, it has been re-classified as a 3<sup>rd</sup> class (income level) LGU, as of July 29, 2008 by the DOF-BLGF.

### ETYMOLOGY AND HISTORY OF “BANTAY”:

The naming of the town as a Local Government Unit has two versions:

First, some people believed it was named ‘bantay’ [or ‘*kabanbantayan*’] after its natural and physical features, meaning MOUNTAIN, because of its hilly and mountainous terrain, particularly at its eastern portion.

Second, the other explanation is linked to the Holy Shrine of the famous and miraculous **Image of Our Lady of Charity**, which was accidentally found by fishermen on board a ship that got stranded on the shores of the Ilocos coast during the Spanish colonial period (about 1572- 1590), where only people from Bantay were able to carry it. Bringing home to their place, the Bantay residents built a chapel, which is now the main feature of St. Augustine Parish Church. It is often said that, from the time the miraculous Image was brought to Bantay, Tagalogs and Zambals would come to town claiming for the Holy Shrine and Image of Our Lady of Charity but even with all their might and efforts, they were not able to move nor possess it. Instead, they left Bantay with the notion and belief that the Holy Shrine

was meant purposely, and the miraculous Image of the Virgin intended, to remain for the residents of Bantay only, therein to reside forever to “guard” the place. Thus, evolved the name of the town as -BANTAY-, meaning, as a GUARDIAN.  
CREATION OF THE TOWN:

Juan de Salcedo, the great *Spanish conquistador*, first arrived in *Ylocos* in 1571 and began setting up tribunals that soon became the seat of municipal governance (also at pp.71-72); while the Augustinian friars followed in 1572 and started building the convent or house of worship that later became the St Augustine Parish Church. But it was only in 1591 that the parish was recognized or first established, while the town of Bantay was formally founded (as duly organized pueblo) in 1593 because it was formerly a part of Vigan. It is one of the thirty-four (34) towns of the Province of Ilocos Sur, the legal basis of its juridical existence is the MAURA LAW of 1893 and, hence, was constituted as a separate political subdivision during the Spanish regime, even before the settling of the American occupation in 1898

#### MAJOR AND SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

The early Spanish settlers made the town beautiful by building the ‘tribunal’, otherwise known as the town hall, the church, bell tower, roads and streets by forced labor. The St. Augustine church was originally made only of bamboo and cogon, a hut structure built by Bantay residents to house the miraculous Image of Our Lady of Charity, but it was later-on changed into a permanent edifice (built and completed in 1591) because of the good fortune it brought to the people (also refer at p.13). The Augustinian friars chose *Saint Augustine de Hippo*, the Doctor of Grace, as the Patron Saint and the town fiesta used to be celebrated every 28<sup>th</sup> of August, (the feast day of His conversion), but because of inclement weather during this month, **Fr. Alfredo F. Verzosa** (Parish Priest, 1912-1916) caused the transfer of the festivity to May 5 (Patronal feast day of St. Augustine) of every year.

The original inhabitants of the town have family names start with letter “P” taken from the designated listing, as an adopted system of the Spanish rulers in all the towns of Ilocos Sur, to easily identify and monitor movement of residents. In a report of Bishop Domingo de Soria on August 15, 1613, the population of Bantay was 4,000 souls while at that time, Vigan parish has only 2,000. This can be explained by the fact that by then, Bantay parish was very extensive and broad with the inclusions of the parishes of Magsingal (separated in 1676), Santo Domingo (separated in 1742), San Ildefonso (separated in 1769), San Vicente (separated in 1795), Sta. Catalina de Baba (separated in 1795) and Sta. Catalina de Alexandria (now Santa) within its coverage or *bisitas*.

One of the Augustinian friars, Fr. Francisco Lopez, a great Augustinian Philologist, with the help of **Pedro Bucaneg**, the blind genius of the Ilocano tongue who was from this place and author of the epic *Biag ni Lam-ang*, labored hard to translate the Bellarmine Catechism originally written by Robert Cardinal Bellarmine. The book was approved at the **Bantay convent** in 1616 printed in Malayan script and Spanish alphabet and was first published in 1621. The Bellarmine Catechism was the first book printed in Ilocano, by then its influence on the morality, culture and language of the entire Ilocos is immeasurable.

Several battles have spillovers in Bantay, one of which was the Ilocos revolt (Dec. 24, 1762 to May, 1763) led by Diego Silang. Here, this heroic figure resolved to kill the bishop-elect Bernardo Ustariz and all Spanish friars imprisoned by him in Bantay. The prisoners prayed fervently to our Lady of Charity for their deliverance then a Spanish mestizo nicknamed “Vicos” treacherously killed Silang on May 28, 1763 with a pistol at his makeshift fort that took place on a hillside referred to as *Calle Encuentro* (now *Crisologo St*). For the Spaniards, Vicos was their savior and to his honor a commemorative monument was erected in 1763 which, by then and now, became the epitome of the **Municipal plaza**. Then, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1915), it was re-dedicated and transformed (renamed) as Diego Silang Park where a statue of Diego Silang stood but the Vicos memorial was not removed for historical significance... Of late, however, on March 23, 2010, construction works for the renovation and improvement of the center stage (town plaza) and relocation of the shrine were undertaken, in order to pave way for major face-lifting but without sacrificing its parochial set-up and antiquated motif or outlook. This is so, because the memorial is a gloom reminder of the arrogance and tyranny of the Spanish rule and (the stage as well) serves more as an obstacle or barrier in the holding of public functions and social activities. Hence, with the approval of concerned authorities, the town plaza was improved to provide more ample space for civic gatherings preserving its original bearing and cultural heritage [at p. 15(Diego Silang Park) and p. 77 (town plaza)].

Education gained acceptance during the Spanish rule, however, it was at the period of the American regime that more schools were established.

Not long before the coming of the Japanese, the people of Bantay were divided into two opposing groups called the Westerners and the Easterners. The national road going to the North, which is located at the Poblacion, was then known as the ‘*caratela general*’ that served as a demarcation or borderline between the two feuding factions. The spirit of strong sectionalism prevailed between the two groups that not anyone from either group dared to step in the other’s ground to enjoy any form of social intercourse or to ask for help. This dissenting spirit only ceased after the battle of the Greater East Asia co-prosperity

sphere, the aggressors of whom were the Japanese who occupied the Philippines in 1941. In their evacuation places in the mountains and remote barrios, the two opposing groups finally decided to bury their hatred and fought united against the Japanese aggressors.

During World War II, exactly on April 15, 1945, three (3) big incendiary bombs indirectly hit the St. Augustine Parish church but none of them exploded, however five other bombs exploded fifty (50) meters away from it that resulted in the collapse of its roofs. Miraculously, the Image of Our Lady of Charity, which is probably the oldest Marian Image in Ilocandia, remained unscathed. The Church was later rebuilt (in 1950) after the cessation of the arm conflict (at page 13, *ibid*).

Bantay is also one of the very few towns in the country with two (2) established parochial parishes, the other one -Christ the King Parish- at Barangay Paing was inaugurated by then Archbishop Santiago Sancho and Auxiliary Bishop Most Rev. Juan C. Sison, on December 12, 1953 (see p. 47).

**On January 12, 1956**, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, Egidio Vagnozzi canonically crowned, while Archbishop Santiago Sancho of Nueva Segovia proclaimed, the holy Image of Our Lady of Charity as the shrine of “Queen of Ilocandia” which is now figuratively adorned at the Bantay parish church, turning Bantay as the sanctuary of *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad* in Northern Luzon. Thereafter, a *Templete* of *Apo Caridad* was built by the parishioners where the coronation (crowning) is annually commemorated (at page 14).

In the late 1960’s, Ilocos Sur was disreputably renowned for its notoriety due to the relentless clashes of feuding political clans and herein coined the lingo ‘*saka-saka*’ (barefooted), which refers to the dreaded private armies, cunningly representing themselves as militia men, who would ruthlessly kill and malevolently carry out orders for their benefactors. Barangay Ora-*West* was then an identified lair of the Crisologos; while Ora-*East* was a known coddler of the Singsons that the people in these Barangays were at grave odds, depending on the *purok* (either *sitio* West, East or Centro) a resident belongs. Then came nightfall of May 22, 1969, almost all the households of sitio Ora-East and Ora Centro lost their houses and belongings when, right before the folks eyes, these were burned to the ground by attacking mercenaries, several of whom believed were their adversaries from Ora-West. The atrocity that took place was very historical as it triggered one of the causes for the declaration of martial law in 1972 and was decided in a celebrated landmark arson case (People vs Camilo Pilotin, et. al., L-35377-78, 7/31/75), which is the leading jurisprudence and classical illustration cited in law books where the Supreme Court exercised its constitutional mandate ‘to order change of venue or place of trial to avoid miscarriage justice’. Presently, however, all is put to

oblivion as adherents of the disputing families rested their political reprisals and rivalry and the only remnants were the terrified inhabitants, some still lives today recounting their horrifying experience (also refer at p. 46).

Inspired with the common vision that it will strengthen and improve the totality of local governance, 1.) **Legislative Building** (“Annex 1”, also called ‘SB Office/LCS hall’) and 2.) **Administrative/Municipal Health Office** (“Annex 2”, also called ‘Puericulture building’) were blessed and inaugurated on **December 23, 1999** and **May 5, 2003**, respectively (also at p.76, *ibid*). Then, on March 14, 2011, 3.) **Municipal Health Office Extension Building I** (“Annex 3”, also called ‘Dur-as Bantay Birthing Home’) was built/completed in the same year and blessed on **December 22, 2011** to cope with increasing demand for the medical needs and hospital requirements (also refer at pp. 76 and 80). 4.) Another **new 2 storey building** (“Annex 4” or MHO Bldg II), located at the back of the “Annex 2” building (Administrative/MHO) fronting Real Street, commenced construction on **November 12, 2013** (at p. 82). Intended as an additional facility to the MHO extension building (Annex 3), it was funded by the DOH and implemented by DPWH worth 2.5 M. Considered as major breakthroughs and milestone feats in the history of Bantay, these four (4) massive structures (building annexes) were built to ‘reinforce’ the old (main) town hall in order to meet the vast administrative and basic service provisions of the public clientele

Earlier or by November of 2007, the **Bantay Arcade/Commercial Complex** was completed and occupied in **March of 2008**, marking the start of its operation. It was inaugurated/blessed on **December 26, 2008** (at p. 79). In 2012, wet section and motor pool of the Arcade were constructed (p. 81).

#### HISTORICAL SITES/TOURIST SPOTS/PLACES OF INTEREST:

1. **San Augustine Parish Church and Belltower** – one of the oldest churches of Ilocos Sur, was built in 1590 with **Fr. Juan Bautista de Montoya**, as the first parish priest. The Augustinian missionaries named it **St. Augustine**, after their religious congregation which, of course, soon became the Patron Saint. Originally, it was just a chapel or temple for adoration made of *cogon* grass and splitted *bamboos*, built by Bantay natives, where the earlier found Image of Our Lady of Charity was placed and venerated. Then it was made as a church (convent), its columns (pillar) constructed with bricks, molds and clay, but its roofing remained covered with primitive *nipa* and *bolos* that remained for centuries. By **March 23, 1883**, then Parish Priest, **Fr. Eduardo Navarro** (1878-85) initiated the move for the widening and repair of the Bantay church and have it replaced with the introduction of **galvanized iron** (as per documents by the *Obras Publicas de Manila*). He submitted structural plans, elevation designs, wooden beams (architectural support) and towering metal spires and sought permission of the Church hierarchy based in Manila. Despite approval, it was not fully implemented due to financial difficulty. It was during the incumbency

of **Most Rev. Alfredo Verzosa** (parish priest from 1912-1916) who have the church's roofing changed/modified (modernized) with modernized g.i. sheets...

The church was severely damaged when it was obliquely knocked down by a bomb (during World War II, April of 1945), so a temporary shack has to be built where masses could be held but was later reconstructed in 1950 during the time of **Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes** as parish priest. The now restored facade is of neo-gothic designed mixed with pseudo-Romanesque materials and elements. Its grandiose design afforded a reminiscent of the old Spanish architecture using indigenous materials that are of bricks and lime. When the altarpiece background were ruined with termites, it was at the time of **Fr. Amancio Garcia**, as parish priest (1973-1977), who strenuously replaced it with granite-marble type design. At the time of this writing, the ceiling or inside overhead (*bobeda*) is being covered with 'hardy flex plywood' initiated by **Msgr. Gary Formoso**, our parish priest (at p. 84, 2016 chronicles).

According to our great ancestors, fishermen found the **Image of Our Lady of Charity** placed in a wooden box floating in Bantaoay river and when the news broke, people from other towns and Provinces came to take the Image but could not be moved and only people from Bantay were able to carry the miraculous Image. The feast day of Apo Caridad (La Naval, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of September) is fittingly observed with a solemn novena, heightened by a procession attended by many of the faithful every first Sunday of September...

On January 12, 1956, the Parish became the sanctuary of Our Lady of Charity, when the Most Reverend Msgr. Egidio Vagnozzi, the Papal Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, crowned the miraculous Image as the Patroness of Ilocandia. Since then, Bantay, as a parish, celebrates in a sacred manner, the canonical coronation anniversary of *Apo Caridad* every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of January (or 12<sup>th</sup> of January), where devotees from different parts of Ilocos come to pay homage. In her honor, a **Templete** in the parish grounds was built for this purpose. At first, individual persons and families hosted the celebration (or serves as *Hermana Mayor*) but starting 1973, Barangay Pastoral Councils play hosts in the annual festivity (see p. 64). In preparation of the silver anniversary celebration of Her coronation in 1981, major face lifting were undertaken when the church went through significant restoration such as the repair of its roofing, refurbished facade, reconstruction of lateral turrets, plastering and reinvention of its walls and interiors. To signify the presence of a Marian Shrine, a commemorative **Marian Arch** was also erected at the main entrance, realized through the munificence of some of the yearly *hermanas*, which serves as the "Alleluia stage" and site of the "*domingo sabat*" during Easter Sunday. In 1993, the first Nueva Segovia Pastoral Assembly (NSPA 1) decreed that an Archdiocesan gathering takes place every anniversary of Her coronation. On January 12, 2006, on the occasion of Her golden anniversary, a grand and festive program of activities to Her honor was tendered (p.24,also p. 84, 2016 chronicles).

The picturesque, rustic and durable **BELFRY** (or famous Bantay bell tower) sits on a hilltop (**atop the Calvario Hill**) overlooking a vivid green vast of pastureland and the mountain view of the Province of Abra. It was used as a watchtower for invading enemy forces during World Wars I (during the invasion of Zambals) and II (on December 19, 1941, the bells rang incessantly when Japanese ships were sighted at Mindoro, Vigan). On April 15, 1945, the bell tower rigorously rang announcing immediate evacuation of the people as several bombs were dropped by the American forces at the church and bell tower vicinity because Japanese in here quartered and took refuge. Evidently, the scenic Bantay Church and bell tower are monumental witnesses to various atrocities, uprisings and staged revolts. As a main local tourist attraction, it is included in the itinerary of the primeval *Vigan caleza tour ride* and in order that its historical significance and majestic beauty are accentuated, landscaping and face lifting work of the bell tower were undertaken in February, 2004 and the latest was in 2012, courtesy of the Provincial Tourism Council. It is being maintained by the Bantay Parish, with the administrative support of the Municipal government. It was chosen as one of our national heritage due to its endurance from 1592, able to withstand the destructive passage of time and preserve its original beauty to until today.

- 2. Diego Silang Park (town plaza) and LGU gym** – The Diego Silang Park was named in tribute to the heroic feat of this Ilocano hero who was killed at this very site. Ironically, the memorial monument was built in 1763 during the Spanish reign to lend distinction and pay honor to Miguel Vicos, the Spanish mestizo who killed Diego Silang. It is actually the heart and soul of the [central] town plaza where political exercises, social functions and cultural gatherings are held. It was renovated on March 23, 2010, funds provided by Cong. Ronald Singson, to pave way for a more spacious plaza ground through the relocation of the Diego Silang shrine (Vicos memorial) and construction of a modernized multi-purpose stage. The refurbished town plaza was blessed and opened on December 23, 2010 and was first time used as venue for the traditional and annually held Community Christmas program that year (at pp.77 and 80)...

The spacious **Bantay gym** found at the back of the plaza serves as function hall where civic, sports and recreational activities are conducted. In June of 2005, it was further enhanced by the Provincial Government and now under the management and occupancy of Provincial Badminton Association. It is the center of and home to, Ilocos Sur Badminton and other sporting venue.

- 3. Quirino Bridge** – this grandiose four span metallic bridge is named after the late former President Elpidio Quirino and spreads across the Abra river connecting the rocky mountain hills of the town of Santa and the tail end of Bantay. Also referred to as ‘Banaoang bridge’ (at p. 28), it majestically connects and separates two transcending mountains and widely praised because of its marvellous engineering and grand architectural design as glorified by its splendid panoramic beauty, strength and durability when it survived the

bombings of World War II. From here, one can appreciate beneath the serenity and tranquillity of scenic spots overlooking an enormous stretch of riverbed, zigzagging sloping contour of the mountain side and a serene land mass as far as the eye can see. It is considered as one of the most superior bridges built by men because of the utilization of natural endowments combined with fabricated materials. **Unfortunately**, it was destroyed and damaged when one of its steel spans was washed away at the height of super typhoon '*Feria*' that devastated the province on July 4-6, 2001... Construction work began on October of 2007 paving way for a new bridge, where a Japanese firm was contracted by the National government to relocate it to a higher level ground. Completed by 2009, another 'GMA bridge' (aka Banaoang bridge) is now situated on an upper elevation and wider approaches, it was inaugurated by no less than Pres. GMA on December 30, 2009 (also at p. 79). The former Quirino bridge remained at its place for sight-seeing purposes considering that the area has been developed and maintained by the Provincial Tourism Office as an Eco-tourism adventure zone, where a 'zip line' (a cable ride parallel to the bridge with the Abra river), horizontal climbing and a view deck were constructed in the area, making it as a scenic spot for travellers, thrill seekers and nature lovers (at p. 28).

4. **Victoria Park** – locally known simply as '**Caniao**', this square established in 1962 was named in honor of one of the daughters of former President Elpidio Quirino. Herein can be found ✓water falls, ✓a crystal clear natural spring water source (supplying our town and adjacent Vigan), ✓a herbaria, ✓botanical nursery and ✓DENR Office. It is connected to the MNR by a 2.2 kil. road situated on the middle foot of Mount Caniaw located at Brgy Taleb (at p. 57), it is part of the so-called **Caniao Reforestation Project** and **Wildlife Sanctuary**. Gigantic varieties of mountain trees and various species of flora and fauna could be found and waiting to be discovered. A favorite venue for lovers of nature, particularly wildlife hunters, trekkers and hikers, mountain trailers, campers and as picnic groove to residents and vacationers. In May of 2016, it was cited and due for development by the Provincial Tourism Council.
5. **Mt. Tupira** – situated on top of Mount Caniao, (where Victoria Park is located), at Brgy. Taleb (p. 57), the entirety of Bantay and nearby towns could be viewed from this site, even as far as the Abra and the Cordillera mountains. It is 8.5 kilometer road from the national highway, with an elevation of 1,200 meters above sea level, and part of the **Northern Luzon Heroes Hill National Park** (NLHHNP) that extends up to the towns of Santa and Narvacan. It is often referred to simply as "radar" because in the early 60's, a lofty twin metallic-sheet satellite towers are prominently seen radiating during the day and beaming at night. It is situated in such an elevated position that gives access and advantage in telecommunications and antennae relay stations. Transmission lines, telecoms cellular network facilities are found atop its rugged slopes... Untamed animals such as wild deer ('*ogsa*'), wild pig ('*alingo*'), python snakes ('*bet-lat*'), wildfowl ('*abuyo*'), monkeys and other variety of birds could still be caught from this mountainside. Climbing its pinnacle is a toiling task for



the unpaved pathways leading thereto is steeper and precarious than Baguio's Kennon road, but upon reaching its peak, one gets rewarding prize- a cool breeze of air, smell of pine trees, bounteous flora and fauna and breathe-taking natural scenery at high altitude. A perfect destination for mountain climbers, hunters and thrill seekers.

6. Also, Burayok, Napanaas, Sinangbalde & Apar water falls [still due for development] (at page 70 #4).

*Lvcdag2*

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

### (\*Basic data as of June 30, 2016)

Foundation year (town established)	- 1593 by Augustinian friars
Legal basis of juridical existence	- Maura Law of 1893
Total number of local officials and employees	- 161 (supplied by the HRMO)
Elected	= 12 (1 vacant)
Permanent/plantilla	= 64
Casual/contractual workers	= 31
Contract of services//emergency/job orders	= 54
Annual income (from all sources)	- 2011 = 91,709,016.00
(Supplied by the M. Accountant)	- 2012 = 91,307,952.88
	- 2013 = 97,401,660.35
	- 2014 = 90,454,751.09
	- 2015 = <b>130,955,263.12</b> (incl. RA 7171, BuB, IRA)
Number of barangays	- 34
Distance from Manila	- 403 kms.
Population ((MHO supplied)	- 36,828 (projected from NSO)
Voting population, Comelec tally as of 1/31/16	- 18,951 registered voters and counting
Total No. of households (updated MHO data)	- 7,452 families
Classification as of 7/08 (income level)	- 3rd Class Municipality
Total land area	- 104.85 sq. kms (10,485 hectares)
Municipal roads	- 5.33 kms.
Barangay roads	- 100.706 kms.
National roads	- 13.75 kms.
Stadium/gym	- Quirino Stadium; Ilocos Sur Badminton Center
Plazas/Parks	- 25 to include barangay plazas/basketball courts
Parks	- 20
Day Care Centers (public)	- 34
Pre-school/nursery/elem. schools (private)	- 2 (SPC, Greater Heights Learning Center)
Elementary schools (Bantay District, DepEd)	- 18
High schools	- 3 (2 public; 1 private) (TNHS; BNHS, SPC)
Colleges	- 2 (1 public; 1 private) (ISCC; SPC)
Business establishments w/ permits (2015)	- 1,140 duly recorded and w/ permits
Hotels/Inns/Pension house	- 15 (Hotel Manor, One Vittoria, Fiesta Garden, Henady Inn, Villa Manuela, Kuya Mars, North Coast, Terraza de Nino, La Lanterna, La Jenns, Baley Park /Melsol, Marvin Rose Inn, Jaja Hotel, La Lanterna, Hotel Natividad)
Resorts w/ pools	- 6 (Merxine Resort, Jaja resort, La Lanterna, Baley Park/Melsols, Terraza de Nino, Fiesta Garden)
Hospitals (private)	- 2 (Metro Coop Hosp. & Northside Hosp.)
Gasoline refilling stations	- 12
Second Sunday of January (now every 12 <sup>th</sup> )	- Canonical coronation of Our Lady of Charity
May 5	- Town fiesta (Patronal feast of St. Augustine de hippo)

August 28  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of September  
Tourist Attractions/Places of interest

- Feast of the conversion of St. Augustine
- Feast of La Correa de Nstra Sra de la Caridad (La Naval)
- Bantay Bell tower and St. Augustine Church
- Diego Silang Park (Municipal plaza)
- Quirino old bridge (Banaoang zipline and adventure zone)
- Victoria Park (Mt. Caniao water spring)
- Mt. Tupira (Caniao Reforestation Area)
- Burayok, Napanaas, Sinangbalde & Apar water falls (p.70)

Lvcdag2



## **POSTSCRIPT: BANTAY AFTER 400 YEARS**

(Lvcdag2)

[1593 (foundation year) to 1993]

**Agriculture** is still the prime source of income among its rural folks. Agricultural products are rice, corn, peanut, onion, monggo, mango fruits and vegetables. Goldsmithing remains a major home industry specifically in the poblacion, but has rapidly declined due to the mass production of fancy jewelries and progressive/modern use of high tech tools. Commercial establishments abound, most of which are privately owned. Of these, there are around about a thousand retail stores found randomly in its thirty four (34) barangays, gasoline stations, classique hotels, two private cemeteries (memorial parks), eight housing/subdivision projects, elegant resorts and private hospitals. Noted business establishments that thrive includes an NFA buying station, distributors and repackers of known trade products, Universal Robina and San Miguel Corporation products, an illustrious grand mall (JTC Superstore), tire centers, commercial complex (Marinella), LPG refillers, Smart/Globe/Piltel cell sites, hamburger joints, pizza parlor, just to mention a few. Business settlement continues to flourish along the areas of Balaleng, Bulag, Paing and other barangays adjacent to the Poblacion, which are considered as our buffer zones. There are machine shops, motorcycle dealers/trading centers, vulcanizing shops, insurance companies, burger houses, lodging houses, rice mills, lending institutions, grocery stores, refreshment parlors and restaurants. (Latest additions are pizza parlor, coffee/tea shops and chicken outlets) Recreation centers, computer stations and secretarial services are availing due to the presence of high schools and colleges. Entrepreneurs eyed Bantay as having possessed the better prospect for economic viability due to its best alternative expansion site, very conducive to a sublime climate of investment, expansion and growth because of its proximity to Vigan City, which is considered by some business analysts as ‘too constricted, restricted and conservative’.

### **ECONOMIC ASPECT:**

The Municipality has now an estimated 3,000 farmers, each having an average of 1.64 hectares of land to till. The agricultural area tilled totaled 1,763.61 hectares and at present, all poblacion municipal roads are cemented. Economic growth is focused at the remote barangays by way of improving farm-to-market

roads, introduction of new farm methods and methodology and the undertaking of livelihood projects that would directly generate funds for the people. Business enterprises thrived and concentrated not only in the urban (Poblacion) areas but in almost every Barangays along the National highway. Entrepreneurships flourished because of its strategic location as doorway to the capital city of Ilocos Sur. It has a public Arcade (commercial mall-complex) completed in November of 2007, opened for lease and started to function by the 2nd quarter of 2008 (at p. 34 and pp. 78-79)

#### TRADE AND INDUSTRY:

While agriculture remains the principal source of livelihood, Bantay can boast of industries that speak well of distinction. To mention few local food delicacies that originated and/or available only from this town are - the world renowned *chichacorn* (crunchy corn crackers), *chicharon* ('*bagnet*' or that deep fried crispy pork belly), *ladek* (meat crumbs, at p. 74-75), *royal bibingka* (rice cake), *calliente* (garnished boiled cow skin), *pinipian* (finely grind rice in red meat soup with *pasotes* herb) and '*namuli-a-cacao*' (home-made native tsokolate/tablea). The luscious *bunog* (elongated swamp fish), *pasga* (a variety of the milkfish), *bolidao* (a full-bellied sumptuous fish), *igat* (river eel), *carpa* (carp) and *udang* (big headed shrimp), which are the fine catch along the Abra river at Barangays Banaoang and San Mariano (at pp. 28 & 54)

The conventional and unequalled way of goldsmith(ing) (handcrafted jewelry making using primitive tools) at the Poblacion, **blacksmithing** at Banaoang and **abel-iloco weaving** (hand-woven knitted garments) at the eastern barangays are still a major home or cottage industry. Various business establishments are abundant to include groceries, commercial complexes, hamburger joints, banks, pawn shops, and lending investors, lumberyards, motorcycle traders, electronic shops, repair shops and other types of general merchandising can be found. With almost all access roads, provincial, municipal, as well as barangay streets, either concreted or asphalted, carabao-drawn carts and calezas could now hardly be seen as means of transportation but the mode of conveyance is by way of motorized vehicles. Tricycles and PUVs provide the most common types of public transport in traversing the interior barangays.

#### EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS:

There are eighteen (18) elementary public schools under the Bantay (DepEd) District, two (2) private elementary/pre- schools; three (3) high schools (2 public and 1 private) and two (2) colleges (1 public and 1 private). The **Bantay National High School** (established by way of administrative approval by the Secretary of Education on July 15, 1997) is located at Barangay Bulag, opened and became operational for SY 1997-98 (at p. 35); while the **Tay-ac National High School** (created through RA 8395,

authored by Congressman Mariano Tajon and approved by Congress on November 22, 1997) had its pioneer students for SY 2002-2003 (also at p. 58).

There are Barangay Health Centers operational and staffed by the Municipal Health Office, added thereto the various Day Care Centers (nursery) in every Barangay under the supervision of the MSWDO.

**Quirino Stadium**, with an estimated total land area of six (6) hectares, lies within the territorial jurisdiction of Bantay. It is the favorite venue of festive and grandiose provincial meets/competitions, athletics, games, religious, civic and political activities; sporting events like motocross, horseracing, cycling, boxing tournaments and other similar shows due to its spacious grounds, unwavering oval tracks and majestic grandstands that could accommodate to more than ten thousand spectators. Due to vast administrative functions of the Provincial government, portions (eastern side) of Quirino Stadium lot were either donated/utilized to provide Provincial offices or quarters for the Ilocos Sur Cooperative Bank, BIR-District Office, Register of Deeds/LRA, ISTA, DepEd. (Division Office), NTA, DILG/Liga ng mga Barangay, IS Medical Society, Rotary Club, CSC, DENR, DA-Provincial Office, NBI District Office, other quasi-governmental entities and as field and drill ground of the University of Northern Phils. It is being developed by the Provincial government as a world class venue of local, national and international athletic competitions by providing exceptional lightings equipment, amenities and facilities. The most recent was in March-May, 2016, when the oval and its race track underwent major rehabilitation (rubberized) for football (soccer) and running events, preparatory to Ilocos Sur's hosting the 2017 R1AA and its bid for the Palarong Pambansa in 2018. (Currently, it is still undergoing improvement to meet international standards)

Also found in the town are the District Offices of the DPWH, NFA, NAPOCOR substation, the Provincial Command/Headquarters of the PNP, (Camp Elpidio Quirino) and CHPG (highway patrol detachment group) are located at Brgy. Bulag (at p. 35). Of late, on July 1, 2014, the Ilocos Sur Provincial Jail (penitentiary) was transferred from Vigan to Brgy. Taleb (at p. 57).

## RELIGIOUS AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS:

About 92 % of the total population of Bantay inhabitants are of Catholic faith, with only the remaining 9% either Moslems or belonging to other religious sect/aggrupation. The leading and most active religious associations/movements include the Catholic Women's League, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Legion of

Mary, Simbaan Sangkarubaan, IYM and the Ador Adores. People's organizations and NGO's abound, while most prominent and civic-minded leaders of the community joined, pioneered and became known officers/members of the Knights of Columbus, Jaycees, Free and Accepted Masons, Rotarians, the 4H Club, Farmers' Association, among others.



## **“A CONDENSED BACKGROUND OF THE IMAGE OF NUESTRA SENORA DE LA CARIDAD, AS TOLD”**

*Lvcdag2*

Historical backdrop:

The Statue of our Lady of Charity is an old treasure of the Church of Bantay venerated by the townsfolk since time immemorial. Its origin is uncertain and probably as old as, or even older than, the Bantay Parish itself which was founded in 1591 by the Augustinian friars. According to our great ancestors, fishermen on board a ship got stranded on shores of the Ilocos coast and found the Image of Our Lady of Charity in a wooden box floating in Bantaoay river. When the news spread out, people from other towns and Provinces came to take the Image but could not move and only people from Bantay were able to carry it. To Her honor, the Bantay residents built a convent, made of bamboo and cogon, and from the time the miraculous Image was brought to Bantay, Tagalogs and Zambals would come, time and again, to claim for the Image but even with all their might and efforts, they were not able to get nor possess the Image and would leave the town with the belief that the Holy Shrine was meant to remain and purposely intended to ‘*guard*’ the residents. Thus, when the town was founded in 1593, therein evolved the name Bantay, which means ‘guardian’.

The Augustinian Chapter of April 20, 1591 accepted the Bantay convent as a house of the Order owing to its strategic location and as an important mission center in the first generation after the arrival of Juan de Salcedo in the Ilocos in 1572. Fr. Juan Bautista de Montoya, who was named Prior of the Augustinian Monastery in Bantay in 1593 and acknowledged as the first parish priest, claimed to have placed the statue of Our Lady with his own hands in the Bantay Parish. From then on, the Virgin is worshiped at the main altar of the St. Augustine Parish Church of Bantay.

The Image:

The Image of *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad* is made of wood in ornate sculptural style, except for the face and hands, which are made of ivory. It stands

50 inches tall or about one hundred thirty centimeters high. The original ivory face and hands are of beautiful craftsmanship and perhaps carved according to Polynesian art style. The unusual sculptural parts of the Image are the extra long neck and enormous eyes. She is shown holding the Child Jesus with Her left hand. Her right hand (the benevolent hand) is open, as if to shower favors from Her Son upon Her devotees. The original statue, except for the face and hands which are replicas, now stands and adorned at the altar of the Bantay Parish Church.

The Image of the Santo Nino carried by Apo Caridad matches the beautiful craftsmanship of the Image of the Senora. The ivory face and hands of the child Jesus are of the same outstanding exquisite quality. It is now placed under the care of the Archdiocesan Commission on Cultural Heritage.

#### The Clothing:

As a distinctive mark, she wears around her waist a *correa* or the Augustinian cord and an apron or *delantal*. Both Mother and Child are clad in richly floral embroidered garments and wear golden crowns. The Virgin has *rostrillo* and a *diadema*.

#### The Crown:

The crown of Apo Caridad is a glowing tribute of gold and precious stones. It follows the exquisite lines of the imperial style, with a wide frontal belt supporting an aureole of four arches surmounted by a cross. Being of pure gold of 18 carats, it tips the balance at past the thousand gram mark. The frontal belt is a work of art from the hands of a master during the Spanish times. The aureole, of the same style as the belt, is a product of contemporary artist, Vicente Peredo, one of the master goldsmiths of whom Bantay, Ilocos Sur is distinctly renowned.

Studded as it is with precious stones of various cuts and sizes, the whole crown scintillates with the fiery gleam of diamonds and rubies, with the mellow sparkle of pearls and with the soft glow of amethysts, topazes, torques and sardonyxes. The gorgeous ornamentation was designed by Maria Villanueva Rosario of Vigan, a connoisseur in gold and precious stone craft, while it was masterfully executed by Tomasa Picache of Manila who, not only impended expert craftsmanship free of charge, but even added a number of her own precious stones to enhance the embellishment.

The materials were furnished in its entirety by generous individuals of Vigan, Bantay and of many other towns, who graciously donated gold and precious stones in sundry quantities. Foremost of these donors was Archbishop Santiago Sancho, himself, who did not hesitate to pitch in his Episcopal consecration ring.

The long list of other donors to the crown appeared in the souvenir book on the occasion of the canonical coronation of Apo Caridad in 1956.

Another crown of gold embossed with floral design in the same imperial style was made for Apo Caridad which matches her golden *diadema* and *rostrillo*. The golden crown of the Santo Nino complements the set. For ordinary use, a replica of gold plated crowns for Apo Caridad and her Nino were also made. Both golden crowns are, likewise, under the care of the Archdiocesan Commission on Cultural Heritage.

The Coronation and Marian Hymn:

On January 12, 1956, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, Egidio Vagnozzi canonically crowned the Image, while Archbishop Santiago Sancho proclaimed, the Shrine of our Lady of Charity as “Queen of Ilocandia” which is now figuratively revered at the Bantay Parish, making Bantay as the sanctuary of *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad* in Northern Luzon (Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Abra and La Union). During the preparations for her coronation, there was a Marian hymn composition contest and the winning entry was originally entitled “Kenka, Apo Caridad” published in November 22, 1955 by authority of Archbishop Sancho. The lyrics were provided by Fr. Jose Purugganan and it was set into music by Fr. Angel R. Cruces. In 1995, on the occasion of the Quadricentennial celebration of Nueva Segovia as a diocese, the song was revised by the composer (who passed away only last Oct. 4, 2006) with the expanded adaptation into four voices for special choir singing. This revised version of the hymn is now sang popularly by devotees -

Ref.: Apo Caridad taklinan  
Il-ilim a kailokwan  
/Kibinen nakam nga ipan  
Ken Jesus mangisalikan (2x)

Im-imam ti paglasatan  
Parabor a nailangitan  
/Ipaaymo dika sardayan  
Ta kaasim pangliwliwam (2x)

Adtoy kam iti saka-anam  
Ta umaydaka balangatan  
/Iti ayat a katatarnawan  
Puspuso a napalungduan (2x)

Bituen a kararaniagan  
Ti dalanenmi silawam  
/Makita minto ta rupam  
Sadi langit pagarian (2x)

Changes in the Image:

On November 4, 1968, the ivory face of Apo Caridad was stolen and on June 15, 1973, her ivory hands were stolen, too. The people of Bantay enjoined the procession barefooted recanting the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, begging for the return of the stolen artifacts and it did not take long, the Lady's face and hands were replaced with a wooden replica. The efforts were not all in vain for as time goes by, the Apo Caridad's face slowly resembles the lost original, Her silent miracle sent to comfort her devotees. Although the holy Image of Apo Caridad suffered the desecration of thieves, She remains close to the lives of the people of Nueva Segovia.

In 1994, when the Archdiocesan Museum was being organized, an old unfinished ivory head of the Blessed Virgin Mary was found during the inventory. It is exactly the same size as the head of Apo Caridad of Bantay. Archbishop Orlando Quevedo gave his permission to have the ivory head of Apo Caridad reconstructed on the occasion of the Quadricentennial celebration of the Diocese (1995) but up to this writing the work is not yet completed.

Feast day and celebrations:

1. The feast day of Apo Caridad (La Naval) every first Sunday of September is fittingly observed with a solemn novena, heightened by a procession attended by many of the faithful. However, since 1956, after Her crowning on January 12, Bantay, as a parish, celebrates in a sacred manner the canonical coronation of Apo Caridad every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of January, where devotees from different parts of Ilocos come to pay homage. At first, individual persons and families hosted the celebration (or serve as *Hermana Mayor*, at p.64) but starting 1973, Barangay Pastoral Councils played hosts in the annual celebration. In 1993, the first Nueva Segovia Pastoral Assembly (NSPA 1) decreed that an Archdiocesan gathering takes place every anniversary of Her coronation. In **1981** (silver anniversary), a festive celebration was held. On January 12, **2006**, on the occasion of Her golden anniversary, a grand and festive program of activities to Her honor was celebrated. Followed by its diamond jubilee celebration (60<sup>th</sup> anniversary) last January 12, **2016**, where more than thirty (30) Marian images from various regions were paraded for the afternoon procession, followed by long display of fireworks.

[Recorded historical and contemporary interventions related to our Lady could be found at p. 63]



## **“HISTORY” (story) OF THE THIRTY FOUR (34) BARANGAYS**

### **AGGAY**

Aggay is bounded on the North by Brgy. Capangdanan, South by Brgy. San Julian, West by Brgy. Cabaroan and East by Brgy. Puspus. It has an approximate population of 1,050 individuals, registered voters of 463 and with a total land area of about 350 hectares.

Aggay was once a mountainous place ruled by “*Aggaed*”, a native of the Teneg descendants, before the Spanish era. He ruled the place with inhabitants coming from the *Itneg* descent. This tribe is noted because of their fair height and complexion and for their beautiful rounded eyes. They would gather around a bonfire early in the morning especially during the cold days, with their native shawls called ‘*cagay*’ woven by the women, wrapped around them. Weaving was the main occupation of the tribe, followed by carpentry.

During the occupation of the Spaniards, many stayed in the place and observed the living condition, way of life, customs and tradition of the tribe members. They say that due to constant use of the words ‘*aggaed*’ and ‘*cagay*’, the Spaniards coined both words and formed the word ‘*Aggay*’, the namesake given them.

It is said that Diego Silang and his wife, Gabriela, well-known leaders who initiated the *Ilocos revolt* (1762-63), camped, together with their followers, at the highest peak of Aggay where now stands the ‘Silang Elementary School’, named in honor of these two great Ilocano figures. When the Ilocos revolt was suppressed, the ‘*aggaed*’ tribe bartered their occupied lots with people coming from different places, who later became the residents of Aggay. They then left the place and moved to the southern mountainous part of the Province. With the conglomeration of different people, the surnames of the residents of Aggay are various.

Once, Aggay has gained the reputation of notoriety and was referred to as the ‘place of the fearless’, a sort of ‘no man’s land’ because for a time, some of the most hardened criminals (hoodlums, hired killers, delinquents and offenders) reside here.

Presently, however, it is one of the most developed Barangays that has produced Municipal Mayors, Vice Mayors, Councilors, outstanding community leaders and educators. In here can be found the public cemetery lot (LGU-owned) exclusively intended for Muslims, a private housing (subdivision) project being developed and of late, an elegant resort-hotel. In here, can be found the gateway and entry road to Brgys. San Julian and San Isidro of the Municipality, and alternate way connecting to Vigan. Its proximity to the Poblacion makes it an expansion area for business ventures.

- lvcdag2-

## AN-ANNAM

It got its name from the Ilocano lingo ‘*nananam*’, meaning delicious/luscious, referring to the inland fishes and shells that used to be abundant along its river and diminutive spring sources. People from other places were so delighted with the superb taste of yummy fishes and shells caught in the place and thus evolved the word ‘an-annam’.

During the early times, the barangay was just a ‘sitio’ or ‘purok’ of Brgy. Tay-ac (refer at p 58), regarded as the citadel of local elections because of the latter’s large number of registered voters. As time goes by, the ‘sitio’ gained ground when inhabitants manifested their oneness and cooperation. Due to the vastness of its mother barangay, Tay-ac, the ‘sitio’ became a barrio to hasten delivery of administrative services. It was created by RA 2370 (1959, when existing barrios were then equated into LGUs).

It has an approximate population of 1,535 with 703 registered voters. About seventy percent of the residents are engaged in farming, but business enterprises are fast increasing and many find themselves working as OFW/contract workers abroad. ‘Palay’ is the principal crop which is planted during the rainy months of May to September; and for the second crop, from months of October to December, different varieties of vegetables like tomatoes, beans, onions, corn, *monggo* and peanuts.

Notably, town leaders (Mayor, Municipal councillors and officials) hail from this barangay, moving forward of becoming a well developed community in the municipality.

## BALALENG

Next to Brgy. Bulag (at p. 35, supra) this Barangay placed second (2<sup>nd</sup>) in terms of voting population with registered voters of 1,202 and population of 2,797. It is said that it can make or break a candidate for a local elective post. Located around two kilometers northwest of the town proper, it is bounded on North by Brgy. Sagpat and Guimod, East by Brgy. Mira, West by the town of San Vicente and South by Poblacion. It has an approximate land area of about 1,000 hectares and subdivided into four sitios, namely – Balaleng Centro, Balaleng Purok, Balaleng Amianance and Balaleng Laudenia.

During World War II, the Bantay church was made the seat of the Japanese Imperial Army garrison in which prisoners of war were kept. It is believed that whenever they massacre and kill prisoners, they dumped the remains at the nearest secluded place. In the vernacular, to throw or dispose means –‘*ibelleng*’. Therein derived the name of the place, ‘Balaleng’, for the ilocano slang referring to the dumping ground of dead bodies of prisoners. Another version where it got its name is the leafy vegetable ‘*balangeg*’ which the people of the place are fond of eating. They say, so plenty were planted in the area in the early times that the place was popularly known as ‘*kabalangegan*’.

Agriculture is the main occupation of inhabitants but many has sought for greener pasture and have left to work or migrated abroad. Some are into carpentry and jewelry production. Concealed in this barangay are master goldsmith (makers of world renowned *tambourine* costume-made jewellery). Nowadays, colossal houses could be seen in the barangay as evidence of wealth and prominence of different families. Considering that it is along the National highway, immediately adjacent to the Poblacion, commercial establishments presently abound in the area and still increasing. It is considered as the principal *buffer zone*, meaning an expansion and build-up area of the urban core district, being trimmed as a trade center and commercial hub of the town.

To its credit, it is the site of the biggest shopping mall (the first one stop-shop superstore) in Bantay, where the NAPOCOR electric power is located and other array of service shops, gasoline stations and warehouses.

## BANAOANG

Banaoang is the ‘south-eastern most barangay’ of Bantay. It is said that when a missionary was assigned to the place, ‘the deep and unexplored area of the river and its vicinity’ caught his attention and suggested to the inhabitants to name the village ‘*banaw-ang*’ (an empty, idle space. Another version talks about a narrow road that led to a bank of the Abra river which is perennially swept away during torrential rains. The inhabitants kept on repairing the road but just the same become unpassable during heavy downpours. There conceived the idea of naming their place as ‘*nasawang*’ meaning, wiped out or devastated by waters. Time passed by and it became ‘banaoang’ to identify the road where people have to go in order to pass across the river.

Its legal existence as a Barrio is through the enactment of RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter) for it used to be a ‘sitio’ of Brgy. Paing (at p. 47). Its first election becoming as a separate barangay was held in 1964. The Barangay serves as entryway to barangay San Mariano (at p. 54) and holds the distinction where the legendary Abra river is adjoined, which is why quarry resources (sand and gravel aggregates) are also abundant. Its rich marine life (fresh water) resources include *bunog* (elongated swamp fish), *pasga* (a variety of the milkfish), *bolidao* (a full-bellied sumptuous fish), *igat* (eel), *carpa* (carp), *udang* (big headed shrimp) *bennek* (freshwater clams) and other crustaceans (supra, at p.19). Inhabitants are engaged in inland fishing, and small scale farming. During the early days, the barangay was known for its fine work of blacksmithing (includes bolo/knife and revolver or *paltik* making), but now, due to modern technology, only a handful few are still engaged in this home industry. It has a population of 470, of which 259 are registered voters, a spring water source and a water falls (‘*Napanaas*’)

It is here where **Quirino Bridge** (at pp. 15-16, supra), named after the late former President Elpidio Quirino, that spreads across the Abra river connecting the rocky mountain hills of the town of Santa and the tail end of Bantay, can be found. Otherwise referred to simply as ‘Banaoang bridge’, it majestically connects and separates two transcending mountains and widely praised because of its marvellous engineering and grand architectural design as glorified by its splendid panoramic beauty, strength and durability when it survived the bombings of World War II. From here, one can appreciate underneath the serenity, verdant and tranquillity of scenic spots overlooking an enormous stretch of riverbed, zigzagging sloping contour of the mountain side and a vivid land mass as far as the eye can see. A major structural road link, it has survived hundreds of storms but, unfortunately, not the gory strength and mighty vigor of typhoon ‘*Feria*’, which devastated the Province on July 4-6, 2001 that swept away (to date, is nowhere to be found) one of its steel spans and for almost two months, disengaged the northern provinces of the region. It was rehabilitated and in order not to duplicate same distress, on October of 2007, the DPWH started construction work to replace the Quirino bridge, relocated and built a new ‘GMA type bridge’ to a higher elevation with wider approaches, It was completed and inaugurated by no less than Pres. GMA on December 30, 2009 (also at p.79). The

non-functioning **Quirino bridge** (but still called Banaoang) could still be seen for posterity and sight-seeing purposes because the area has turned into an Eco-tourism adventure zone, maintained by the Prov'l Tourism Office, where a 'zip line', horizontal climbing and a view deck were installed in 2011 (pp. 15-16 supra and p. 80) perfect for travel/thrill seekers and nature lovers.

The Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project (**BPIP**), a nationally funded-foreign assisted infrastructure undertaking, main facilities and spring source, are found herein. It started in 2000, implemented under the auspices of the NIA, but constructed by a Chinese contractor firm, to provide an enormous water supply for continuous irrigation of farm lots not only to Bantay but nearby towns of the Province. It became 'operational' in 2010 (also at p. 79).

- lvcdag2-

## BARANGAY ONE

**Brgy. One** is located at the north-eastern portion of the Poblacion of Bantay. Formerly, it was identified as '*cayapa*' referring to that eminent tree that grew and stood therein for centuries.

The cayapa tree stood at the center which is the distinguished landmark of the place as it provides shade, shelter and a quiet place to rest for the folks. It serves as a recreation area and on December, after coming from '*misa de aginaldo*', all would gathered around the tree and burned its leaves to comfort themselves from the cold and then enjoy chatting about the Christmas season. Residents enjoyed so much the place that they made a wide bamboo bench around the tree and became the rendezvous of the young, as well as for the old, on moonlight night. The spirit of camaraderie is very much alive in the place with the tree as the heart and core of fond memories, where songs are composed and sang, where ladies are serenaded, and where love is experienced. It also bears witness and testimony to countless courtship and relationships. With the tree, it seems the place is so unique and peaceful where one could find solace and solitude under its branches. In sum, the tree was well loved by the town folks and is considered part of their lives. Unfortunately, in 1946, the cayapa tree was burned by the Japanese. However, its significance remains and lingers until the end of time and the worthiness of said tree is retold and passed upon to next generations. As a tribute, there is a road leading to where the cayapa tree was formerly found that is now called '*cayapa*' street.

Originally, Brgy. One is just a part of the *Poblaciones*, then it was designated as a 'Purok' following the arrangement or subdivision prepared by the parish church for the procession at the town proper. It became a 'Barrio' in accordance with the apportionment into districts for purposes of the elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). With the issuance of PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios), it was transformed into a 'Zone'; then followed by PD 557 (1974, where the 'barrio' and citizen assemblies created

under PD 86 became barangays), it was renamed and now called as Barangay 1. It has 361 voting registrants, with residential population of 771 and land area of 6.4 hectares. Most of the residents are educated and professionals who are profoundly religious due to their proximity to the parish.

- lvcdag2-

## BARANGAY TWO

The origin of the barangay came about through the organization of youngsters during the liberation period (1946) called '*timpuyog ti namnama*', which means 'union or association of hope'. By way of this association, residents adopted a new system of bonding, kinship and friendship that was suppressed during World War II. The organization was a clear expression of the sentiments of the residents on the ravages of war and a manifestation of their interest to move on as one community.

The main occupation of the people then was carpentry, though most are employed in government and private offices. In early times, townfolks were also engaged in home-made '*namuli-a-cacao*' (native tsokolate or *tablea*) and goldsmithing. The prominent residents then were the *Parel, Organo, Gorospe, Pilar, Punio, Paz, Patao, Javier, Peredo, Perilla, Barroga, Pe Benito* and *Pablico* clans. Notice that mostly starts with letter 'P' which is the assigned coding system of the Spanish era to identify and locate residents.

Generally, the residents are into entrepreneurship or office employed elsewhere, while quite a few have migrated abroad. Part of the barangay which are along the national and barangay roads are booming with business enterprises and commercial activities. It has a total land area of about 4.4 hectares, a population of 1,108, a registered voters of 413 and with a 93% literacy rate.

Since it is a part of the whole Poblacion of Bantay, its boundaries were determined in consonance with the religious blocking system set up by the parish church. It then became a 'Barrio' in accordance with the apportionment into districts for purposes of the elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). Being an existing Barrio when PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios) was issued, it was constituted as one of the Citizen

Assemblies, referred to as a 'Zone', to broaden citizens participation and facilitate the conduct of referendum for the ratification of the 1973 Constitution. By virtue of PD 557 (1974, where the 'barrio' and citizen assemblies created under PD 86 became barangays) it was renamed and now called as Barangay II.

- lvcdag2-

## BARANGAY THREE

During the Spanish era, the town proper was simply called- *Poblaciones*, the urban center of Bantay, in which this Barangay is a part of. After liberation (1946), the old folks formed an organization called '*timpuyog ti laud*' meaning 'union or association of the west'. Its general aim was to extend financial assistance and cooperation to its Officers/Members under the concept of '*bayanihan*' or '*saranayan*' ('*tagnawa*' in the vernacular), as well as other social endeavors like fiestas, weddings, baptismal and formation of *Zarzuela Ilocana* troupe. Later, the aggrupation was divided into two, the other group is what now comprised Barangay IV.

Presently, it is the second most densely populated area in the Poblacion with a total land area of about 3 hectares of purely residential lands, an estimated total population of 889, registered voters of 531 and where **goldsmith** (maker of jewelleries or dealer in gold metals) used to be the primary source of livelihood. Due to the presence of Muslim community herein, which deals in cheap fancy jewels, only a few are now engaged in this livelihood and the handicraft is almost obliterated. Its proximity to the national highway and being in the town core, makes it very accessible thus, some are engaged in slaughtering and merchandise of meat products, either in its raw state or cooked form; while others are into business enterprises. Residents of this barangay are known to be connoisseurs in cooking and said to be the original makers of *bagnet*, *ladek* and *pinipian* (supra, at p. 19). As evidenced by the ruins of medieval houses herein, it was once occupied by, and the residence of, the most prominent people of the town. The only barangay where a Moslem compound (with their Mosque and primary school) exists with Muslim community inhabitants who started settling in the early 80's.

Barangay Three was then designated as a 'Purok' following the arrangement or subdivision prepared by the parish church for the procession at the town proper. It became a 'Barrio' in accordance with the apportionment into

districts for purposes of the elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). With the issuance of PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios), it was transformed into a 'Zone'. By virtue of PD 557 (1974, where the 'barrio' and citizen assemblies created under PD 86 became barangays), it was renamed and now called as Barangay III. It is generally a peaceful and law-abiding community.

- lvcdag2-

## BARANGAY FOUR

During the Spanish era, the town proper was simply called- *Poblaciones*, the urban center of Bantay, in which this Barangay is a part of. After the Philippine liberation (1946), the old folks formed an organization called '*timpuyog ti laud*' meaning 'union or association of the west'. Its general aim was to extend financial assistance and cooperation to its Officers/Members under the concept of '*bayanihan*' or '*saranayan*' ('*tagnawa*' in the vernacular), as well as other social endeavors like fiestas, weddings, baptismal and formation of *Zarzuela Ilocana* troupe. Later, the aggrupation was divided into two, the other group is now what comprised Barangay III.

It is the most thickly populated area among the Poblacion Barangays and like Barangay III, to which it is adjoined, **goldsmith** (maker of jewelry or dealer in gold metals) used to be a cottage/home industry, now almost forgotten due to the entry of Muslim community who trades in cheap fancy jewelries. Many are currently into business enterprises or either employed in private and government firms. It lies within the main urban core of the town where its total land area of about 10 hectares are now all classified as residential lots. It tops the number of registered voters in the poblacion with 547 and 1,210 population and land area of 5 hectares. Like adjacent neighbour Brgy III, some are still engaged in the slaughter and merchandise of meat products, either in its raw state or cooked form. Residents of this barangay are known to be connoisseurs in cooking and said to be the original makers of *bagnet*, *ladek* and *pinipian* (supra, at p. 19); while erstwhile educators and professionals prominently known for their intelligence came from the Barangay. In here, one can still find preserved or renovated Spanish ancestral houses, a glaring manifestation that once, this was the bastion of wealthy early settlers of the town.



Brgy. Four was then designated as a ‘Purok’ following the arrangement or subdivision prepared by the parish church for the procession at the town proper. It became a ‘Barrio’ in accordance with the apportionment into districts for purposes of the elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). With the issuance of PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios), it was transformed into a ‘Zone’, then by virtue of PD 557 (1974, where the ‘barrio’ and citizen assemblies created under PD 86 became barangay), it was renamed and now called as Barangay IV. It is generally a peaceful and law-abiding community.

- lvcdag2

## BARANGAY FIVE

Since the founding of the town in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, all the adjacent portions or premises surrounding the parish church and municipal hall were then called ‘Poblaciones’, which is the urban district of the *pueblo*. However, the Poblacion was later divided into six ‘puroks’ (or ‘sitios’) where the territorial boundaries were determined following the religious blocking system adapted by the parish church for its campaign for the black rosary and procession inside the Poblacion. In the early sixties, it was made a ‘Barrio of the Poblacion’ with the apportionment into districts for purposes of elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios) transformed it as a ‘Zone’; and later, by virtue of PD 557 (1974, where the ‘barrio’ and citizen assemblies created under PD 86 became barangays), it was renamed and now called as Barangay V.

It is here where institutional and ecclesiastical structures of the town can be found such as the St. Augustine Parish Church, Belltower, Diego Silang Park (the town plaza), *Municipyo* (town hall), Central schools (BECS and BWCS), Quirino stadium, (that provide Offices to Governmental entities such as the Ilocos Sur Cooperative Bank, BIR District Office, Register of Deeds/LRA, ISTA, DepEd Division Office, NTA, DILG/Liga ng mga Barangay, Ilocos Sur Medical Society, Rotary Club, Civil Service Commission Provincial Field Office, DENR, NBI-Ilocos Sur, DA Provincial Office, etc.), Govantes dike and two other provincial roads (Quirino Blvd and Rojas St.) leading to ancient City of Vigan, the provincial capital. Evidently, it is the urban core and most prominent among poblacion barangays, being along the National highway, the center of trade and commerce and the biggest in land area. It has a registered voters of 431, an estimated population of about 938, 4.5 hectares land area and where business establishments flourishes such as gasoline stations, restaurants, lumberyards, banks, hotels, service shops, auto supplies, variety stores, commercial complexes and parking terminals. Undoubtedly, it is the barangay where the municipal government collects the largest amount of rpt taxes and revenues due from business establishments, as well as the residents, mostly of whom are professionals. Many of its residents are fond of cooking and it is believed that it is in this barangay where the best of local delicacies could be found such as *pinipian*, *bagnet*, *ladek*, *namuli-a-cacao*’ (supra, at p. 19) and where the lingo foods as *ukilas* (*pigskin cracker*), *mullo*

(*dinardaraan*), *warek-warek* (the *ilocano* version of 'sisig') and *yosi* (*lumo-lumo*) were coined. During the early times, some are engaged in goldsmithing, blacksmithing and leather craft.

It is bordered on the south partly by a brook (connected to the *mestizo* river that surrounds Vigan) where, in ancient days, people have to navigate or ride a raft in traversing *Ciudad Fernandina*, then considered an islet. A makeshift wooden bridge plank was made linking Vigan and Barangay V of Bantay to facilitate going to and coming out of Ciudad Vigan. Later-on, the bridge was elevated into a dike ('*Govantes*') that stretched approximately one kilometer connecting Bantay from Vigan, but was renamed to Isabelo de los Reyes dike, a champion of labor unionism, where a memorial was constructed at the entry dedicated in his honor. In year 2011, a twin bridge has been funded by the national government and implemented by the DPWH to prevent inundation and afford continuous flow of rainwater along the watercourse beneath the Govantes/Isabelo de los Reyes dike. - hvdag2-

## BARANGAY SIX

The place was originally called 'riverside' as it is situated in the southwestern part of the poblacion adjoining the Govantes river, a tributary connected to *mestizo* river that surrounds Ciudad Vigan. It is one of the Barangays that comprised the Barangay Poblacion, which is the urban district of the *pueblo*. However, the Poblacion was later divided into six '*puroks*' (or 'sitios') where the territorial boundaries were determined following the religious blocking system adapted by the parish church for its campaign for the black rosary and procession inside the Poblacion. In the early sixties, it was made a 'Barrio of the Poblacion' with the apportionment into districts for purposes of the elections by precinct pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter). PD 86 (1972, where citizen assemblies were created in barrios) transformed it as a 'Zone'; and later, by virtue of PD 557 (1974, where the 'barrio' and citizen assemblies created under PD 86 became barangays), it was renamed and now called as Barangay VI.

The common occupation of the people by then is fishing by means of '*desdes*' and as '*kangkong growers*'. It has an approximate population of 760, then considered as the 'poorest' and the smallest in terms of registered voters with only 311 among the Poblacion Barangays. The largest in land area within the Poblacion with 9.1 hectares and where most residents are into micro-commercial activities.

It is one of the low-lying areas of the Municipality where inundation is a usual occurrence attributed to its proximity to the banks of the river; however, with the construction of a twin bridge (that started August, 2011 and completed the following year) along Govantes dike by the DPWH, this predicament may finally find solution. To date, however, it is in this barangay where one can find the Bantay '*talipapa*'

(satellite market), the town's parking terminal, business spaces, commercial stalls and mall, food houses, hospital, lumberyards, subdivision/housing project, the St. Paul College of Ilocos Sur and where the district office of the DPWH are located.

Site of the flamboyant and spacious Bantay Arcade (a commercial complex) worth P42M completed on November, 2007 and made operational (open for business lease) by March of 2008. It was inaugurated and blessed on December 26, 2008. In 2012, a wet market (*talipapa*) section was established and blessed (made available) for occupancy on June 28, 2013. (also refer to chronicles of 2007, 2008 & 2013 at pp. 78, 79, 81-82).

- lvcdag2-

## BULAG

Barangay Bulag is bounded on the North by Brgy. Malingeb, on the East by Brgy. Naguiddayan, on the West by Brgy. Cabalanggan (its former 'sitio') and on the South by Brgy. Taguiporo. It tops in term of voting population with 1,319 registered voters (followed by Brgys. Balaleng and Tay-ac), a population of 2,890 and with three sitios – Bulag West, East, and Centro. There were initiatives of residents of sitio Bulag East to create/constitute it as an independent/separate Barangay, the latest was filed and deliberated by the Sangguniang Bayan on January of 2008, however failing to qualify as to population and income requirements, such move remained a wishful thinking. During local elections/campaign period, this Barangay is typically lobbied and patronized by political candidates due to the votes it can deliver that would ensure them of great edge.

It is said that in the olden days, there live an *old blind man* that despite his infirmity, he can perform, or even outdo, activities which an able-bodied individual can accomplished. Despite his disability, he can do farming and other domestic chores and was very industrious working from sunrise to sunset with only a twelve year old boy guiding him in his everyday tasks. When the Tagalogs and Zambals came to Bantay to possess the miraculous Image of Our Lady of Charity, they heard about the astonishing information about this old blind man, so they looked for him for they want to see it for themselves. When they found him, they can not believe what they saw as they witnessed that the news about this extraordinary abilities and skills of the old blind man were true. To their delight, they exclaimed: '*ang dakilang magsasakang bulag*' (the great blind farmer). Time passed and the inhabitants simply called the place as *bulag* – referring to, and in honor of, the place where the famous blind farmer lives or was found. Nowadays, a funeral parlor, hotel/lodging inns, gasoline stations, grain dealers, trading posts and warehouses are easily found. Gasoline stations, restaurants and luxury hotel are the latest additions of business ventures in the area.

It is along the national highway with a vast tract of agricultural lands. Predominantly, residents are engaged in farming but in the early days, weaving ‘abel iloko’ was a main home industry. It is the site of ‘*hacienda tamdagan*’ [agricultural estate owned by the Municipal government that was subjected to and covered by land reform (PD 72 of the Marcos era)], Constabulary Highway Patrol Group (CHPG) and to the Ilocos Sur PNP-Provincial Headquarters (Camp Elpidio Quirino), which was established (transferred from Tamag, Vigan) in the late 60’s because of the growing mayhem in nearby Barangays. Now stands in this barangay is the Bantay National High School, the first pioneering public secondary education of Bantay, which was made operational in SY 1997-1998, through the initiatives of then Mayor Samuel Parilla and District Supervisor Rosalino Javier, and administratively approved on July 15, 1997 by then DECS Secretary, Ricardo T. Gloria.

- lvcdag2 -

## BUQUIG

The Barangay is relatively small with only 481 voters and population of 814. It is just half a kilometer away from the town proper, adjoining Barangay V. Although it is along the national highway and considered as an expansion area or a buffer zone, still, most of its land area is suitable for farming. It is for this reason how the barangay got its name, from the pilipino jargon *bukirin*- a view of wide tract of farmland.

As told, when Tagalogs and other visitors passed by in their way to the town proper, they are amazed with the serenity and awesome scenery of spacious tract of rice field being tilled by farmers, so they referred to the place as *bukid*, then evolved to become as Boquig.

People are, mostly, into farming; others engaged in carpentry, vegetable dealership, drivers, conductors, office workers, teachers and businessmen.

It is here where the catholic public cemetery is furtively located due to its proximity to the Parish church. Like Brgy. Balaleng, it is an extension section of the urban core and now thrives with commercial activities (like service shops), the latest is a stunning modern hotel of five floors cum bar and restaurant, with rooftop deck for sightseeing.

- lvedag2 -

## CABALANGGAN

The Barangay is located along the national road, bounded on the North by Brgy. Ora, South by Brgy. San Isidro, West by Brgy. Sinabaan and East by Brgy. Bulag. It was formerly a part (sitio or purok) of Brgy. Bulag but when the residents began to celebrate their barangay fiesta separately in the early 60's that triggered and caused their severance. It was created as a 'Barrio' pursuant to RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter).

Folklore has it that, like Barangay Balaleng, the Barangay was named after the '*balangeg*' plant that grew abundantly during the early days. For convenience, it was termed '*cabalangepan*', then '*cabalanggan*'. It is predominantly inhabited by farmers whose agricultural products include rice, corn, vegetables, root crops, fruits and livestock.

Now, the barangay is a known stop-over, (especially to travellers and busses going to and from the North), for food stores and *carinderias* that offer local viands such as *calliente*, *bibingka*, '*pasalubongs*' and other '*lutong bahay*'. With a population of about 795 and registered voters of 406, it is relatively a peaceful community ascribed, perhaps, to its

propinquity to the Provincial Camp of the PNP which is just a kilometer away. It now boast of a regal hotel (One Vittoria Hotel & Restaurant) and where the renowned maker of local delicacies (Marsha's casaba cakes, pastries etc.) can be found.

- lvedag2 -

## CABAROAN

Cabaroan is situated along the national highway, about one kilometer distance from the town proper. It is bounded on the North by Brgy. Mira, on the South, partly by Brgy. San Julian and Vigan, West by Brgy. Boquig and East by Brgy. Aggay. It has a total land area of only about thirty two (32) hectares, a population of about 838 and with 410 registered voters. Main source of income is farming and carpentry, although many have ventured in business enterprise, weaving and cattle/swine raising. Found in here is the town's first fully established private resort-hotel-restaurant and memorial park/cemetery.

Long time ago, the place was suited only for agriculture and for pasture of livestock because it was simply a grazing land covered by thick grasses, meadows and bamboos. Literally, nobody wanted to inhabit the place because it seems like barren. One day, a clan from the north came and dwelled therein. The Chieftain called for the villagers and asked how they would call their place. Since they have just newly settled in, they agreed to call it '*cabaroan*', an Ilocano phraseology meaning 'the newest'. Another version, as old folks narrate, could be attributed to the dominance of young bachelors (*babbaro*) living therein the earlier days, prompted the people to call it '*cabaroan*', or where lots of bachelors (single males) reside.

Its barangay fiesta is celebrated every January 1, believing that it would usher a fresh start or new (*baro*) fortune for the residents. Being near to the town

proper, it is now beaming with business activities as an expansion site for business entrepreneurs.

The more recent development is that, it provides is the entry and access road to luxurious Camella homes/subdivision.

- lvcdag2 -

## CABUSLIGAN

It is one of the interior Barangays of the town with a registered voter of 427, total population of 845 and whose 85% of its land area is devoted to agriculture. Indubitably, farming is the main livelihood of residents.

Its roots could be traced when a squad of Spanish soldiers, guided by a Filipino from the *Poblacion*, patrolled the place to look for an edible plant that is found in Spain. This plant is called in the vernacular '*buslig*', a kind of weed or plant with black fruits that grows between rice plants. The soldiers then gathered the fruits which, when cooked, were very tasty, and presented it to their commanding officer. Informed by the Filipino guide that the locals called the plant as '*buslig*', the commander officer ordered his soldiers to name the place, where they gathered the tasty fruits, as '*cabusligan*' to denote or distinguish it from other communities. As years went by, more settlers came and the village was known then as '*cabusligan*' and adopted the same appellation when it qualified to become a barrio.

## CAPANGDANAN

It is considered as one of the 'inner' Barangays of the town. About 90% of its land area is devoted to agriculture and whose voting population is 492, with a total inhabitants of 874. It is believed that the first settlers of this place were limited to four families, namely: Pugal, Paz, Pe Benito and del Castillo clans. However, due to intermarriages, these families multiplied swiftly until it turned into one big tribe or community, qualified enough in number to become a barrio.

Cultivation of the land is the prime source of livelihood, however fishing in a small stream of water called '*alog*' (a spring source) that traversed the place is also an avocation. To have sufficiency of water for their rice fields, the said families made a way to re-channel the flow of the fresh water, referred to as '*manalmen*' that extends up to Brgy. Ora, using the trunk of the '*pandan*' plant to block the sides of the water course in order not to be eroded. The importance of the '*pandan*' plant that grew abundantly in the area was again experienced when one time, hunger stroke and the residents made use of the stem of the '*pandan*' plant as their staple food by mixing it with '*tagapulot*' (native brown sugar). Its leaves could be cut, dried and made to hats and mats, while its roots were utilized as a breeding place for fishes, crabs, snails and other aquatic resources.



Evidently, because of the significance and many uses of the ‘*pandan*’ plants, the residents decided to call their place ‘*ca-pandan-an*’, referring to the place where the pandan plant grows bountifully.

- *lvcdag2* -

## GUIMOD

Guimod is the ‘northern tip most barangay’ of the Municipality. It is along the National highway, bounded on the North by the town of San Ildefonso, South by Brgy. Balaleng, West by Brgy. Sagpat and East by Brgy. Capangdanan. It has a voting population of 549, inhabited by 1,280 individuals, with a vast track of agricultural, as well as pasture/grassy land.

According to folktales, the early families that inhabited the place regularly conduct gatherings or meetings for them to be heard in order to afford participation and consultation on significant matters that has to be presented to or decided by them. The holding of public gatherings is called ‘*gimong*’ (the ilocano jargon for a ‘*meeting of the community*’) that has become their practice for purposes of dissemination of local affairs and happenings. One day, while having a meeting, a group of foreigners accidentally arrived and asked the residents what place are they in. The residents misunderstood that they were being asked what were they doing or what was the gathering all about. The Chieftain answered that they were having a traditional ‘*gimong*’ and then it soon began, the place was called ‘*guimod*’.

When its population increased, it was transformed into a barrio whose inhabitants’ main principal source of subsistence is farming. Situated along the

national highway, it is a very viable future expansion site as manifested by the gradual boom of business entrepreneurs in the area such as restaurant-resort, lodging inns and service shops. Of late, portion of Alta Mira Subdivision and El Pueblo de Colinas Subdivision and Socialized Housing Project (at page 69) are found herein.

- lvedag2 -

## LINGSAT

Lingsat is a barangay nestled at the bottom of the eastern most tip of Bantay resting at the foot of the Cordillera mountain. It is the farthest and one of the original barrios of the town, 14 kilometers away from the seat of the Municipal government, with 591 registered voters and population of 1,190. At the time when infrastructure for social development was not yet known, the place was the shortest connecting link or passageway on foot between the places north of Vigan and the Provinces of Abra, Ilocos Norte, the Cordillera and Cagayan. It adjoins our town from the Municipalities of Sto. Domingo in the West and Magsingal in the North.

To reach the place, one has to navigate a river and pass through a rock-strewn road that is part of its territory. The *'burayok'* river, which stretch to more than a kilometer and most of the time dried up, is both an advantage and disadvantage to the Barangay. For one, it provides stone aggregates, quarry resources and the only access path leading to the barangay; however, during rainy season the riverbed becomes a mudflow passageway making the barangay literally isolated and inaccessible. For many times the said river have been provided with funding allocation for its 'rechanneling' and road rehabilitation, only to be washed out and destroyed time and again due to flash water that emanates from the upper portion of the bordering mountainous terrain of the cordilleras.

It derived its name from the contraction of two Ilocano words – '*linglingay*' (to rest or have fun) and '*lumasat*' (to traverse or cross) due to its strategic location where

travellers used to stop and took a rest. Until now, there still stands a gigantic *balete* tree believed to be centuries old, as a distinguished landmark, which served as a resting place for voyagers in the early days.

During the Japanese occupation, it was known as the hiding lair of local guerrillas from nearby towns. A clandestine command post was established herein taking advantage of its concealed location and remoteness which the Japanese armies found difficult to penetrate.

The barangay is proud of its contribution having supplied the timber requirements of the religious structures in neighboring places. It is believed that most, if not all, of the wood and lumber used in the building of the Bantay church were derived from the tough timber trees of this Barangay, which are still structurally attached in the original ceiling of the parish and rectory (convent) up to this day. There are minuscule spring sources waiting to be tapped and forest-concealed waterfalls (*'burayok'*) due for development. In the early days, many are engaged in carpentry, firewood gathering, charcoal production, wildlife hunting and planting along the forested slopes. It has fertile soil and grazing land fit for agricultural production and pasture of swine and other livestock animals, though farming is the main occupation of the people. Its corporate existence is RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter).

- lvedag2 -

## MALINGEB

Located 7 kilometers away from the town proper, it is about 2.5 kilometers from the National Highway via the Brgy. Ora-east road. It is bounded on the North by Brgy. Cabusligan, Quimmarayan and An-annam, on the South by Brgy. Bulag, on the West by Brgy. Ora and Capangdanan, and on the East by Brgy. An-annam. It is divided by a river, with an approximate land area of 100 hectares and with a voting population of 721 and inhabited by 1,530 souls.

History have it that in the early days, the place was once a concealed vast green forested land covered by big trees and grasses. One day, a group of people came looking for a conducive place where they could seek refuge. In here, they found a perfect site, an uninhabited area, for it is covered with tall weeds and plants very ideal for a secluded habitat. They named the place as *'nalinged'*, denoting to a *hidden, remote or isolated place*, until the word *'malingeb'* was coined.

Its geographic feature, up to now, is hilly and mountainous, but no longer much covered with thick forest-like trees. Farming is the main occupation followed

by carpentry and swine fattening. Women are engaged in weaving, others in blue-collar jobs and many have gone abroad to work as OFWs.

Its barangay fiesta is celebrated every May 15, dedicated to, and in honor of, the patron saint of farmers, San Isidro Labrador, as their devotion of gratefulness for an abundant harvest.

- lvcdag2 -

## MIRA

Lying just few meters below north of the bell tower and Bantay parish, the Barangay is one of the most popular places in Bantay dating back in the colonial era. A population of 498, with only 236 registered voters, it ranked the least in voting population (followed by Brgy. Sagneb p.50 and San Mariano p. 54).

Originally, the place was called '*panpantok*' because of its steep landscape and a favourite site for hill-walking and hiking by those residents from the Poblacion. It was made by the Spanish authority as the stronghold of its armed frontier because of the hilly terrain where they could overlook the northern approach of *Ciudad Fernandina*. In all matters affecting the safety of Vigan, then the seat and bastion of Spanish rule, this Barangay played an essential role in the maintenance of peace and its security because it is in here where Spanish soldiers encamped, as they could gain strategic access and advantage against invading enemy forces. Relatively, old folks say, this is the very reason why even the Bantay belfry was constructed (atop Calvario hill) far apart from the church, to serve as a porch or watch tower to ensure that Vigan is protected against outside aggression. Hence, the place was commonly referred to the cognomen '*mira*', which means in the vernacular- *overlooking*.

The residents are into farming, herding and raising of swine animals. Many have worked abroad for better opportunities. In here lies, the first private cemetery/ memorial park of the town, adjoining the catholic public cemetery.

The barangay was created pursuant to RA No. 1408 that provides for the first barrio elections held on January 19, 1956.

- lvedag2 -

## NAGUIDDAYAN

**Brgy.** Naguiddayan is bounded on the North by Brgy. Tay-ac, on the West by Brgy. Bulag, on the South by Brgy. Taguiporo and on the East by Brgy. Taleb. Its legal existence as a Barrio is through the enactment of RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter) for it used to be a '*sitio*' of Brgy. Paing (refer at p. 47). Prior to its creation, it is simply identified as a '*vast nil land*' (meaning, empty or barren) covered with tall trees where, if one would stand on top of its highest peak, one could view the Abra river in the southeast.

It is said that the first settlers of the place would cut numerous trees, which are very abundant at the time, to build their huts that has denuded the place considerably. When rainy season came, land erosion took place as a result of the frequent cutting of trees. Many, if not all, of their crops were washed away and laid flat to the ground and herein formed the word '*naguidda*', (an ilocano term for: *laying or bending down*) referring to the scores of crops that leaned down to the ground due to the erosion. The incident was unforgettable and unforgivable as the inhabitants had to move several paces away from the denuded area but this inspired them not to abuse the cutting of trees.

The barangay is composed of farming communities whose principal crops include rice, corn and vegetables. Some are engaged in weaving, herding, small scale businesses and a fave spot as vehicles stop-over. It is located along the national highway that serves as entry way to the “inner” Barangays of Tay-ac, Lingsat, An-annam, etc., with a voting population of 352 and with inhabitants numbering 705.

Nowadays, there are eateries/restaurants where buses going north frequented these establishments and also the home to the pioneering Three Sisters bibingka.

- lvcdag2 -

## ORA

The barangay has three sitios: *Ora West*, *Ora East* and *Ora Centro*. It is about 6 kilometers from the town proper with registered voters of 1,156. It is considered as the most famous (or unpopular) barangay of Bantay when it rose to prominence in the late 1960's because, as narrated by this author-

“Ilocos Sur was disreputably renowned for its notoriety due to the relentless clashes of feuding political clans and herein coined the lingo ‘*saka-saka*’ (barefooted), which refers to the dreaded private armies, cunningly representing themselves as militia men, who would ruthlessly kill and malevolently carry out orders for their benefactors. Barangay *Ora-West* was then an identified lair of the Crisologos; while Barangay *Ora-East* was a known coddler of the Singsons that the people in these Barangays were at grave odds, depending on the *purok* (either *sitio* West or East) a resident belongs. Then came nightfall of May 22, 1969, almost all the households of sitio *Ora-East* and *Ora Centro* lost their houses and belongings when, right before the folks eyes, these were burned to the ground by attacking mercenaries, several of whom believed were their adversaries from *Ora-West*. The atrocity that took place was very historical as it triggered one of the causes for the declaration of martial law in 1972 by Marcos and was decided in a celebrated landmark arson case (People vs Camilo Pilotin, et. al., L-35377-78, 7/31/75), which is the leading jurisprudence and classic illustration cited in law books where the Supreme Court directly exercised its constitutional mandate ‘to order change of venue or place of trial to avoid miscarriage justice’. Presently, however, all is put to oblivion as adherents of the disputing families rested their political reprisals and rivalry and the only remnants were the terrified inhabitants of Brgy. Ora, some still lives today recounting their horrifying experience.” (p. 12, supra)

It is said that there was once three great young men in this place who wanted to outdo each other as to who among them is the best and strongest. So, they challenged one another to arnis, wrestling and other competitions involving strength to determine who is more superior. But surprisingly nobody won because their skills, talents and prowess were proven equal. These three great fellows were named *Osong*, *Ramon* and *Angkuan* who, when the first letter of their names are joined, together makes ORA. The old folks claimed that ORA was the namesake of this barangay as early as the 1900s.

Due to its density, this is the only barangay [aside from Brgy. V with two central (Gabaldon) schools] that has two public Elementary schools, Ora West and Ora East E/Ss.

The main source of income is agriculture, while some are into fishing and carpentry jobs, because of the ‘alog’ (an arm or stream of fresh water referred to as ‘*manalmen*’) that extends to the barangay from Brgy. Capangdanan (at p. 40). Many ‘*kutseros*’ (calesa drivers) reside from this barangay and because it is basically an agricultural-based community, understandably, most of the inhabitants are into farming with vast tract of lands to be cultivated, where rice is their principal crop. Of late, many have gone and worked abroad in search for better living and of ‘greener pasture’.

- lvcdag2 -

## PAING

**Barangay Paing** is one of the oldest Barangays of the Municipality located along the national highway that is bordered on the South by a river. It is believed that as early as 1616, the Augustinian friars, who worked for the establishment of the Bantay parish, frequented the place for their yearly Christian retreat due to the fresh air coming from the hills and fine scent of the mountains, combined with the cool breeze of the Abra river.

It is said that during the Philippines-Spanish revolution, Barangay Paing served as headquarters and hideout of first Ilocano rebel Diego Silang and his wife, Gabriela, together with other revolutionaries, taking advantage of its terrains and strategic location being near the Abra river.

Its estimated land area is about 1,054 hectares with a voting population of 816. In the early days, the territorial coverage of this barangay was very extensive as it included Barangays **Naguiddayan**, **Taleb** and **Banaoang**, its former sitios. With the passage RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter), the aforementioned Barangays were separated from Paing due to expanding population and for better governance, but up to now, **it is still collectively called and singly referred to as ‘Barangay Paing’ by some of its more aged constituents.** Some of the women residents are still into weaving *abel iloco*, while some men are into fishing because

of its stretch of shoreline. It is one of the only three Barangays of the town that is blessed with aquatic resources (aside from Brgys. Banaoang and San Mariano) and because a portion of its land lies in a coastal area, it has abundant quarry (aggregates/sand & gravel) resources from its riverbeds. Most of its inhabitants are into farming but many have sought work or migrated abroad, hence, it is no surprise why enormous residential houses abound herein. There is also a private housing (Monte Vista Subdivision) development project. During the dry season (summer months) **it is only here** where the fruit tree - '*sarguelas*' (also known *sinigwelas*) is harvested and paraded for sale along its national highway.

Bantay is one of the very few towns in the country with two (2) established Roman Catholic parochial parishes. In here, lies Christ the King Parish and a catholic cemetery- whose vicariate address is: Barangay Paing (but actually the parish site is within the territory of Brgy. Taleb, refer at p. 57), which was inaugurated by then Archbishop Santiago Sancho and Auxiliary Bishop Juan C. Sison, on December 12, 1953. Some religious sect and worship houses of other denominations could also be found in this Barangay. Ironically, no record or tale could be found how it derived its name.

- lvcdag2 -

## PUSPUS

It lies along the national highway between Brgys. Aggay and Sinabaan with a registered voter of 308, a total population of around 596 and an approximate land area of 50 hectares.

The name of the barangay was taken from the term '*alipuspupus*' because its residents, in the early days, were mostly engaged in weaving. They called their weaving product as '*alipuspupus*', referring to the initial core of knitted thread of interlace base, and therefrom coined the phraseology '*taga-puspupus*', referring to the fine weavers of the place.

Many are into farming, poultry raising, bus (*puv*) operators, drivers, conductors, teachers and other business' livelihood. It is in this place where the original *pulutan* or appetizer called *calliente* (garnished cow



skin) originated and was duplicated or imitated only in adjacent barangays of Bantay and other towns.

- lvcdag2 -

## QUIMMARAYAN

It is situated at the eastern part of the Poblacion, regarded as an ‘interior’ barangay of Bantay with a voting population of 373 and about 689 inhabitants. It is bounded on the North by Brgys. Cabusligan, Sagneb and partly by Sto. Domingo; on the South by Brgy. An-annam; on the West by Brgy. Malingeb and Cabusligan; and on the East by Brgy. Sagneb and An-annam.

Despite its hilly topography, the main occupation of the people is farming, followed by carpentry, weaving, poultry and cattle raising and other medium scale businesses. Its patron saint is *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad*.

According to old stories, it got its name because of the large part of its area is easily submerged in knee-deep water during rainy season due to low lying topographic state. The ilocano description for a frequently flooded rice field, similar to a swamp (or marshland), is '*kinarayanan*' or '*karayan*' (a riverbed), thus, evolved the name Quimmarayan. Surprisingly though, there is no actual river found within the barangay.

- lvcdag2 -

## SAGNEB

**D**uring the Japanese regime, locals used to wander from one place to another in plight of, and to evade, the brutality of Japanese soldiers, until they discovered this secluded, remote and isolated place that they decided to reside therein. Resettlement rapidly grew as habitation was not a problem because of two (2) water spring sources that produce plenty of local shells (mollusc) such as '*doriken*', '*bisokol*', '*birabid*' (variety of edible snails), clams, weeds and other types of inland river fishes.

One day, Japanese soldiers patrolled the area and asked the folks the name of the place where one local, mistakenly misunderstood that he was being asked –what brought him there- so, he replied: '*agneb*' alluding to a hiding place where the soil is always moist or damp due to the presence of water springs. From then on, the place was called as '*sagneb*' connoting a

suitable agricultural area very conducive to farming due to the bounty and humid condition of the natural water spring.

The land area comprising the barangay was originally large, however in the 60's, when delineation of territorial boundaries was determined, it was divided into two portions. The northern part belonged to the Municipality of San Ildefonso, while the southern part was ceded to the Municipality of Bantay. With only 218 registered voters, it is the second barangay with the least voting population. (topping the list is Brgy. Mira, at p.44 and third is San Mariano at p. 54).

- lvcdag2 -

## SAGPAT

Sagpat is located north-western of the town. It is bounded in the North by the town of San Ildefonso, East by Brgy. Guimod, West by Bantaoay river and the town of San Vicente, and South by Brgy. Balaleng. It has a total land area of 70.5 hectares with a population of not more than 700 and registered voters of 382. It is plainly an agricultural-based community where farming, followed by livestock production, is the main occupation of residents. However, it has its share of an outlet or tributary arm of the Bantaoay river, so fish pens could be found and some are into inland fishing.

Long time ago, the place was simply called '*casilagan*' because there was a part of its area that were covered by trees called '*silag*',

where nearby villagers would come herein to harvest and sell its fruits. The place was then slightly inhabited because it is often flooded during rainy season, but not the place where these *silag* trees were located that became the evacuation site of some dwellers. Other people came to realize that in order to be safe during inundation, they have ‘*to climb up*’, and seek temporary shelter to the place of the *silag* trees. The Ilocano term, meaning, to reach or ride on refuge, is ‘*simmagpat*’ (or ‘*to get on top*’), until it became Sagpat.

For now, the barangay is still flooded during heavy rains because it is one of the low lying areas of the town, its land mass being 1 to 3 meters below the level/ground elevation of the national highway.

- lvcdag2 -

## SAN ISIDRO

Formerly, the barangay is just a *sitio* of Brgy. San Julian, but in the earlier part of the 70’s, old folks and group of families residing in the eastern part of Brgy. San Julian, popularly known as sitio ‘*Piano*’, wanted to be separated or detached. Hence, a barangay meeting was called among the residents where they acquiesced and approved of this plan. The reason given was: “because the former barangay captains’ residence was too far from their place making it difficult for the residents to reach him in times of trouble and when municipal aid are given to the barangay, their *sitio* receives less and oftentimes, none”

On this premise, a barangay resolution, together with other necessary documents, were forwarded to the Municipal government. The request ‘seeking separation of Sitio Piano’ was approved by the Municipal government, headed by then Mayor Amado Mendoza; endorsed and submitted by the Department of Local

Government headed by then DILG Officer, Bonifacia Raceles, to the Provincial government. In the later part of 1972, a written approval from the national government was received informing and declaring that *sitio 'Piano'* has been administratively decreed with full-fledged status as being a barangay, making it the **youngest barangay** (LGU) of the town.

It has now a voting population of 452, and like Brgy. Malingeb (at p.43), its barangay fiesta is celebrated every May 15, dedicated to, and in honor of, the patron saint of farmers, **San Isidro Labrador**, in gratefulness for a bountiful harvest. Dominantly, the inhabitants are into agriculture, with locally grown vegetables and crops (bananas, corns, rice, peanuts, squash, sugar cane, tomatoes, eggplants, string beans, onions, etc.) as their main produce.

- lvcdag2 -

## SAN JULIAN

It is bounded on the North by Aggay, Puspus and Sinabaan; on the East by San Isidro; on the West by Cabaroan; and on the South by the City of Vigan and a tributary of the Abra river, colloquially known as San Julian stream/creek. At the height of torrents, the Barangay is literally detached from the rest of the town because the road leading thereto becomes impassable due to the overflow of said inland brook connected as far as the Banaoang and Mestizo rivers, passing through different water paths of adjacent barangays.

How the name of the barangay originated is not known, but as could be gleaned, it was in honor of its patron saint, San Julian. It has a

registered voter of 634 and Barangay San Isidro (formerly known as *Sitio Piano*) used to be one of its *puroks* until its separation in 1962 (at p. 52).

Its residents depend on agriculture for their subsistence and like its neighboring Barangay San Isidro, their produced includes rice, corn, peanut, banana, tomato, sugar cane, onion, string bean and other backyard vegetables. Some are into livestock and poultry raising. It is situated in a low lying area that is often inundated brought about by the river that crosses its path of territorial jurisdiction.

- lvcdag2 -

## SAN MARIANO

The Barangay is the most estranged and remotest barangay of the town and ranked third (3<sup>d</sup>) least in terms of voting population (next to Brgy. Mira and Sagneb) with only 248 registered voters. To illustrate how inland the barangay is, from this place it is nearer or easier to go (East) at San Quintin, a Barangay in the Province of Abra, (part of Cordillera Region), which is just less than two kilometers away, rather than to reach the Quirino bridge (national highway) at Brgy. Banaoang which is more than four kilometers far. It is inhabited by about 450 individuals who are engaged in fishing, farming, livestock raising, collection of firewoods, charcoal making and gathering of bamboos (*'cawayan', 'bolo'* and *'bical'*). It has a vast land area, however, only meager portion is utilized for habitat because most of it is comprised of inalienable forested grounds, part of the patrimonial property of the State.

Formerly named as Brgy. *'Sallacong'*, but not until Dec. 20, 1996, with the passage of RA 8243, authored by then Representative Mariano Tajon (1<sup>st</sup> District, Ilocos Sur). For indeed, it was he, during his incumbency as Congressman, who worked for light (electrification) to this barangay, poured numerous financial assistance and livelihood projects finding the retarded conditions of the community. Owing to Congressman **Mariano** Tajon and in gratefulness, residents agreed to adopt San Mariano as its new appellation taken from the latter's first name. It

is also a way to get rid of the ridicule and its disgraceful past where, purportedly, the word ‘*sallacong*’- was derived from the early mountain tribes-settlers of the place who are known to be ‘*sallapid*’ (bowlegged).

Formerly, the barangay was not accessible to any kind of land transportation and can only be reached through riding a raft, *banca* or motor boat navigating through the legendary Abra river or by walking along the steep trails and traversing rocky mountainous terrain on foot. However, due to the implementation of the Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project (**BPIP**) [also at p.28, *ibid*], a nationally funded-foreign assisted infrastructure undertaking, through the auspices of the NIA, structural work started on the third quarter of 2000 that **paved way for the construction of a new access road leading to the BPIP** and was continued/pursued up to the nucleus populace of the barangay. The BPIP and subject road was opened and made accessible in June of the following year located at the edge of the Quirino bridge. The project went full-scale in 2005 but construction works stopped by 2008, and finally completed in January of 2010. Hence, after decades of arduous living, inhabitants have now the convenience of conveyance and travel, propelling drastically its way to progress. On its final planning phase is the construction of Abra-Ilocos Sur national road which aims to connect the Province of Abra to other Northern Provinces that would pass through San Mariano. When this project materialized, it would greatly bring and transform the Barangay to economic growth and development (as of this writing, it is still awaiting national funding allocation).

It is one of the barangays with coastal area (the other two are Brgys. Banaoang and Paing) and with minute hidden water falls (“*Sinangbalde*” & “*Apar*”). Its aquatic resources are rich, the same those found and caught at Brgy. Banaoang (at p. 19 and p. 28, *supra*) and it boasts of abundant quarry (aggregates) resources from its riverbeds. All marine life derived from the Abra river are renowned for its luscious taste so that those caught therefrom are sold directly at source and only a few find its way to the local market because buyers would purposely go at the Quirino bridge (at Barangay Banaoang) to look for the fine succulent catch of the marginal fishermen of San Mariano. Despite its proximity to the Abra river, even at the height of strongest typhoons and enormous flooding, the most feared scenario that the Barangay might be swept out is far-fetched because it is situated in such a strategic landscape and secured platform that would neutralize even the biggest river waves. Residents would brag that ‘water may subdue or reach the level surface of the Banaoang bridge (as it did several times already during destructive typhoons) but still their Barangay cannot be overwhelmed’. - *lvcdag2* -

## SINABAAN

The Barangay is about 3 kilometers east of the town proper located along the national highway. It has a total land area of more than 50 hectares, with registered voter of 399 and total population of about 700. The major occupation of the inhabitants is farming because its soil is best suited for cultivation. Others are into livestock raising, small scale business enterprises and locally employed as factory or shop workers

According to legend, the barrio had no name before the Spaniards came. It was just a small village or tribe composed of four families who built their houses near a creek that was their source of water. Their

number increased attributed to inter-marriages with families from other neighboring sitios. Bananas abound in the place especially that site, now found near the (of the *saba* variety) bridge bordering Brgys. Sinabaan and Cabalanggan. The story goes that one time, Spaniards passed by in search for the place where bananas' plentifully grew and they saw a man. When asked, the man thought the Spaniards were asking from what place the *saba* (a banana) could be found, so he directed them to the place, locally known by them as '*ka-sabaan*'. From then on, the *gobernadorcillo* of the town called the place as '*sinabaan*'. It was claimed that, as early as 1634, old documents of the Augustinian friars have mentioned and cited the place in their religious conquest of Bantay and of *Ylocos*.

Being situated along the national road, there are many food stores, a resort and most of its land along the perimeter highway are occupied and built with residential houses. In here, one can notably find site of construction companies and cold maker (Bantay Ice Plant). Lately, the first 'state of the art' private slaughterhouse (abattoir), food processor/cold storage, warehousing and cosy restaurant (all under one roof/management) are established.

- *lvcdag2* -

## TAGUIPORO

It is located, literally, at the 'south tip of the town' about 6.5 kilometers from the town proper. It is bounded on the North by Brgy. Bulag, South by Brgy. Raois of Vigan, West by Brgy. San Isidro and East by Brgy. Paing. It has registered voters of 475 with a total population close to 978. Many have gone to work abroad that is why, despite the 'depth' location of the barangay, huge houses could be found herein.

Originally, it is said that the place was plainly called as '*puro*', meaning an island (or *pulo* in tagalog), because it was then surrounded by inland water. According to old tales, there was a fisherman who resides here and when asked by Spaniards what is name of the place, he thought they were asking for his name.



Because he cannot understand or speak Spanish, he just answered: ‘*taga-puro*’, implying that he came from this place. From that time on, the Spaniards referred to it as ‘*Tagi-poro*’ and residents got accustomed in answering ‘*taguiporo*’, every time they were asked where they reside.

As time passed by, the place was no longer an islet. Soil formation has covered up most parts of the inland water, so it receded. Presently, the Barangay could be reached on four sides but, mainly, via the Brgy. Bulag or Vigan-Raois roads; however, there is also a feeder road that connects it through Barangays Paing and San Isidro.

It has a vast tract of agricultural lands, Farming remains the main occupation and some are into trading (buy and sell farm products) activities.

- *lvcdag2* -

## TALEB

Taleb is located along the national highway about 8 kilometers from the Poblacion. Like Brgys. Banaoang and Naguiddayan (at p.27 and p. 45, *supra*), it is originally a part of Brgy. Paing (also at p. 47) but due to the wide territorial coverage of the latter, the residents petitioned for its separation because of inadequate supervision and governance. With the passage RA 3590 (1963, The Revised Barrio Charter), ‘*Sitio Taleb*’ qualified and was constituted as a regular barangay, mainly because of expanding population and for better administration. Up to now, however, it is still collectively referred as ‘Barangay Paing’ by some of its more aged constituents. It has registered voters of 998 and population reaching to less than 1,700.

Due to its geographic location surrounded by hills, it serves as the air breaker or pathway of strong winds passing from the north going to the Abra coast.

‘*Taleb*’ is an Ilocano vernacular that means *window cover* or, otherwise, a protective *wall shield*. Thus, the Barangay acts as the wall barrier or ‘*taleb*’ that absorbs gusty winds caused by typhoons and storm.

It is predominantly an agricultural barangay where rice and corn are its common crops. Endowed with large tract of forestland, gathering of firewood, carpentry and charcoal production are also a source of livelihood. It is in here where the **Victoria Park** (at p. 16), established in 1962 situated at Mount Caniao, which is one of the tourist attractions of the town that features minuscule waterfalls and a crystal clear natural spring source that supplies potable water to the Municipality and other parts of Vigan, is located. Also in this Barangay, is the road leading to **Mt. Tupira** (or commonly referred to as ‘radar’ at p.16, supra), a perfect destination for mountain climbers, wildlife lovers and hunters, and the premier *chichacorn* industry (crunchy corn crackers) can be found. It is the site of the Municipal “*Bagsakan center*” (livestock trading post completed in 2000) and the Bantay socialized housing project (ground breaking held in May, 2003 and inaugurated in 2006).

The Christ the King Parish, while its present vicariate address is at Barangay Paing (at p.47), is actually within the territorial jurisdiction of Taleb. Similarly, the ‘Paing Elementary School’ and ‘Paing cemetery’ actual location lies in Brgy. Taleb. This could be explained in that, the said parish was established in 1953, while Barangay Taleb was only created later in 1963, the year it was separated from its mother Barangay- Paing.

The most recent development worthy of note is that, on July 1, 2014, the Ilocos Sur Provincial Jail or ISPJ (old *carcel* now turned museum) was transferred (inaugurated and opened) from Vigan City to this Barangay.

- lvcdag2 -

## TAY-AC

During the early days, a larger portion part of the Barangay was planted with trees and only a minute area was suitable for farming or cultivation. Barely sugar cane and *camote* crops could only then be planted, so what the people did was to cut-off hundred of trees and what revealed thereafter was a large agricultural land. To call that in Ilocano parlance is ‘*tay-ac*’, meaning a wide, plain and spacious area of tillable land with fertile soil mass. It is bounded on the North by Brgy. Lingsat, South by Brgys. Naguiddayan and Taleb, West by Brgy. An-nam and East by a portion of Brgy. Sallacong and Lingsat.

Barangay An-annam was a former *sitio* (at p. 26) but due to the vastness of Brgy. Tay-ac and in order to hasten delivery of administrative services, An-annam was constituted as a separate barrio in 1959. Now, with 1,287 registered voters,

Tay-ac ranked third largest in terms of voting population, next to Brgy. Bulag and Balaleng (at p. 35 and p.27, supra), and considered as a fortress for purposes of local elections. It consists of seven (7) sitios namely: Hidalgo, Piga, Madriaga, Pinto, Portuguese-Herrera, Duque-Paz and Lopez-Pula. Some of the most noted political leaders of the town are from here.

Mainly into agricultural farming, it is regarded as the ‘vegetable bowl’ of Bantay for it supplies the town and other neighboring Municipalities with its home-grown vegetable harvest. There are rivers that traverse the barangay, while there are spring water sources in the area, some were already developed while others remained to be tapped. It is blessed with a large tract of productive farm fields, mostly are irrigated.

In here was established the second public high school of the Municipality, the Tay-ac National High School (which initially opened its gates in SY 2002-2003), via RA 8395, authored by Congressman Mariano Tajon and approved by Congress on November 22, 1997.

In the mid of year 2005, a four (4) hectare lot worth 3.9 M, situated in this barangay, was purchased by the LGU to be its ‘Municipal dumpsite’, but due to some technical issues, it has not been used. Some have left the barangay to seek greener pastures overseas, so now huge houses could be seen as signs of prosperity. A private resort was put-up recently. Raising of livestock, herds and other poultries is also an avocation due to its abundant grassy pasture lots

- lvcdag2 -

## **FROM THE TOWN ARCHIVES**

(- lvcdag2 -)

### **A.) PARISH PRIESTS (1752 to 2016)**

Based on the Baptism and Marriage records of the Parish; together with the painstaking research of our LCR Imelda Obrero and her staff, using the Registry of Death, Birth and Marriage (DBM) of our Municipality, the following clerics had either served as parish priest/assistants/vicar or otherwise assigned, at one time or the other, at

#### *Parochia de San Agustin*

1752.55 - Fr. Manuel Garrido

1756-57- Fr. Vicente Callesa

1757-59- Fr. Tomas Torres

- 1760-62- Fr. Manuel Basa  
- Fr. Antonio Beybaria
- 1762-64- Fr. Juan Bautista Arenas  
- Fr. Agustin Gomez
- 1765-68- Fr. Pedro Perez
- 1769-70- Fr. Manuel Munoz
- 1770-71- Fr. Mathias Echeverria  
- Fr. Juan Villa
- 1772-73- Fr. Francisco Baldonado  
- Fr. Andres Anias
- 1773-75- Fr. Antonio de Padua
- 1775-76- Fr. Miguel Guerrero
- 1776-77- Fr. Pedro Blaquier
- 1777-79- Fr. Nicolas de la Fuente  
- Fr. Geronimo Pizarro
- 1779-80- Fr. Thomas Urquiza
- 1781-89- Fr. Francisco Antonio Abella  
- Fr. Antonio Garcia
- 1790-94- Fr. Thomas Urquiza  
- Fr. Antonio Garcia
- 1794-99- Fr. Francisco Antonio Abella
- 1799-02- Fr. Antonio Garcia
- 1802-07- Fr. Andres Rodriguez Castano
- 1807-10- Fr. Juan Arriortua  
- Fr. Paulino Nick Blando
- 1810-19- Fr. Josef Lataza
- 1820-25- Fr. Juan Lugasti
- 1825-27- Fr. Remigio de Jesus
- 1827-39- Fr. Mariano Lazo
- 1839-43- Fr. Mariano Villanueva  
- Fr. Mariano Francisco
- 1843-48- Fr. Agustin Echevarria
- 1848-49- Fr. Martin Giron  
- Fr. Lazaro Benigno
- 1849-59- Fr. Antonio de Castro
- 1860-62- Fr. Martin Giron
- 1863-64- Fr. Luis Lagas  
- Fr. Melecio de la Cruz
- 1864-67- Fr. Santiago Munoz
- 1867-69- Fr. Rafael Redondo  
- Fr. Melecio de la Cruz
- 1869-70- Fr. Manuel Jimenez  
- Fr. Cornelio Bustamante
- 1870-73- Fr. Eduardo Navarro**
- 1874-76- Fr. Santiago Munoz
- 1876-78- Fr. Roque Errasti  
- Fr. Rafael Redondo
- 1878-85- Fr. Eduardo Navarro**  
- Fr. Antonio Garcia
- 1886-87- Fr. Victoriano Aguila
- Fr. Juan Sallo
- 1888-90- Fr. Roque Errasti  
- Fr. Cosme Fernandez
- 1891-92 - Fr. Flaviano Lorenzo
- 1892-97- Fr. Lisandro Villanueva
- 1897-99- Fr. Nicomedes Bandayrel  
- Fr. Pio Romero
- 1899-12 - Fr. Eulogio Alcid
- 1912-16- Fr. Alfredo Florentin Verzosa**
- 1916-22- Fr. Ignacio Cordero
- 1922-27- Fr. Jose Pasion
- 1927-34- Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes  
- Fr. Filomeno Molina  
- Fr. Mariano Pacis
- 1935-37- Fr. Andres Alcayaga  
- Fr. Filomeno Molina  
- Fr. Mariano Pacis  
- Fr. Glicerio Manzano
- 1939-40- Fr. Paulino Nick Blando  
- Fr. Domingo Pascua  
- Fr. Daniel Cortez
- 1941-44- Fr. Osmundo A. Calip  
- Fr. Cipriano Sipin  
- Fr. Alejandro Elefante  
- Fr. Enrique de Leon  
- Fr. Godofredo Albano  
- Fr. Daniel Cortez  
- Fr. Jose de Ocampo  
- Fr. Armando Calip  
- Fr. Manuel Pe Benito  
- Fr. Maximino Villanueva  
- Fr. Clemente Tabije  
- Fr. Andres Alcayaga  
- Fr. Elisero Rullodu  
- Fr. Rosario Lopez  
- Fr. Felipe Borja  
- Fr. Urbano Paz  
- Fr. Reinaldo Venida  
- Fr. Joaquin Lontog
- 1945-46- Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes  
- Fr. Avelino Batoon  
- Fr. Stephen Mosuela  
- Fr. Manuel Pe Benito  
- Fr. Victoriano Pe Benito  
- Fr. Antonio Mabutas
- 1947-52- Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes**  
- Fr. Mariano Saraos  
- Fr. Cornelio Balayog  
- Fr. Crisanto Padernal  
- Fr. Mariano Timbreza

- Fr. Daniel Cortez
- Fr. Jose Lallana
- Fr. Urbano Paz
- 1953-65- Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes
  - Fr. Mariano Timbreza
  - Fr. Benito Sison
  - Fr. Metodio Quinto
- 1966-67- Fr. Mariano Timbreza
  - Fr. Ernesto Salgado
- 1967-70- Fr. Simeon de Peralta
  - Fr. Peregrino Pira
  - Fr. Mariano Timbreza
  - Fr. Ben Paderes
  - Fr. Domingo Pascua
  - Fr. Igmedio Dingle
- 1971-72- Fr. Miguel Purugganan
  - Fr. Jose Bello Brillantes
  - Fr. Venusto Mata
- 1973-77- Fr. Amancio Garcia**
  - Fr. Orlando Fuller
  - Fr. Francisco Abaya, Jr.
  - Fr. Manuel Pe Benito
  - Fr. Juan Apolinar
- 1978-83- Fr. Venancio Acas
  - Fr. Zacarrias Agatep
  - Fr. Simeon de Peralta
- Fr. Florencio Rebebes
- Fr. Ernesto Salgado
- Fr. Manuel Pe Benito
- 1984-87- Fr. Gabriel Ramos
  - Fr. Felicisimo Ferrer
  - Fr. Pedro Arrogante
- 1988-93- Fr. Bernardo Panay
  - Fr. Cosme Fang
  - Fr. Felix Costales
  - Fr. Raymund Ellorin
- 1994-00- Fr. Venusto Mata
  - Fr. Ferdinand Ragasa
- 2001-02- Fr. Ben Andres Paderes
  - Fr. Gaudelio Donato
- 2002-03- Fr. Gaudelio Donato
- 2003-06- Fr. Felicisimo Ferrer
  - Fr. Constantino Atinaja, Jr.
- 2006-10- Fr. Magdaleno Ruelos
  - Fr. Reynaldo Rebebes
  - Fr. Raymond Ancheta
  - Fr. Michael Atanacio
- 2011 - Fr. Magdaleno Ruelos
- June 2012 - Fr. Jack Cabatu
  - Fr. Amancio Garcia
- June 2015 prsnt- Fr. Gary Noel Formoso
  - Fr. Amancio Garcia

*Parochia de Cristo Rey*

- 1954-74- Fr. Pedro Arrogante
- 1975-77- Fr. Cezar Lazo
- 1978-83- Fr. Cosme Fang
- 1984-87- Fr. Jose Lazo
- 1988-93- Fr. Amancio Garcia
- 1994-00- Fr. Gabriel Ramos
- 2001-06- Fr. Peregrino Pira
- 2007-11 - Fr. Amancio Garcia
- 2012 prsnt - Fr. Aloysius Malcaba

**B.) LIST OF MAYORS (1911-2016)**

HON. BASILIO PAREL -1911-1912  
HON. EUSEBIO PAZ -1912-1916  
HON. FERMIN GOROSPE -1919-1922  
HON. FAUSTO MANGALIMAN-1922-1925  
HON. EUSEBIO PAZ -1925-1928  
HON. EUSEBIO PAZ -1928-1931  
HON. EUSEBIO PAZ -1931-1934  
HON. BRIGIDO BARROGA -1934-1937  
HON. PABLO PE BENITO -1937-1940  
HON. PABLO PE BENITO -1941-1944  
HON. CIPRIANO PAMUSPUSAN-1944-1945  
HON. BARBARO PAAT-1947-1951  
HON. FROILAN PAA -1952-1953  
HON. PEDRO PATAO -1953-1955  
HON. CIRIACO PAREL -1956-1963  
HON. SANTOS PACLEB -December  
1963

HON. MARIA ASUNCION PORTE-1964-1967  
HON. MARIA ASUNCION PORTE-1968-1971  
HON. ARTURO PAAT -Nov. & Dec., 1971  
HON. AMADO MENDOZA -1972-1975  
HON. AMADO MENDOZA -1976-1979  
HON. AMADO MENDOZA -1980-1985  
HON. CIPRIANO PAMUSPUSAN-1985-1988 (Feb. 1/88)  
HON. SAMUEL C. PARILLA -Feb. 2, 1988-Jun 1992  
HON. SAMUEL C. PARILLA -Jun 30, 1992-Jun, 1995  
HON. SAMUEL C. PARILLA -Jun 30, 1995-Mar 27, 1998  
HON. JOSE P. PACUBAS -Mar 28, 1998-June, 1998  
HON. CHINITA G.F. PARILLA -Jun 30, 1998-June, 2001  
HON. CHINITA G.F. PARILLA -Jun 30, 2001-June, 2004  
HON. CHINITA G.F. PARILLA -Jun 30, 2004-June, 2007  
HON. SAMUEL C. PARILLA -June 30, 2007-June, 2010  
HON. SAMUEL C. PARILLA -June 30, 2010-June, 2013  
HON. SAMUEL GF PARILLA II-June 30, 2013-June, 2016  
HON. SAMUEL GF PARILLA II-June 30, 2016-June, 2019

**C.) TEMPLATE OF ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS (2004-2016) [LAST FIVE TERMS]**

	<b>2004-2007</b>	<b>2007-2010</b>	<b>2010-2013</b>
	Mayor Chinita GF Parilla	Mayor Samuel C. Parilla	Mayor Samuel C. Parilla
	Vice Mayor Floro Peredo	Vice Mayor Floro P. Peredo	Vice Mayor Floro P. Peredo
Peredo	Sbm Roger Reboroso	Sbm William Pre	Sbm William Pre
	*Sbm Jasmin Ramos (resigned: 8/15/05)	Sbm Ireneo Quintinita	Sbm Roberto Reboroso
	Sbm Edilberto Mercurio	Sbm Edilberto Mercurio	Sbm William Pacpaco
	Sbm Paternia Calderon(resigned: 3/8/06)	Sbm Roberto Reboroso	Sbm Ireneo Quintinita
	**Sbm Criselda Bundoc (died: 7/20/05)	Sbm William Pacpaco	Sbm Edilberto Mercurio
	Sbm George Leones	Sbm Aida Bundoc (until 11/3/09)	Sbm Nick Pamuspusan
	Sbm Ireneo Quintinita	Sbm George Leones	Sbm Arnold Paz
	***Sbm Paul Lucero (died: 3/9/06)	Sbm Nick Pamuspusan	Sbm George Leones
	ABC Araceli Nabor (until 12/11/07)	ABC Francisco Carmelo (beg. 12/14/07)	✓ABC Francisco Carmelo(until 11/30/10)
	11/30/10)		
	SKC James Bundoc (until 12/07)	SKC Learnie Tolio (beg.12/06/07)	✓✓SKC Learnie Tolio (until 11/30/10)
Notes:	*replaced by W. Pre on 2/15/06 by appt.		✓ replaced by Gloria Ramirez eff.
12/7/10	**replaced by A. Bundoc on 10/03/05 by appt.		✓✓ replaced by Jonalyn Pre eff.
12/3/10			
	***replaced by C. Peredo on 4/10/06 by appt.		

<b>2013-16</b>	<b>2016-2019</b>	<b>2019-2022</b>
Mayor Samuel GF Parilla II	Mayor Samuel GF Parilla II	
Vice Mayor William Pre	Vice Mayor William Pre	
Sbm William Pacpaco	Sbm Floro Peredo	
Sbm Roberto Reboroso	Sbm Hipolito Madriaga	
Sbm Floro Peredo	Sbm Arnold Paz	
Sbm Hipolito Madriaga	Sbm Hilario Paet	
Sbm Hilario Paet	Sbm Ireneo Quintinita	
Sbm Arnold Paz	Sbm Aniceto Ramos	
Sbm Aniceto Ramos	Sbm Edilberto Mercurio	
Sbm Nick Pamuspusan	Sbm Araceli Nabor	
ABC Gloria Ramirez (resigned & replaced by PERCIVAL VICENCIO eff. 12/5/15)		





## D.) RELIGIOUS INTERVENTIONS (Related to Our Lady of Charity)

The foregoing documented favors in history are expressly mentioned in the novena approved by Bishop-elect Bernardo Ustariz, OP (1760-64) of Nueva Segovia. Such favors of peace and freedom in the region, and safety for travellers were attributed to our Lady. The cure of the blind, the lame and the sick, prompt succour during droughts and other calamities, the conversion of sinners, grace to the youth and relief from grave illnesses are other favors of divine charity received through her intercession. The list of **contemporary testimonies and experiences of devotees to Apo Caridad** indicating various manifestation of divine grace continues to grow. But for purposes of historical significance, only the 'first' three known documented information we have of the Image are republished herein. (Author's Note: Taken from a featured article on *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad* written by Fr. Roque Reyes, Curator/Archivist Nueva Segovia, 4 September, 1994):

1. In 1660, Andres Malong of Pangasinan, revolted against Spain and proclaimed himself king of the province. He bestowed the title of Conde to Pedro Gumapos of Agoo and sent him with 3,000 men to invade Ilocos and Cagayan. In the army of Gumapos were a great number of Calanasans, Tingguians and Aetas from the wilds of Zambales. The invaders came killing, pillaging and burning until Badoc, Ilocos Norte. Juan Manzano, a lieutenant of Gumapos, attacked Bantay on January 22, 1661, leaving 800 dead in the sea. He burned everything. One tiled house and the church with its convent were left standing. The old novena to our Lady of Charity expressly says that the church was saved through her intervention. The Zambals repeatedly tried to set fire the church at least three times, but it would not burn, though the cogon roofing was very dry. Terrified at such an inexplicable phenomenon, the Calanasans finally fled. Rev. Fr. Pedro Murillo wrote of this incident in his book *Historia de Filipinas de la Compania de Jesus*: "They burned Bantay and though they set fire three times to the church, it was delivered by the Nstra. Senora dela Caridad through her special protection.

2. In 1723, a Visitor for the Augustinian friars came over to Ilocos. He was met at Bantay by ecclesiastical officials and a number of people. The river was swollen, but there was some urgency in bringing the Visitor across the river to Vigan. A banca with a ten person capacity was provided. The Visitor, Diocesan Provisor, a Judge and other persons went along. A violent whirlpool sucked the banca in midstream and the boat capsized. All the passengers in full dress and with shoes on were sinking helplessly in that sucking eddy of water. In their helplessness, they appealed to Our Lady of Charity whose shrine they had just visited. Our Lady saved them all from a common watery grave, including those who did not know how to swim.

3. From December 24, 1762 until May of 1763, Diego Silang led a revolt in the Ilocos. He defeated all the armies which the authorities of the region could send against him. He even imprisoned Bishop-elect Bernardo Ustariz, all the friars and practically all the Spaniards in Ilocos Sur. On May 26, 1763, he resolved to kill the bishop-elect and all the friars imprisoned in Bantay. The prisoners were alarmed. Their situation was desperate indeed. That same day, they unanimously promised to Our Lady of Charity that if they came out of the prison alive, they would compose a novena in her honor. They at once began to pray a novena to her for their deliverance. Silang actually commanded some of his Christian followers to kill the bishop-elect and the friars but no one would obey him. He then sought out the Calanasans-tingguians to do the black deed for him, but they delayed in executing his orders. It is the custom of the Calanasans to consult the resonance or voice of certain Chinese jars or the bloom of certain trees before killing people. On the third day of novena (May 28, 1763), Miguel Vicos, under the guise of friendship, entered Silang's fort constructed on a hill south of Vigan and treacherously killed him with a pistol. Vicos might have seen the danger to himself, for he was a Spanish mestizo. Or he might have realized the misery that would come to Ilocos if the bishop-elect and all the friars (about 90 of them) would be massacred. Or he might have received blood money. Needless to say, the prisoners were saved. Amidst great rejoicing, the bishop-elect returned to his palace, and the friars to their respective parish houses where they finished the novena as an act of thanksgiving to Our Lady. Bishop elect-Ustariz and his former co-prisoners declared their deliverance as a signal of favour from Our Lady of Charity.

E.) **HERMANA MAYOR** (Those who served as sponsor/benefactor from 1957 to 2016)

Host to Apo Caridad Coronation Annual Anniversary Celebration

1957	- Rosa Obrero	1987	- Sinabaan
1958	- Modesta Arellano	1988	- Malingeb
1959	- Petronila C. Parilla	1989	- Brgy. 5
1960	- Angela Paat	1990	- Capangdanan
1961	- Maria P. Pacis	1991	- Guimod
1962	- Lolita Agatep	1992	- Brgy. 1
1963	- Felipa P. Pilien	1993	- Parish Pastoral Council
1964	- Esperanza C. Remucal	1994	- San Isidro
1965	- Quintina P. Singson	1995	- San Julian
1966	- Felipa Padernal	1996	- Bulag West
1967	- Pacencia vda. de Paat	1997	- Brgy. 6
1968	- Natividad Pe Benito	1998	- Ora West
1969	- Dedicacion Saruca	1999	- Cabaroan/Boquig
1970	- Teodora A. Pacis	2000	- Puspup
1971	- Coleta C. Paz	2001	- San Julian East
1972	- Caridad P. Mendoza	2002	- Cabalanggan
1973	- Puspup (Brgy Pastoral Council)	2003	- Bulag Centro
1974	- Aggay	2004	- San Isidro
1975	- Brgy. 3	2005	- Aggay
1976	- Brgy. 1	2006	- Balaleng Amianance (50 <sup>th</sup> )
1977	- Bulag Centro	2007	- Marsha's Delicacies
1978	- Balaleng Purok	2008	- Quimmarayan
1979	- Bulag West	2009	- Brgy. IV
1980	- Bulag Centro	2010	- Balaleng Laudenia
1981	- Parish Pastoral Council (25 <sup>th</sup> )	2011	- Mira
1982	- Balaleng Laudenia	2012	- Cabusligan
1983	- CWL	2013	- Sagpat/Sagneb
1984	- Brgy. 2	2014	- Guimod
1985	- Apostolada	2015	- Bulag Centro
1986	- Brgy. 4	2016	- Brgy. 3 (60 <sup>th</sup> )





H.) **More READINGS and WRITINGS...**

- lvcdag2-

1. **\*Town's present characteristics, features & situation**

[\*Note: **Mostly** taken from the existing CLUP of Bantay 1999-2009, formulated through Resolution No. 20/00, as enacted by Zoning Ordinance No. 197/00, passed on 7/17/00 and 2/8/02, respectively, and approved-in-review by SP Res. 181 dated 11/15/02. As of this writing 8/8/16, the CLUP (2012-2022) is still under revision work of the MPDC]

### Land area and classification:

- Total land area is 10,485 hectares, where
  - ✓ 334 hectares or 3.19 percent comprises the urban Barangays (I to VI)
  - ✓ 10,151 hectares of 96.81 percent comprises the rural barangays (28).
- Barangay Lingsat is the largest while Brgy III has the least in land area.
- Alienable or disposable area is 68.81 percent while 30.19 is forestland (inalienable-patrimonial)

### Topography:

- Relatively uneven in its physical features, its eastern portion which bounds the Province of Abra consist of elevated land forms bounded by steep slopes and rising to prominent ridges, the highest point of which is 745 meters above sea level located at Barangay Lingsat.
- At Barangays Balaleng, Mira, Guimod, Capangdanan, Ora, Malingeb, Puspup, Aggay, Quimmarayan, An-annam, San Mariano and Banaoang are pots of rolling hills with elevation from 20 to 40 meters above sea level. Others are generally flat. The hills are folded sandstones and shale, while the mountainous areas consist of diuretic blocks.

### Demography:

The first official census was conducted in **1903** where, at the time, Bantay has only a total population of 7,020. After fifteen years or in **1918**, this figure rose to 9,573 or an increase of 36.37%. Its population steadily grew during the succeeding census years > **1960** =15,833; **1970** =19,164; **1980** =22, 282; **1990** =26,024; **1995** =28,128; **2005** =32,693; **2009** = 35,837; **2015** =36,828.

### Land Use:

- With a total of 10,485 hectares of land area, the classification of land usage are –
  - ✓ Forest land - 30.19%= 3,165.25 (where protected forest areas is 3,107.76 and timberland is 57.49 hectares)
  - ✓ Grassland - 26.23%= 2,750.47
  - ✓ Agricultural - 21.30%= 2,233.60
  - ✓ Built up area - 7.61%= 796.88
  - ✓ Residential - 6.31%= 661.90
  - ✓ Special uses - 3.9%= 40.47
  - ✓ Institutional - 3.2%= 33.68
  - ✓ Parks/Recreation area - 2.7%= 27.96
  - ✓ Commercial - 1.6%= 16.27
  - ✓ Vacant lot - 1.0%= 10.19
  - ✓ Industrial - .06%= 6.41
  - ✓ Pasture area - 5.35%= 560.95
  - ✓ Water easement/creek river - 4.10%= 430.19
  - ✓ Roads - 2.66%= 279
  - ✓ Sandy land - 2.56%= 268.66

### Soil:

It has five (5) types of soil – the ✓Bantay Clay loam, ✓Bantog loam, ✓San Manuel loam, ✓rough/stony land and ✓river wash.

### Climate:

- Type I climate – characterized by two distinct seasons namely –
  - ✓ the dry period (from November to April) and ✓wet period (from May to October).
- The months of July and August register the highest annual rainfall and humidity.
- The months of April and May are the hottest month with an average temperature of approximate 28.6 degrees Celsius.

- The months of December and January are the recorded coolest months at 25.4 degrees Celsius. Ilocos Sur has an average annual temperature reading of 81 degrees Fahrenheit. January is the coldest month with an average temperature of 63 degrees Fahrenheit. The annual rainfall in the province is 250 centimeters, with August receiving almost 60 centimeters of rain during the year.

**Educational attainment:**

- As of 1990, literacy rate is high with 94.60% of its population aged 10 years and over were literate, majority or 75.72% were in rural areas mostly were females –
  - ✓ 2.6 have not graduated from elementary
  - ✓ 59.83 percent attained elementary
  - ✓ 26.47 high school graduates
  - ✓ 2.47 finished post secondary
  - ✓ 8.63 college graduate/ academic degree holders.

**Sports and recreation:**

Bantay is considered as the sports and recreational center of Ilocos Sur because in here located the spacious **Quirino stadium** occupying a land area of 6 hectares. Other areas that serve as recreation spaces include the bell tower which is an ideal venue to unwind because of the aerial view of the beautiful sceneries of Bantay town proper, surrounding towns and the scalloping mountains of Abra and inland fishing at the Abra river. Also, worth mentioning are the wildlife view at the **Victoria park** and **Mount Tupira** that are part of the Caniao reforestation area and resort-hotels for satisfying leisure.

Other sporting venues include the LGU gym-auditorium (now converted as home to Ilocos Sur Badminton Center), Children’s parks, barangay plazas and basketball courts, school playgrounds and barangay multi-purpose halls.

**Housing units:**

Presently, there are eight housing/subdivision projects [w/ issued development permits;

- ✓ Monte Vista at Paing (2000)
- ✓ Bantay Housing Project at Taleb (2001)
- ✓ Alta Mira at Guimod, Balaleng, Mira, Aggay (2003)
- ✓ Carrington at Brgy. IV (2003)
- ✓ Baluarte hills at Ora (2006)
- ✓ Camella Homes at Cabaroan, Mira (2012)
- ✓ El Pueblo de Colinas Subdivision Project at Guimod (2015)
- ✓ El Pueblo de Colinas Socialized Housing Project at Guimod (2015)

**Commerce and trade:**

The major commercial business area of Bantay is currently found at the southern part of the urban core, particularly at Brgy VI, where the former Bantay public market is located. Due to the proximity of Bantay to Vigan, which is the commercial center of the Province, the public market was not, however, utilized for its purpose as most residents prefer to market/buy their needs and sell their products at Vigan, where big trading businesses are conducted and other services that are not offered in the Municipality are readily available. Hence, it was leased then to the late Mr. Lorenzo Agatep (1990, for 25 years), who, in turn, subleased it as a commercial/residential tenement. **Consequently, after the Municipal government regained control of the site of the public market in 2006, sometime November of same year, it was developed and transformed, where the Bantay Commercial Complex (Arcade) and a satellite market (talipapa) now exists** (at p. 78, 2006 chronicle #3). Aside from the Arcade and *talipapa* market, other existing commercial establishments include wholesale trades, service stores, retail trades, banking/financial intermediaries, educational institutions, insurance companies, real estate lessors, and gasoline stations. Commercial and service establishments include mall (superstore), commercial complexes, sari-sari stores, restaurant, food houses, hotels lumber yards and those engaged in retail-wholesale business.



Farmers and merchants of Bantay market their products in adjacent Municipalities. Town peddlers often go to different Barangays to sell commodities not readily obtainable in the locality. During harvest season, middlemen go directly to barangays to buy the farmer's products like locally grown vegetables and later sell their products to outside market at higher prices. Sometimes, they store what they bought and wait until prices go up...

### **Development needs, problems and issues:**

1. The proximity of Bantay to Vigan seems to hamper commercial development of the town. Although the Municipality has an Arcade and flea/mini market, many consumers, including some of its residents, still prefer conducting business in Vigan that offers more readily available merchandize and where big commercial establishments are put-up. However, by now (since 2000), Bantay is eyed as a place for mercantile spaces because business enterprises may likely thrive more in its area within the next ten year period, considering that Vigan appears congested already. The strategic location of Bantay as catchment area makes it an appropriate alternative, being along the MNR. Availability of marginally productive lands for urban purposes makes it a perfect expansion site for big malls, warehouses and recreational centers. Crime rate and incidents of lawlessness are expected to rise.

2. The minimal, if not lacking, concern of government agencies, constraint farmers to sell their products to middlemen at a very low price. This is aggravated by the lack of storage facilities where farmers could stock their products while waiting for the right time to sell. Commercial growth rate is high with an average of 33.34 per year. With this rate, by 2018, the LGU shall be fully commercialized at the urban areas. At present, the objective is to make Bantay an alternative area for medium to large scale commercial establishments, how this could be achieved is a great challenge.

3. The suppose Metro-Vigan Development Authority/Coordinating Council (MVDA or MVCC) is still underway, due to issues and roles of participating LGUs in the areas of cooperation, terms of mutual understanding, services and resources. If operational, it can identify the SWOT of Bantay.

4. The Municipality has high potential of becoming an eco-tourism site with the presence of **Mt. Tupira & Victoria Park** (Mt. Caniao and part of the Caraballo mountain), the **St. Augustine Parish** and **Belfry**, the **Diego Silang Park** and the **Quirino bridge** among to boost with. Waiting to be tapped are the secluded '**Burayok**' and '**Napanaas**' waterfalls located at Lingsat (p.42) and Banaoang (p. 28), respectively. Also, '**Sinangbalde**' and '**Apar**' at Sn Mariano (Sallacong, p. 54). Towards this end, there is a need to provide tourists, guests and visitors with more and better facilities such as hotels, inns, conference buildings, retreat houses, restaurants, swimming pools, resorts, training and convention centers. Nevertheless, the available facilities for **resort/swimming leisure** (wanting to be promoted) are: ✓Fiesta Garden (Guimod), ✓Baley Park (Cabaroan), ✓Terraza de Nino Resort (Aggay), ✓Jaja Hidden Water Park Resort (Sinabaan), ✓La Laterna (Cabalanggan) and ✓Merxine Dos Nietas (Tay-ac); **Hotel/Pension house/Inn** accommodation includes Mel and Sol Inn, Jaja Hotel, Daenee's Lodge, Farm View Apartment, Hotel Manor, One Vittoria, Fiesta Garden, Henady Inn, Villa Manuela, Kuya Mars, North Coast, Terraza de Nino, La Lanterna, La Jenns, Marvin Rose Inn, Hotel Natividad etc.

5. With the advent of low-priced motorcycles, more vehicles are traversing the national and provincial roads leading to Vigan City and the other connecting towns. The town serving as a gateway, management of monstrous traffic (jam) is fast becoming a dilemma and the rising risk of vehicular accidents, a high price to pay for in exchange of development.

6. No LGU permanent dumpsite; absence of long range plan to address garbage and proper waste disposal as an offshoot of urbanization...

7. The dying handicraft (livelihood) of GOLDSMITH, particularly the production of **Tambourine** jewelries, re-invention and repackaging of the town as haven of investment and opportunities. The OTOP (one town, one product) declared was '**abel iloco**' (SB Res. 35/16), when it could be LADEK, CHICHACORN, CALLIENTE, BIBINGKA or something else ingenious (at p.19).

## **1. Historical trace of Ylocos Province**

It is located along the western coast of Northern Luzon. It is bounded on the North by Ilocos Norte and Abra, on the South by the Province of La Union, on the West by the China sea and on the East by Benguet and Mountain Provinces. Its total land area is 2,576.69 square kilometers.

In 1572, Juan de Salcedo made his famous trip along '**Samtoy**' ('*sao ditoy*') or what is now known as the *Ylocos* Province. He was sent by his uncle, Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, [who earlier led a major naval-military expedition in 1564 and started establishment permanent settlement in Cebu (1565) Manila (1571)] to explore further north the island of Luzon. Two years later, Salcedo founded Villa Fernandina (1574 in Bigan) as the heart of the '**Yloko settlement**, meaning, a far away **lowland region**. It became the center of Spanish rule and influence, evangelization and pacification movements. After the exploration of Salcedo, the Spaniards created **Samtoy** or the *Ylocos* region into an 'encomienda' with Ciudad Fernandina, now Vigan, as the capital (also at pp 7-8 supra). Salcedo was then made Lieutenant Governor of Ylokos and through his efforts, the settlements in Tagudin, Santa Lucia, Narvacan, **BANTAY**, Candon and Sinait were pacified and made to pay tribute to the king of Spain. However, the Spanish pacification of the region, aided by the Augustinian friars, was never completely successful. Proofs of this were the 5 uprisings by the Ilocanos against the abusive practices of the colonizers such as the Malong's inspired Ilocos revolt of 1661, Diego and Gabriela Silang's uprisings in 1762-63, Basi Revolt of 1807, Ilocos Revolt of 1811, Candon Revolution in 1898.

Originally, the *Ylokos* (province) comprised the present provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Abra and a part of Mountain province. Since then, we saw the dismemberment of Ylokos due to increasing population and demand for administrative services or otherwise regionalized governance. **Pangasinan**, plus parts of La Union, were made into a province in **1611**. On February 2, 1818 or 207 years later, the northern part of *Ylokos* became the province of **Ilocos Norte**, while the southern part, which included the northern part of **La Union** and all of what is now the province of **Abra**, was originally the Province of **ILOCOS SUR**. Thirty six (36) years after the creation of Ilocos Sur, the province of **La Union** was created in **1854**- dislodging some towns that belonged to both Ilocos Sur and Pangasinan. Before the creation of La Union, Namacpacan (now Luna) was the southernmost (boundary) territory of Ilocos Sur, and the territory south of this belonged to Pangasinan. With the subtraction of Namacpacan from Ilocos Sur's territory, the sub-provinces of **Lepanto** and **Amburayan** were taken from the Mountain Province and incorporated with Ilocos Sur. But years thereafter, due idyllic geographical administration, the two were returned to Mountain Province. Earlier, **Abra**, which was once a part of Ilocos Sur, was created in **1846**, eight years ahead than La Union. But in February of **1905**, Abra was annexed as a sub-province to Ilocos Sur, not until March **1917** when Philippine Act 2683 made it again as a separate province.

Ilocos Sur consists of 34 Municipalities and 765 barangays. It is famous for its varied home industry products like loom weaving, pottery, salt-making, furniture, jewelry, basket-weaving, bolo-knives making and cigar manufacturing. **Bantay is famous for its jewelry making**, Pagburnayan and Bulala in Vigan are the centers of pottery and jar making. Salt making is located in Candon, Caoayan, Santa and furnitures in San Vicente. The late President Elpidio Quirino made Ilocos Sur known in Philippine history; Pedro Bucaneg, the father of Ilocano literature; Diego Silang, the first Filipino emancipator; Josefa Gabriela Silang, the Filipino Joan of Arc; Fr. Jose Burgos, the father of Filipino nationalism; Leona Florentino, the Ilocano poetess; Ventura de los Reyes, the first Filipino delegate to the Spanish cortes; Mena Crisologo, the Ilocano Shakespeare; Isabelo de los Reyes, the Champion of Filipino labor, socialism and unionism; Msgr. Pedro Brillantes, the first Bishop of the Filipino Independent Church; Vicente Singson Encarnacion, Ilocano millionaire and industrialist; and Benito Soliven, the great Ilocano patriot and parliamentarian. Of late, Luis 'Chavit' Singson, as then Governor of Ilocos Sur and the author of RA 7171 (Share of Virginia Tobacco Producing Provinces from the Excise Tax), made vast headlines as the whistleblower of the 'jueteng payola' that lead to the deposed of a President and considered the 'hero' of EDSA II (2001). The Province has now two chartered component cities, Vigan and Candon, both created in 2001.

[a reprint from unknown source]

- lvcdag2 -

## 2. "Only in Bantay"

(lvcd)

**Identity** is the ascription or attribute that one possesses to become innate and different from others. It is that essential self of individuality, distinctive trademarks or set of characteristics as belonging uniquely to someone's personality or way of life. Looking back (circa 1970's) on the common traits, vernaculars, behaviours, mannerisms, qualities and such peculiar practices, you are a true blooded **Bantayenio** if you know or are aware of the following customary features and typical aspects of origination. Falling or covered by at least five (5) items listed below, chances are, you are a genuine native, an origin or a grassroots of Bantay. Expressed otherwise, - You are from the town of Bantay, if and when you can relate with the following...

1. Your surname or those of your ascendants begin with the letter **P**;
2. You are familiar with the words **tagaang, solas, tabungao, sampaloc, rosita, domino, kalangkang, piniwir, piramid, tamburin**, the lingo words ascribed to the types of jewelries made locally;
3. You hunger for that residual meat crumbs of **bagnet** called **ladek** (an original local delicacy) and can speak well of the story how it came about;
4. You dispute and argue with anyone else who claims that **Quirino stadium** lies within the territory of Vigan;
5. You enjoy the taste of the culinary recipe` called **pinipian** (that finely grind rice in red meat soup which is an original/native recipe of the town) whose indispensable ingredient are the *pasotes*' leaves (a wild herb) grown at your backyard;
6. You call that favourite morning soup of tender pork and internal organ parts as **yosi**, instead of **lumo-lumo**, and love it most with abundant '*kutchai*' you gather in your patio;
7. You irately **climb tombs** and **step upon graves** in your way to the poblacion cemetery because there are no pathways;
8. You simply like **namuli-a-cacao** (home-made native **tsokolate or tablea**) that is made a hot chocolate drink and blends well even with rice as your viand during cold breakfast and stormy mornings;
9. You call the Ilocano version of **sisig** as **warek-warek**, not **dinakdakan**;
10. You are very familiar with the local dialect verb-**usaos**, meaning the cleaning and scouring of jewelry to enhance the gold color on it;
11. You still call and order **halo-halo** (that fruit shake with grated ice) as **monggo**;
12. You interchangeably cook and make no distinction between **imbaliktad** and **ata-ata** (half-cook tender beef with internal parts);
13. You know the way leading to Mount '**Caniao**', a local picnic groove, but frown and seem at a loss what is this **Victoria Park** and where it is located;
14. You call the seasonal red **sarguelas** (sinigwelas of Brgy. Paing) as **bayag** (testicles in tagalog, so *bastos*!); the **sitaw** (stringbeans) as **utong** (breast nipple in tagalog, *oh my*!); the **black beans** as **pusi** (yes, a pussy!); the **tortang talong** (braised eggplant) as **puki-puki** (a vagina, *most bastos at its worst*); and the **patola** (white squash) as **kaba-titi** (*oh Jesus*);
15. You used to refer the now famous chichacorn (corn crackers or **cornik**) of Brgy. Taleb as **marbik**, the **bopis** dish as **gogoto** and your pair of slippers as **ismagel**;
16. You must have climbed the top of the Bantay **belltower** at least once during your lifetime and now clearly understand why it was built there by the Spaniards;

17. You drop-by along the eastern national highway to savor the original *caliente* (garnished boiled cow skin) as it goes well as cheap *pulutan* with your favourite gin;
18. You gauge and can forecast the strength of a typhoon or extent of its flooding by the height measurement of **water level** at Banaoang bridge;
19. You can determine whether the *bunog, pasga, bolidao, igat, carpa* and *udang* being peddled around were caught from Abra/Banaoang river just by the look of it but confront the vendor later-on if not luscious as you expected them to be;
20. You are familiar with ‘Mount Caniao’ but do not know that on top of it is the rugged terrains of *Mount Tupira*, what you only knew is its highest peak simply called as “*radar*”;
21. You are a glib (fast) talker, a gossipmonger (*tsismosa*), love steaming *rosangis* (meat soup of tiny shells) being peddled in pot-jar at early mornings and often brag that you are far better off than your stupid neighbour, financially and capability-wise (N.B. this only applies to the Poblacion Barangays);
22. You know, as you were told, that in the town plaza, the monument that stands therein belonged and was dedicated to *Vicos* (the *mestiso* traitor) who assassinated Diego Silang, the Ilocano patriotic hero in whose honor the Silang Park was named after;
23. You smile pathetically at the thought that the poblacion’s **goldsmith** handicraft has been obliterated as a home industry with the entry of Muslim community who deals in cheap fancy jewelries;
24. You cook and classify two (2) versions of the *dinuguan* meal into *mulio* (if with abundant soup or broth) and *dinardaraan* (if dry and so tacky that when served in a plate and overturned will not fall);
25. You have observed that the structure of the **St. Augustine Parish** is somewhat ‘irregular’ because its **belfry** is separated about 120 meters afar (Calvario hill) from the parochial church, making it one of a kind;
26. You refer to the dried fish (*tuyo*) as *tinapa*, while the smoked fish (*tinapa*) as *tinuyo* (or *sinuoban*);
27. You recall the early improvised *wanpong* (one shot) paltik revolver (no reloading mechanism) that blacksmiths used to make in Banaoang using primitive tools, now barely forgotten overtaken by modern technology;
28. You prefer cooking **edible frogs** with its snake-like skin on and your lechon manok with lots of **cactus** (*carimbuaya*) in it;
29. You proudly sport a **new dress** every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of September (La Naval) and buy cooked flattened green rice called *pinipig* after the mass;
30. You yearn to eat the rare adobong *aros-aros, abal-abal, simut-simut* and *ar-arawan* (palatable insects, *yaks!*... *yummy aphrodisiacs too*).

## 4. **L A D E K**

(An original delicacy of Bantay)

### **Brief description:**

**Ladek** is a pork meat (specifically the deboned parts of a pig's head and intestines) that is first boiled to tender, cooled, then minced and fried in oil up to a time it turns sticky and greasy until it is cooked with its own fat. When served, it becomes a **crumb meat meal** that requires no ingredient, seasoning or garnishment other than salt to taste. To make it appealing and appetizing, it may be presented in wrapped banana leaves or served directly (as is) from the cooking pot. It goes well with sliced tomatoes perked with fish sauce (*patis*).

**Ladek** is a proud discovery product of the town. A recipe that requires no culinary art or mastery, it is bare pork meat crumbs derived as residual titbits when cooking the famous *bagnet*. The ingenuity of *Bantayenos* made it a classic meal, though. A superb delicacy food reflective of the resourcefulness and creativity of the town folks. Savour it to experience and relish its delectable flavour. An authentic zest of the Bantay cuisine.

### **Early ladek:**

Its origin and how it all started could be traced back during the Spanish era when the '*poblaciones*' of Bantay was renowned as home to '*partidores*' (butchers and slaughterers) and '*kusineros*' (food chefs), either as an avocation or source of livelihood. In olden times, as elderly folks claim, it really makes a difference when the chicharon or *bagnet* (deep fried crispy belly pork), *longganisa* (local meat sausage), *dinuguan* or *dinardaraan* (blooded pork meat) are made from Bantay because of its uniquely delectable taste and exquisite blend compared from those sold from other towns. Foods prepared by them must be superbly sumptuous, so they say. These *partidores* and *kusineros* were responsible in introducing **ladek**; first, for personal consumption only, next to the neighbourhoods, then it reached among other communities and later even beyond the town. Its discovery was by chance or unintentional and was brought about by local demands for its plain and simple meaty flavour.

### **The story behind its making:**

The **Ladek** recipe` dates back from the time chicharon (*bagnet*) making was also conceived. This is so because after all, **ladek** is, supposedly, the remaining meat crumbs that accumulate at the bottom of the '*silyasi*' (a deep metal cooking pan or '*kawa*' in tagalog) in the process of cooking chicharon (*bagnet*); similar to the '*tutong*' in tagalog or '*ittip*' in the vernacular, referring to the excess particles that stuck in the casserole when cooking rice. Like any leftovers, initially, it was never given importance and merely given away to the lowly *partidores* and *kusineros* as token for all their labors since it was regarded of no value and meant anyway to be discarded. When brought home, however, it is shared among their families and friends and because it was so luscious, crunchy soft, flavourful, tangy, more delightful and tastier than its source, which is the chicharon (*bagnet*), it becomes an ideal viand. It was not intended then for sale that is why it is only of limited quantity and not even available for public consumption. But while it is taken freely by *partidores* and *kusineros*, their pals would await and seek for **ladek** after being through with their cooking works. This gave rise for them to surreptitiously add grated pork to increase the meat crumbs that remain after

cooking its main, the chicharon (*bagnet*), so they could liberally produce and sneakily bring home more. Still, the demands for **ladek** continued that prompted *partidores* and *kusineros* to purposely cook **ladek**, simultaneous or mixed with the chicharon (*bagnet*), and offer it now for sale. By then, the cost of **ladek** was cheaper than chicharon (*bagnet*). Nevertheless, **ladek** spreads further that residents in the *poblaciones* longed to buy and savour its succulent taste and sticky meat grains. Soon thereafter, due to vast demands among neighbourhoods, *partidores* and *kusineros* were encouraged to cook **ladek** separately and as an independent dish for commercial purposes, this time at a price same with that of its principal, the chicharon (*bagnet*).

### **Ladek at present times:**

**Ladek** only became known in the 1950's, but it is believed that the first commercial **ladek** was cooked in the mid 1960's, neatly wrapped individually in banana leaves bought by piece and not by weight as being done nowadays.

In earlier times (70 to 90's), many entrepreneurs ventured in the making of **ladek**; presently, however, only a few are now engaged because of 'interventions' such as the need for capital, economic instability, marketability, labor cost, production difficulty, fluctuating cost of hogs and even perhaps lack of technical skill. The truth is, even among *Bantayenos*, particularly the younger generations who are not from the *poblaciones*, several do not know this delicacy and that it was invented in this town. Moreover, its production is not pursued in large scale because the making and packaging is yet to be quality controlled in accordance with national standards or criteria prescribed under existing food regulations.

Today, avid connoisseurs of **ladek**, particularly among households of Bantay, enjoy this mouth-watering meal by cooking it home-made. The recipe is no secret, it is pure and bare, but somewhat tedious to prepare. It can be stored and preserved in the refrigerator and reheated in the oven, microwave or ordinary pan. It can last for days, weeks and even months without losing its splendid taste and stickiness as long as kept properly. A great 'fast food' and perfect '*baon*' on outings and picnics, so yummy to devour the fragmented greasy meat in a plate of banana leaves with your bare hands coupled with your favourite dip or seasoning

Verily, **ladek** is no longer just a by-product or derivative of chicharon (*bagnet*) but a delicious fine meal by itself. Though it has gained popularity by the passing of time, it still awaits to be tapped to be more competitive in the market.

## VII. THE ERA OF Dur-as BANTAY, A GLANCE

### A) Notes on:

#### 1. LEGISLATIVE BUILDING, ANNEX 1 (“SB Office”/“LCS hall”)

Construction work began in **March 1997** to cater and address the vast administrative demands and service requirements of the public clientele. Considered as a major breakthrough and milestone feat in the political history of the town, this massive structure is a joint undertaking sourced from Provincial and Municipal funds with a total cost of **5.5M** funded by Gov. Luis Chavit Singson and Vice Gov Deogracias Savellano, under the tutelage of the town’s elected officials of 1995-1998 & 2008-2001 term (at p.61). Inspired with the common vision that it will strengthen and improve the totality of local governance, though finally completed and ready for occupancy by **year-end of 1998**, Offices transferred and actually occupied allocated room spaces only on February of 1999. It was later formally blessed and inaugurated by (now Bishop) Fr. William Antonio on **December 23, 1999**, on the occasion of Community Christmas Program. Rehabilitated on May, 2014 (p. 82) and re-blessed on September 4, 2015(at p. 83).

#### 2. ADMINISTRATIVE/MUNICIPAL HEALTH OFFICE, ANNEX 2 (“Puericulture building”)

After the Annex 1 building was completed on December of 1998, immediately, then Mayor Chinita Parilla and Vice Mayor Samuel Parilla envisioned another edifice that would be their lasting tribute to the people of Bantay to showcase a legacy and lasting governmental accomplishment achieved during their administration. Soon, thereafter, they initiated and lobbied once more for funding source and it did not take long when their aspiration was pursued and fulfilled. **September 25, 2000**, on the occasion of the birthday bash of VM Parilla, a time capsule was laid to the ground in a simple ground breaking ceremony at the very site of new building. It did not start immediately, not until **February of 2001** did actual construction works began. Health personnel moved out from their old dilapidated RHU Office and occupied the first floor corridors/aisle of the Annex 1 building for 2 years and 2 months or until its final completion (all 3 Phases) on **April, 2003**. For the building itself, the total cost spent was **6M Pesos** (1.5 from the CDF of Congressman Baterina and 4.5 M derived from the 20% ADF of 2001 and 2002 of the Municipal government allocated by the SB members (term 1998-2001, at p. 61). It was inaugurated and blessed by Archbishop Edmundo Abaya on **May 5, 2003** as part of the town fiesta festivities with guests of honor, then PCSO Chairman Honey Girl Singson, Gov. DV Savellano, Vice Gov. Gerry Singson, Provincial Board Members, Regional Director and Officials of the DOH and DPWH, among other dignitaries.

#### 3. MUNICIPAL HEALTH OFFICE EXTENSION BLDG I, ANNEX 3 (“Dur-as Bantay Birthing Home”)

Due to the compelling need for a broader local health facilities and amenities brought about by the ever-increasing want for medical provisions, high cost of drugs, expensive doctor’s fees, soaring hospital charges, enlarged health care, medical treatment, curative healing and nursing attention, the Municipal government earmarked in its 20% ADF of 2011 an allocation, on Economic Development Program, under ‘Infrastructure Service and Public Utilities’ component, for the **Improvement of Rural Health Unit** in the amount of 2M pesos (SB Res. 43-A, dated 12/6/2010). On **February 28, 2011**, however, with the recommendation of the MDC, seeing the genuine demand for basic health necessities, it was imperative not only to expand and improve the Rural Health Unit/Office, but to construct virtually a lying-in hospital, that offers the conveniences of a hospital, in order to reach out, accommodate and deliver better medical services and health programs to the constituents, particularly the less-privileged sector of the society. Then came the prolific idea of putting up MHC Expansion Building at the still vacant inner space of the town hall lot. With a cost of 4.5 million, all taken out from local fund, but without sacrificing financial accountability and compromising other activities in the 20% ADP of 2011, the erection of this new structural edifice started **March 14** of **2011**. Mayor Samuel C.

Parilla lobbied for additional fund to complete the structure and afterwards, with political providence, Honorable Congressman Ryan Singson contributed another 3.8 M (for Phase II) making the extension-building a total worth cost of **8.3 M**. It was blessed and inaugurated on **December 22, 2011** by then Parish Priest, Fr. Magdaleno Ruelos. It officially opened on January 1, 2012. Another feat in the political saga of the town through the combined efforts of the incumbent elected officials of 2010-2013 (see p. 61; also at p. 80-81, 2011 and 2012 chronicles).

#### 4. THE TOWN PLAZA

(Diego Silang Park)

In a letter to National Historical Institute (NHI) Exec. Dir Ludovico Badoy, dated January 7, 2010, Mayor Parilla requested for an authority to transfer/relocate the commemorative monument (Vicos shrine) that is situated in the middle of the plaza, to pave way for major face-lifting and renovation without sacrificing the parochial set up and in conformity with its antiquated motif or outlook. It was cited that the memorial is a gloomy reminder of the arrogance and tyranny of the Spanish rule and serves more of an obstacle or barrier hindering festivity of public functions and social activities. If and when moved, its cultural significance and historical importance will be left unaltered because a replica of the entire structural edifice will be fixed in mid-southern portion of the plaza, thus preserving its original bearings in order to provide ample space for civic celebrations or gatherings such as fiestas, parades and programs. Said letter was acted upon favorably by the NHI, through Executive Director III and OIC Emelita Almosara, in her letter dated February 3, 2010 where (it)interposes no objection. With the approval (“go signal”), on March 23, 2010, construction work for the renovation and improvement of Diego Silang Park started with funds obtained through the initiatives of Cong. Ronald Singson... First, was the former archaic stage bearing signs that it was (re)built in September 1, 1953 and now in place is an accentuated modernized multi-purpose stage-hall. Next were the bleachers/staircases, then the flat form. The memorial (dedicated to Vicos, at pp. 11 & 15, supra) was constructed in 1763 and reconstructed (transformed) and rededicated (renamed) in 1915 with four surrounding marble *lapida* tablets bearing inscriptions that read:

(translation courtesy of Fr. A. Foz)

*Al gran patriota  
e intrepido Diego Silang*

To the great patriot  
and daring Diego Silang

*El primer heroe ilocano que  
protesto contra la soberania de  
España en estas islas*

The first ilocano hero who  
protested against the sovereignty  
of Spain in these islands

*Fue muerto alevosamente por  
Miguel Vicos inducido  
por los frayles en 1763*

He was treacherously killed by  
Miguel Vicos induced  
by the friars in 1763

*Fue reformada en 1915,  
siendo gobernador Provincial  
El Hon. Juan Villamor,  
Presidente Municipal de este  
pueblo de Bantay el Sr. Eusebio Paz*

It was reformed in 1915, the  
Governor of the Province being  
the Honorable Juan Villamor,  
the Municipal Mayor of this  
town of Bantay was Sr. Eusebio Paz

It was blessed, inaugurated and formally opened on **December 23, 2010**, by Parish Priest Magdaleno Ruelos and ribbon cut by City VM (then Congresssman) Ryan Singson. Initially used as venue for the annual and traditional Community Christmas Program held on the same day.

5. **Bantay Commercial Complex** (BCC or Arcade) - was completed in November of 2007, occupied in March of 2008 and inaugurated/blessed on **December 26, 2008** (at pp. 78-79, 2006, 2007 & 2008 chronicles). In 2012, wet section/*talipapa* and motor pool of the Arcade were constructed (p. 81).
6. **MHO Building II, Annex 4** - began on **November 12, 2013** (at p. 13 & p. 82, 2013 chronicles) Still unfinished (Phase II) to this date of writing.



## **B) Ten years Political Chronicles (2006-2016):**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS AND SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

#### **2006**

- 1. January 12 - The golden (1956 to 2006) anniversary celebration** of the canonical coronation of Our Lady of Charity as the Patroness of Ilocandia. A weeklong program of activities, actively participated by members of the Municipal council, was tendered to commemorate Her crowning fifty (50) years ago that made Bantay Parish the sanctuary of *Nuestra Senora de la Caridad*. It also marks the completion of the landscaping work undertaken at the bell tower, courtesy of the Provincial Tourism Council, accentuating a new look and ambiance and inclusion in the itineraries of Vigan calesa tour ride.
- 2. February 15** - Hon. William Pre was appointed as SBMember by the Provincial Governor vice the slot vacated by Jasmin Ramos. Kag. Paternia Calderon filed her leave of absence made effective **March 8, 2006** but even after consuming all her accrued leave, she has not yet returned from abroad up to expiration of her term on June 30, 2007. Alas, on **March 9, 2006**, Kag. Paul Anthony Lucero was gunned down inside his vehicle in broad daylight at the entrance of Bantay West Central School. Forthwith, former Punong Barangay of Brgy. V, Crispin Peredo, Jr., replaced his deceased brother-in-law, when he was appointed by the Provincial Governor on **April 10, 2006**... [For a recap, of the original eight (8) Sanggunian members elected in May, 2004 elections (at p.61), only four SBMs (Reboroso, Mercurio, Leones and Quintinita) remained, while the other four (4) “left” or have been gone (the late Kag. Criselda Bundoc passed away on 7/20/05 and was replaced by the appointment of her younger sister Aida Bundoc on 10/3/05; Kag. Jasmin Ramos resigned on **8/15/05**; Kag. Paternia Calderon left for the US on 3/8/06; and Kag. Paul Anthony Lucero murdered on 3/9/06]. {Refer also at p.61, supra}.
- 3. November 3 - The passage of SB Resolution No. 26**, otherwise known as the “Final Borrowing Resolution” that confirmed/ratified the subsidiary loan agreement, assignments and other supporting documents pertaining the loan availment/credit facility of the LGU with the LBP worth **42 M**, intended for the establishment of the envisioned **Bantay Commercial Complex (Arcade)** at Brgy. VI (formerly leased by L. Agatep). A ground breaking ceremony ushering its kick-off was held **November 29, 2006**. It was completed in November of 2007, occupied in March of 2008 and inaugurated/blessed **December 26, 2008**;
- 4. November 15 - The enactment of Ordinance No. 277** titled ‘An Ordinance establishing a Diagnostic Laboratory Section under the Municipal Health Office (MHO), providing administrative guidelines therefore and prescribing rate of fees for Laboratory tests and Blood chemistry analysis services rendered by the Municipal government’. The beginning of an added vital health facility extended by our MHO.
- 5. November 26 - The Cristo Rey (Viva Cristo Ari!) festivity** where the town served HOST to this annual diocesan celebration, supported by Bantay officialdom. The last time it was held in Bantay was 30 years ago (in 1976) and it will take perhaps another thirty years (30) of waiting before this religious event could unfold again in Bantay.

#### **2007**

- 1. February** - The LGU was a recipient of a slightly used Toyota Altis as patrol vehicle for the exclusive use of PNP Bantay. It was acquired and facilitated through the efforts of the Municipal Mayor.
- 2. May 14** - Local (and national) elections result. Emerged winners came from the roster/line-up of Team Unity-Lakas-CMD political party spearheaded by come-backing and former Mayor Samuel C. Parilla (who defeated his only rival, Roger Reboroso, a former SB Member), with Vice Mayor Floro Peredo, and Councilors 1)William Pre, 2)Ireneo Quintinita, 3)Edilberto Mercurio, 4)Roberto Reboroso (the only one who did not come from the administration party), 5)William Pacpaco (a first timer), 6)Aida Bundoc, 7)George Leones and 8)Nick Pamuspusan (another first timer) [see also p. 61].
- 3. October 29** – the Barangay and SK elections were held. Out of the 34 barangays, seventeen (17) new Punong Barangays were given fresh mandate, while seventeen (17) were re-elected. Elected SK Federated President (Pambayan organization) on December 6 is Learnie Tolio of Taleb; while the new LIGA (ABC) President is Francisco Carmelo of Cabarosan voted by his colleagues on December 11 [at p 61, supra].

4. **November** - By this time, 98% of the **Bantay Arcade** (Phase II) was completed and ready for occupancy. Efforts were exerted as to the final drafting of the Lease Agreement, the allocation and awarding of the stall spaces, as well the opening, management, occupancy and operation thereof by **2008**.
5. The LGU was awarded the “**2007 Most Outstanding Disaster Preparedness Municipality of Region 1**” (Categories 3-5).

## **2008**

1. **February 10** - Bantay, Ilocos Sur was earlier adjudged as “**2008 Most Child-Friendly Municipality**”, under 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> LGU class category at the Provincial (1<sup>st</sup>) and Regional (1<sup>st</sup>) levels. A finalist at the national level, a Plaque of Recognition was received from Pres. GMA in Malacanang, Manila, after finishing 1<sup>st</sup> runner-up in the over-all country wide search.
2. **March to July**- By virtue of prior SB Res. No. 38/07, the Municipal Mayor commenced accepting applications for the rental of **Bantay Arcade** stalls and after negotiations, a Lease Contract executed to formalize the occupancy of stallholders. It officially marks the opening/start of business operations.
3. **November 12** - Pursuant with **DOF-DO No. 23-08** dtd. **7/29/08** that prescribed the new income (based on average annual income from 2004-2007) of LGUs, the BLGF issued Memo Cir. No. 01-M(33)-08 dated **November 12, 2008**, reclassifying (income category) Bantay from 4<sup>th</sup> to a **3<sup>rd</sup> CLASS Municipality**, effective July 29, 2008 with an increased annual average income bracket of 43 M.
4. **December 5** - The Sangguniang Bayan enacted another milestone legislation when it passed a new **Revenue Code of Bantay** (RCB), through Tax Ordinance No. 303, providing for a broader, updated and the 4<sup>th</sup> codal compilation of all local taxes, fess, charges, impositions and other revenue resources, supplanting the former revenue code that was enacted in 2003.
5. **December 26** - The **Bantay Arcade** was inaugurated/blessed by Asst. Parish Priest, Fr. Raymond Ancheta, witnessed by Municipal employees, in a simple ribbon-cutting matinee ceremony, preceded by a motorcade and followed by the yearly Municipal Christmas program held thereat in the evening.
6. **Awards** - Certificate of appreciation given by the CHR, RO-1 on October, 2008 for the town’s invaluable support on “Human rights capacity building”;
  - Certificate of Recognition (*‘Gantimpala Agad’* Award) under the *‘Mamamayan Muna’* Program given by the CSC RO-1 in recognition of the PNP-Bantay Police station for their dedication to duty, exemplary performance, outstanding teamwork and responsive service that resulted in the successful arrest of several criminal and evacuation of flood victims affected by typhoon Karen at Mt. Caniao, Bantay;
  - Certificate of Recognition – recipient of Best Day Care Center (San Julian DCC) bestowed by SIGLAT Awards, Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur.

## **2009**

1. **1<sup>st</sup> week of December** -The makeshift vending booths in front of the town plaza were relocated to pave way for the construction of a uniform commercial stalls, (funding) courtesy of Hon. Cong. Ronald Singson and Gov. DV Savellano.
2. **2<sup>nd</sup> week of December** – With initial funding of US14,000.00 from BAM, Hawaii (Bantay Association of Maui), while the supposed LGU counterpart of P650,000.00 was provided by Hon. Congressman Ronald Singson, a new and first LGU Ambulance was presented to the towns people on **December 22**, on the occasion of the Community Christmas party.
3. **December 30** - Pres. GMA visited the town and led in the opening and inauguration of the newly constructed and relocated President Quirino bridge at Banaoang (at pp 15-16 and 28, supra);

## **2010**

1. **2<sup>nd</sup> week of January** – The LGU received its first Bantay firetruck (Anos standard) from the DILG.
2. **3<sup>rd</sup> week of January** - With a local counterpart of 356,000.00 provided by Gov. DV Savellano, the LGU was a recipient of a PCSO ambulance under the LMP-PCSO Procurement Program.
3. **4<sup>th</sup> week of January** – The Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project (**BPPIP**), a national funded project, was formally inaugurated and officially opened (see related story at p. 28).

4. **2<sup>nd</sup> week of February**- The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) occupied and hold office at the Bantay Arcade, marking the birth and establishment of **Bantay Fire Station**.
5. **March 23** - Start of the renovation of **Diego Silang Park (town plaza)** major face-lifting, funded by Cong. Ronald Singson, to give way for a more spacious plaza grounds, pavement and modernized multi-purpose stage (p. 77, supra). The **Vicos memorial** that was originally constructed in 1765 and reconstructed in 1915, has to be demolished and in its place or stead, a replica erected at mid-southern part of the plaza. Construction works were finished by **December**.
6. **May 10** - Election year, national and local elections, where the COMELEC's PCOS (Precinct Count Optical Scanner) was pilot-tested. A significant and memorable voting exercise because after more than two (2) decades of Parilla's reign and political career (from 1988), the administration ticket under the ruling Lakas-CMD/KAMPI swept ALL elective municipal positions. All SB (Municipal councilors) candidates under the Parilla line-up won convincingly. A grand victory, a reason to toast and celebrate.
7. **June 29** - Mass Oath taking ceremony administered by Gov. DV Savellano to the fresh set of Municipal elected officials (2010-2013, at p. 61) followed by ribbon cutting, blessing and inauguration of the ten (10) new vending stalls and two (2) comfort rooms at the town plaza (that started December, 2009) with Cong. Ronald Singson, as supposed Guest of Honor, and Fr. R. Ancheta for the blessing.
8. **August 6** - Bantay Municipal Jail was adjudged as 'Most outstanding Municipal Jail of the Year' by the BJMP RO-1, during its 19<sup>th</sup> foundation anniversary ceremony held at Bauang, La Union.
9. **October 25** – Simultaneous Barangay and SK elections was held and on **November 24**, the newly elected Barangay and SK Officials took their Oaths. Gloria Ramirez of Taleb and Jonalyn Pre of San Julian were voted by their memberships as Liga and SK Fed, President, respectively (also at p. 61, supra).
10. **December 23** – Afternoon blessing, inauguration and ribbon cutting of the new refurbished **Diego Silang Park (town plaza and multi-purpose stage)** graced by then VM Ryan Singson and Parish Priest Magdaleno Ruelos. In the evening, **initial use** of the brand new plaza as venue for the traditional and annually held Community Christmas Program.

## 2011

1. Construction work started **March 14**, paving way for the establishment of **MHO Extension building** (Annex III) costing 4.5M sourced from local 20%ADF of 2011, while Cong. Ryan Singson added 3.8M, or a total worth of **8.3M**. A two floors dispensary-like structure with medical service and treatment similar to that extended by a hospital (also at pp 76-77) is situated at, and connected to, the rear of the Administrative /Municipal Health Office Building.
2. Beginning **March 28**, the issuance of police clearance was made computerized where a data base software program was installed, through the passage of SB Resolution 8/11.
3. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sammy Boy GF Parilla II IBBT, as an interlude and main event for of the town fiesta festivities of 2011 was held from **March 28** to **May 5**. Barangay Bulag bagged the Championship trophy.
4. The construction of twin bridge along Govantes dike starts mid of **August**, funded nationally thru the DPWH, to dredge and resolve perennial inundation along the *mestizo* river, the channel canal that surrounds Vigan, adjacent to our town.
5. A Special election was conducted on **May 28** for the 1<sup>st</sup> District of Ilocos Sur to elect the replacement of Ronald Singson, who resigned March 1 as Congressman (also from Congress/House of Representatives) after being confined to prison due to his implication in a drug related charges (possession) in Hongkong on July 24, 2010. The specially held election to fill the vacated position was overwhelmingly won by Ryan Luis Singson, his younger brother.
6. A cable ride called "**zip line**" and **wall climbing** were opened on **December 17**, to boost eco-tourism and local natural scenery parallel to the Quirino (Banaoag) bridge. It bisects our town with that of neighboring Santa, aimed at promoting it become an adventure zone.
7. **December 22**, the Municipal Health Office Extension Building I (Annex III) was blessed and inaugurated by Parish Priest Fr. Magdaleno Ruelos and Cong. Ryan Luis V. Singson, followed by a matinee dinner and with the traditionally and annually held Community Christmas Program in the evening. On this celebration, two (2) brand new police patrol service vehicles (strada) were presented to the public, acquired by the LGU from the partial release of a 2M grant, of the additional 25M approved loan proceeds, pursuant with SB Res. 35/11.

## 2012

1. **January 1**, marks the official opening of the MHO Extension building (Annex III) by its initial admittance of patients with newly furnished facility and atmosphere. The (2) storey building was later named as '**Dur-as Bantay Birthing Home**' thru SB Resolution No. 42/13. It was meant to be as a **lying-in hospital** primarily for maternal care and childbirth delivery under the auspices of the MHO. It caters mainly in obstetrical and pediatric (pre and post-natal delivery) services.
2. A reconditioned boom truck/lifter with a cost of 1.3 M from the calamity fund was acquired by the LGU on **March 1**, as added equipment implement to strengthen our rescue capability during disasters.
3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sammy Boy Parilla II IBBT summer league sporting play offs from **March 11** to **May 4**. Team Bulag grabbed the Championship title for the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year.
4. **June 12**, our LGU commemorated the 114<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, together with brother **MASONS** from Masonic District Lodges of R-1 CAR (Angalo, Laoag, Lam-ang and Abra). Cong. Ryan V. Singson attended the grand occasion as guest of honor and speaker where Bantay was the only town in the entire province that conducted an elaborate flag raising ceremony and symbolical flora-wreath laying in a makeshift statue/monument of our national hero, Jose P. Rizal, prepared just for the purpose, despite the inclement weather of the day.
5. On **July 30**, a ground breaking ceremony was undertaken and a time capsule/keystone at the site of the Bantay Public Market was laid. With an additional loan obtained, a 2 storey market structure (wet section) was constructed at the Bantay Commercial Complex (Arcade), adjoining the '*talipapa*' (satellite market)
6. A 500T fund was given by Sen Chiz Escudero on **August 30** providing for the rehabilitation, repair and improvement by administration, thru the DPWH, of the Bantay *talipapa*, authorized via SB Res No. 35/12.
7. In a plain and simple ceremony, PLGOO Victoria H. Ramos personally awarded and handed DILG's 'Seal of Good Housekeeping' glass plaque for 2011 at the SB session hall on **September 3**, in recognition of the LGUs efforts and effectiveness in advancing the principles of accountability and transparency in local governance. An inspiring feat.
8. The incumbent administration candidates under the slate of Nacinalista/Bileg ti Ilocano political party, filed their respective COCs with the COMELEC on **October 5**. With three (3) retiring three term municipal councillors, who are Kag. Leones, Quintinita and Mercurio, (at p. 61), three (3) newcomers (PBs Araceli Nabor, Larry Paet and Hipolito Madriaga) joined the line-up. Uncontested are the positions for Mayor (Samuel GF Parilla II, his initial try for an elective post) and Vice Mayor (William Pre), while there were nine (9) candidates who vied for SBM position for the May 13, 2013 elections.
9. We had our First Filipino Saint, San Lorenzo Ruiz, declared on October 18, 1987. On **October 21**, or twenty five years (25) after, our Second Filipino Saint, PEDRO CALUNGSOD, was canonized. He was beatified on March 5, 2000.
10. The Municipality was a recipient of 'Pillar of Performance Award', given by the DOH-SFLU on **December**, for Bantay's Microscopy Laboratory (tuberculosis), in the occasion of NTPs Regional Recognition Day.

## 2013

1. Under the auspices of the Municipal government, on **February 14**, the first "mass wedding" nuptial ceremony was held at Christ the King Parish (Paing) with 365 unmarried but living-in couples as initial beneficiaries. It was followed on **April 9**, when a similar ceremony was held at St. Augustine Parish with 21 recipient-couples.
2. **February 28**, 2013 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of gratifying years in public service of Mayor Samuel C. Parilla, the **architect** and **master builder** of Dur-as Bantay onwards its direction to development, having started his political career as elected town Mayor in 1988. A simple but significant dinner toast among Municipal Officials was shared and celebrated.
3. **March 1, 2013**, the whole Christian world was shocked when Pope Benedict XVI (Cardinal Josef Ratzinger) resigned as Bishop of Rome, after being the head of the Roman catholic church for eight (8) years from 2005. The last recorded similar incident where a sitting Holy Father resigns occurred 600 years earlier. Effective this day, a **papal conclave** with 115 Cardinals-electorate congregated to choose a new Pope and only upon the 5<sup>th</sup> time(s) did the pious delegates was able to muster the required 2/3 votes. Barely on **March 13**, has catholic Christianity rejoiced as *habemus papam* (a new Pope) was finally

elected and proclaimed. The proclaimed Pontiff was Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, a Jesuit father (SJ), the 76 years old Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and first Latin American Pope (non-European). He chose the name Pope Francis I, the 266<sup>th</sup> with such appellation.

4. National and local elections were held on **May 13**, where the top elected officials were Mayor Samuel GF Parilla II (first term) and William A. Pre, for the uncontested positions of Mayor and Vice Mayor, respectively. Seven candidates from the slate of the administration's political party emerged, while one (1) independent candidate surfaced. (at page 61)
5. **June 17**, our LGU was a recipient (beneficiary) of new Innova-toyota vehicle for the PNPs patrol use, granted and turned-over by the national government.
6. On **June 28**, the newly elected municipal officials were sworn to office with Mayor Sammy Parilla as inducting officer... In the afternoon, was held the blessing by Fr. Jack Cabatu, inauguration and ribbon cutting opening of the newly built wet section (*talipapa*) of the Bantay public market at the BCC.
7. From **July 30-August 1**, the first ELA seminar-workshop was held at Subic Bay, Olongapo City, attended by all Head of Offices and SB members, conducted by the DILG.
8. The Barangay elections was held on **October 28**, *sans* Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) election, which was scrapped. There were fourteen (14) new Punong Barangays and twenty (20) re-electionists.
9. A new 2 storey "MHO Extension Building II" or Annex IV, located at the back of the Administrative/MHO Building (Annex II) fronting Real Street, commenced construction on **November 12**. Intended as an addition to the MHO Extension Building I (Annex III), it was funded by the DOH and implemented by DPWH worth 2.5 M.
10. Super typhoon Yolanda devastated the Province of Tacloban, Samar and Leyte on **November 8**, which prompted our LGU, for the first time, to skip our annual and traditional Community Christmas Program, usually held third **Saturday of December**, in empathy and amity with the victims. Instead, Municipal employees, the Liga Ng Mga Barangay, business establishments, a portion taken from our 5% calamity fund, government agencies/entities in the locality and other abled individuals, contributed and gave, under the spirit of *bayanihan*, a total of P1 million donation/financial assistance to the fatalities that was coursed through the NDRRMC.

## **2014**

1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> mass wedding activity was undertaken on **February 14** at Christ the King (Paing) Parish with twenty (2) indigent and deserving couples as beneficiaries. A modest and simple *salu-salu* lunch was shared by our elected officials who served as nuptial sponsors.
2. **February 28 - May 4**. The 1<sup>st</sup> **Mayor** Samuel GF Parilla II IBBT was opened that ushered our town fiesta festivities for 2014.
3. The first floor (Phase 1) of the envisioned separate two (2) storey building (MHO Extension Building II/ Annex IV) that was started on November 12, 2013, funded by the DOH with a cost of 2.5 M was finished about **first week of March**. Phase II for its 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and final completion has been endorsed to Cong. Ronald Singson for funding (R-29/14).
4. Major repairs and rehabilitation of the Legislative Building (Municipal Annex I) were undertaken, funded by Gov. Ryan Singson at a cost of 5M from RA 7171 provincial share. It started **May 12** and was completed **3<sup>rd</sup> week of July**.
5. The new provincial jail at Taleb, Bantay, Ilocos Sur was inaugurated on **July 1**, marking the official relocation and transfer of the Ilocos Sur prison cell (penitentiary) from Vigan carcel (now made a national museum) to our town (also at page 57).
6. On **August 18**, eleven (11) grand wooden chairs were fabricated for the lasting use of SB members and Vice Mayor, to complement and aligned with the physical set-up of the Sangguniang Bayan Office.
7. With its completion (started Feb of 20 2010), the Bantay Fire Station (BFP) situated at the Arcade (Bantay Commercial Complex) in Barangay VI was blessed, inaugurated and occupied by the Bureau's personnel on **December 23**.

## 2015

1. His holiness, Supreme Pontiff Pope Francis I visited our country on **January 15-17**;
2. The **2<sup>nd</sup> Mayor** Samuel GF Parilla II IBBT conducted **February 6 to May 5**. The *pa-liga* championship went to Team Barangay Tay-ac.
3. For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, our 117<sup>th</sup> Independence Day (**June 12**) was celebrated with brother Masons from Angalo, Lam-ang, Laoag and Abra lodges. The then incumbent Supreme Commander of the Knights of Rizal, Hon. SPM Jeremias Singson, was the keynote speaker who donated a bust (head statue) of Jose P. Rizal, as he noticed that our LGU grounds has no monument/sculpture of our national hero.
4. The Municipal gov't entered into a Contact of Lease on **July 20** with Mr. Henry Dy (SB Res. 22/15 dtd. 7/13/15), owner of Henady Inn, for the rental of the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the *talipapa* portion (wet section of the satellite market) of the Bantay Commercial Complex extension building (Bantay Arcade at Brgy VI). The said property, held by our LGU in proprietary capacity, has been converted/transformed into a lodging house/inn/hotel business for a long lease term of 20 years, from November 30, 2015 and expiring November 30, 2035.
5. A Mahindra Enforcer (Indian made) patrol vehicle for the service use of Bantay PNP, with a delivery cost of 1.6 M, was distributed by then DILG Sec. Mar Roxas at Camp Elpidio Quirino on **July 23**.
6. The newly refurbished Municipal Annex I (Legislative building) was blessed **anew** by our Parish Priest, Msgr. Gary Formoso, with Gov. Ryan Singson and SPM Jerry Singson, among the guest of honors on **September 4**;
7. Incumbent Mayor Sammy Boy Parilla and VM William Pre, together with their eight (8) SBM party mates, simultaneously filed their Certificate of Candidacy (COCs) on **October 15** with the Comelec of Bantay for their respective positions under the Nacionalista Party for the national/local election to be held on May 9, 2016. It should be noted that for the position of Municipal councilors, there were **5 re-electionists** (H. Paet, A. Ramos, H. Madriaga, F. Peredo, A., Paz) and **3 new** (come backing I. Quintinita, E. Mercurio and freshly N. Leones), in place of three (3) retirees ( 3 termers W. Pacpaco, R. Reboroso and N. Pamuspusan).
8. The issue on the TFHs franchise comes to the fore on **October 27** when Bantay TFH operators and drivers held a public meeting and consultation. It was then suggested that 'OTHER LGUs' be confined and limited to a specified route or place of destination, or an authorized fixed zone, whereby an assigned parking area shall be provided them, where only therein can they board, pick-up and take passengers, matching and parallel to what Vigan City has been doing and implementing. As an offshoot, and acting upon the recommendation of the TRMB, SB Resolution No. 42, dated **November 9**, was passed/adopted, and complemented/implemented with the issuance by the Municipal Mayor of his E.O. No. 10, dated **November 25**, providing for an assigned, limited and specified route and area of operation, i.e., ✓from point of origin passing through and along Govantes dike; ✓up to Poblacion Barangays (Zones 1 to VI); ✓only at its designated parking area in the Bantay Arcade & vice versa. A dry run enforcement was made effective **December 9**;
9. After conducting surveillance and confirming its prevalence, the PNP Bantay conducted a bust-raid at Sitio Peru-Paa, Taleb on **November 15** that resulted in the apprehension and filing of cases against charcoal (*kaingin*) makers without the necessary permit and clearances (authority) from the DENR. The large scale manufacture and production of charcoal and shipment of prohibited woods/timber products yielded to 30 workers now facing charges for violation of the New Forestry Act. The seemingly laxity, inaction and toleration of the DENR/PENRO personnel is also being questioned by our LGU. In the aftermath of this incident, ABC Gloria Ramirez resigned as *Liga ng Mga Barangay* President on **December 5**. Effective immediately, Liga VP Percival J. Vicencio assumed office as the new ABC President and became the new *ex-officio* member of the Sangguniang Bayan.
10. After 42 years, the elusive Miss Universe Pageant Crown was taken home by our very own Ms. Pia Wuntzback on **December 21**, making her the country's only third Miss Philippines - Universe prestigious winner (1<sup>st</sup> was Gloria Diaz in 1969 and 2<sup>nd</sup> was Margie Moran in 1973). The event became viral that earned worldwide spectacle and critique when the emcee erroneously announced the wrong winner. Despite his apologies, the sudden 'switch' gained various reactions and turned a 'fight of word-mouth' among supporters and detractors of contesting countries.

## 2016

1. **January 12.** The Diamond jubilee (60<sup>th</sup> anniversary) celebration of the coronation of our *Nuestra Senora de Caridad* as Patroness of Ilocandia (*Reyna ti Kailokoan*) that was conferred way back in 1956. More than thirty (30) Marian images from various regions were paraded for the afternoon procession, the highlight of the celebration, followed by long display of fireworks.
2. **January 29 - February 7.** The Provincial sponsored *Kannawidan*, which is a weeklong celebration event of Ilocano's cultural heritage and art, was conducted at Quirino Stadium, where our Candidate, Miss Taleb's Nicka Abegail P. Corpuz, was crowned the title of "Miss Saniata of Ilocos Sur 2016".
3. **February 25.** Opening of 3<sup>rd</sup> Mayor Sammy Boy Parilla IBBT. Championship snatched by Brgy. Taleb.
4. **March 28.** Thru EO No. 4 issued this day, the limited and specified route of TFHs Franchise of 'OTHER LGUs' was lifted/suspended (No. 8 of 2015 Chronicles, at page 83). Also, the cutting of ribbon and blessing of the new Science High School (SHS) building of the Bantay National High School (at Bulag) made possible thru funds provided by the Dep.Ed.
5. **April 30.** Inauguration and ribbon cutting of the renovated (newly refurbished) Quirino stadium was held with Parish Priest Fr. Gary Formoso doing the blessing, with Gov. Ryan Singson, Vice Gov. DV Savellano, SPMs, Provincial Athletic officials, Municipal officials led by Mayor Sammy Boy Parilla and other provincial guests as witnesses. The facilities (lightings, tracks, grounds, bleachers, fences. etc.) of the stadium are being trimmed in preparation of the planned hosting bid by our Province for the R1AA in 2017 and Palarong Pambansa in 2018.
6. **May 9** National and Local elections. Locally, except for one candidate (N. Leones), all others (7 SBMs) under the ruling Nacionalista Party of Mayor Sammy Boy Parilla II and Vice Mayor William Pre, were proclaimed winners. The only lone candidate (A. Nabor) who was not in the administration line-up, was able to land 8<sup>th</sup> place as Municipal councillor (at p.61, supra). In the Provincial level, similarly, all administration candidates (Governor, Vice Gov. & 5 SPMs) in the 1<sup>st</sup> District emerged winners, except for one Board Member Candidate.
7. **May 18.** The elected municipal officials of Bantay took their respective Oaths of Office in a simple ceremony attended by Municipal employees and Punong Barangays at the LCS hall at 4 pm., administered by Bantay MTC Judge, Hon. Bonhoever V. Bernardez. An early dinner and cocktails followed.
8. **June 30.** New Administration under **Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte**, the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the Philippines, with Leni Robredo declared as VP by the Comelec. An era of drastic change is about (expected) to take place, hopefully, for the better and not the worst for the Filipino people.
9. **July 1.** Construction works for the ceiling (*bobeda*) of our St. Augustine Parish started by covering the inside overhead with 'hardy flex plywood' initiated by **Msgr. Gary Formoso**, which would conceal the antiquated but grandeur wooden beams, shafts and planks.
10. **July 12.** The long waited verdict came out as regards the diplomatic protest filed by the Phil. government with the UN (Hague) Permanent Court of Arbitration over the dispute in West Philippine sea (South China sea) against China. The international tribunal ruled unanimously in our favour by awarding the disputed reefs as part of our exclusive economic zone and that the occupation by China (the artificial islands/man-made structures) violates Phil. sovereignty. That the "9 dash line" argument of China and its historic and landmark claims are without basis However, the said ruling/award was rejected (not recognized) by stubborn China questioning the authority of the Arbitrary Court to settle the conflict absence of jurisdiction, but rather insist that the issue should be resolved through bilateral talks. The country members-signatories to the UNCLOS is put to test as to the enforcement of the said decision. The Community of nations sided with the Philippine standpoint and a few communists and staunches allies of China back its crooked contention.
11. **July 26.** The Phil Azkals (our national football team) played a friendly soccer game vs. Australia's Perth Glory team, to try the prowess of the Askals players and the suitability of the football field at **Quirino Stadium**, to national standards. An international level of football performance displayed and watched here.
12. **August 8.** The Olympics games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, our bet **Hidilyn Diaz** grabbed the silver medal in 53 kg. (117 lbs.) weight division ending 2 decades (20 years) Olympic medal drought.

- lvcdag2 -