Declaration of Republic of Candon recalled

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CANDON CITY, Ilocos Sur – Local officials and residents recalled the declaration of the Republic of Candon as they celebrated the 121st Philippine Independence Day on Wednesday.

Memorabilia of Don Isabelo Abaya (center) and Don Fernando Guinalda (right) are displayed in the Candon museum to reminisce their heroism in the declaration of Republic of Candon and the “Cry of Candon” on March 25, 1898. (Freddie G. Lazaro / MANILA BULLETIN)
Candon Mayor Ericson G. Singson said the city is one of the few places in the country that is directly linked to the declaration of the Philippine independence.

Singson noted: “Prior to the declaration of the Philippine Republic in Kawit, Cavite on June 12, 1898, by the first Philippine president, General Emilio Aguinaldo, Don Isabelo Abaya declared the Republic of Candon on March 25, 1898, and Don Fernando Guirnalda was appointed as the president.”

On the same day, Abaya, the appointed general and the commander-in-chief of the army, also declared and eventually led the “Ikkis ti Kandon” (Cry of Candon) with a band of Ilokano fighters, who defeated the Spanish forces in the town, he said.

The Candon Republic was shortlived because the Spanish troops retook the town three days later. Most of the leaders of the Candon Republic and participants of the uprising were arrested and summarily executed.

Singson, who led local officials, employees, and residents in a short program for the celebration of the Independence Day, said Candon is very proud of having heroes, who sacrificed their lives to achieve the independence for the nation.

To honor their heroism, Candon officials adopted March 25 as the annual feast day of Candon; and the names of Abaya and Guirnalda were mentioned in the Candon Hymn’s lyric.

Several memorabilia of Abaya and Guirnalda including the wooden seal of the Republic of Candon are on display in the newly opened Candon Museum, the recently restored ancestral house of the family of Gabriela Silang.

To achieve what he described as genuine independence, Singson rallied the officials and residents to join him in the war against poverty.
He said the Filipinos can only gain true freedom if the war against poverty is successful.

“We may not be facing the same fight of our ancestors but the valuable lessons we learned from the past are enough to subdue our current battle against poverty, hunger, and other struggles,” he said.

“If our ancestors struggled for freedom during their generation, our generation must pursue the fight against poverty in the nation,” Singson said.


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