

TWENTY-SEVEN kilometers from the city proper of Davao is a 6.7-hectare public property allotted to the National Manpower and Youth Council.

The lot spreads atop a hill and offers a breathtaking view of the sea and of Samal Island. On the site will stand the Regional Manpower Training Center.

The RMTC presently under construction includes the administration building, which will house not only offices of administrative personnel but also a library for NMYC employes and outsiders who wish to read more on NMYC activities. There is also the canteen and an annex to be used as a drafting room. A row of buildings contains the electrical/industrial shop, machine shop, sheet welding shop, and sheet metal shop. The second floor of each building will lodge a small office for the workshop supervisor or instructor.

The RMTC is located at Buhisan, Tibungco. If you traverse the road from the airport to the RMTC, whether in the city mayor's air-conditioned limousine or in an ordinary private jeep, you will witness and feel the vastness and fertile province that is Davao. (Buhisan is still fondly called Budbud, meaning small mountain, by residents of Davao City. Buhisan, according to some Cebuanos, probably comes from buhis or patis. Whatever the names denote, the town may well be a tourist spot if fully developed with its natural beauty preserved.)

Nearly complete

The Educational Development Projects Implementing Task Force has been mainly responsible for negotiations with the World Bank.

Out of a P12-million loan, 2.5 million pesos is used to build the center. The complex is mostly of bricks and steel and is now 70 percent complete. The pre-completion period of the 10 RMTCs is the primary work of the EDPITAF.

The Bureau of Public Highways takes charge of paving the horseshoe roads leading toward and away from the center. "People are very enthusiastic about the RMTC," exclaims Davao City mayor Luis T. Santos. Not to be left out in the accelerated manpower development pace, the mayor has dreams of his own.

The Philippine government, on the other hand, will supply the equipment, machinery and other training tools to be used at the RMTC. The NMYC will supervise the over-all maintenance of the RMTC and other costs, with the assistance of the International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme, and EDPITAF.

Fifty-four selected instructors are currently upgrading their knowledge and skills at the Office of Manpower Skills Development at Taguig, Rizal. They come from

Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao to prepare themselves for six months as trainers. After the training period, they will be fielded to the various RMTCs which are located in San Fernando, La Union; Guiguinto, Bulacan; Mariveles, Bataan; Taguig, Rizal; Talisay, Negros Occidental; and cities of Batangas; Cebu, Iligan and Davao. Some 62 more instructors will be recruited this April.

The RMTC in Davao is expected to be in full operation in September of this year, on which occasion a formal opening is slated. Director General Rony V. Diaz stresses: "We don't want to inaugurate just a building, equipment, etc. We'll inaugurate it when the building is complete with equipment, personnel, instructors and trainees."

Mr. Menachem Shoham, ILO technical adviser and project manager for PHI '74, explained to Mayor Santos that "the RMTC is multi-purpose. It will succeed if there was proper and wider coordination with the city on other projects."

The RMTC in Davao City is a welcome thing, considering that industrial skills most in demand are

automotive, carpentry, construction, and heavy equipment operators. The development of manpower through industrial skills training will complement the agricultural progress of Davao.

At this stage of the RMTC being set up in Budbud, several problems beset the center, as in all other things experiencing growing pains, so to speak.

The manpower development officer for Region XI, Abraham M. Malli, ticked off the problems that need to be solved soonest. Among matters not stipulated in the contract are water system, landscaping and improvement of the horseshoe drive. The drive is still part of the city but it seems no funds have been set aside for it. Right now the RMTC lot needs a perimeter fence, maybe temporarily of barbed wire. Properties belonging to former residents still lie around inside the premises. The RMDO's problem is whether to compensate for the properties or not.

Aside from hiring security services to guard the center, an administrative system should also have been started even before RMTC courses commence. The RMDO itself lacks vehicles. This may partly explain the concern Malli harbors over the need for vehicles at the center. Staff houses or guest houses or a dormitory for trainees are necessary, too.

The Director General, together with Mr. Shoham, Councilor Domingo Vidanes and Atty. Malli, recently inspected the RMTC and RMDO. Diaz expressed hope that before the RMTC inauguration, its problems shall have been solved. Addressing the RMDO personnel, Diaz outlined the plans of the agency, which includes the turning over of all regional projects to the RMDO, the full establishment of a Management Information System, and expansion and sta

TURN TO PAGE



DS
Davao City
P-15

Indexed ✓
COLLEGE LIBRARY
ATENEO DE DAVAO

A Day in Davao's Development

By MARRA LANOT

The Regional Manpower Training Center (RMTC) viewed from two angles: from the highway (right) and front view (top).

DS

Source: Expressweek, Vol. 4, No. 26, May 27, 1976, pp. 43, 52

Manpower training - Davao



The site of the RMTC vocational training center, donated by Castillo.

development. All these entail a proportionate increase in funds, staff and technical resources.

The Regional Manpower Training Program (RMTP), supposedly conducted at the Davao School of Arts and Trades, and the National Agricultural Skills Training Program (NASTP) will very soon be handled by the RMDO. Before the end of this year, the RMDO will also supervise the RMTC plus other projects it will initiate on its own, dependent upon the needs of the region and national priorities. The RMDO intends to propose special projects like an integrated training program involving basic skills development. Cultural communities can improve and share their knowhow and profit from fishing, boat-making and engine repair.

Other training programs the RMDO will steer are those to be coordinated with the Philippine Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Society (PARES) and with the University of Mindanao Technical School Department, PARES members, mostly registered engineers and technicians, will instruct trainees along a curriculum designed by the NMYC. All graduates for the first batch are promised complete employment absorption. Meanwhile, the University of Mindanao will provide its facilities and instructors for Saturday and Sunday classes. The NMYC will select applicants, give due recognition to graduates of vocational courses, and draw up the curriculum.

Vocational center

Somewhere near Rafael Castillo Street in Ipil, Davao City, "on the fringes of a huge community of near-poverty-stricken residents, numbering not less than 5,000 families," is a lot of 3,000 sq. meters. The lot, sliced from a family subdivision, cost P1.5 million and was donated by former Con-Con Delegate Pedro S. Castillo, one of the biggest landowners in Davao City, judging from the hectares and hectares of land the

A letter addressed to Malli dated February 20, 1976, reads in part: "We sincerely feel that a manpower training center would greatly improve the lives of our people and make them more productive members of the city," signed: Heirs of Rafael Castillo/Pedro S. Castillo.

Atty. Castillo explained that he had long thought of putting up a vocational center to help the resettled families in what used to be a vast swamp area. He later found out it is not that easy to establish a school and so, after a little persuasion from Malli, he donated the lot to NMYC specifically for a vocational training center. Plans of making it the site of NMYC Vocational Preparation for 12-17-year-old out-of-school youth are afoot. Upon Diaz's visit, Castillo offered an additional 2,000 sq. meters for possible extension as the need arises. The donation signals but one active participation of the private sector in government efforts to serve the people of Davao.

Happily, the RMTC is supported by the parish, engineering society, CDCP, mayor and other private employers. But despite all this, the question regarding employment of graduates nags: After RMTC, what? Is there assurance that the investment put in by NMYC will not go to waste?

Malli elucidates that graduates have reason to be optimistic. The Bureau of Employment Services takes charge of placement. Industries disperse throughout Manila and Mindanao. Furthermore, existing industries need technicians.

An Aluminum Plant will open on Samal Island two years from now, Malli continues. The plant will operate with about 3,000 to 4,000 workers. Another firm to be set up is a Japanese automotive plant. These firms will open jobs for skilled workers.

The NMYC can recommend graduates for work in private companies. A certificate of completion of non-formal training will enable trainees to start on their own. The NMYC can even help trainees set up cooperatives with the aid of loans from the bank. The cooperatives will help graduates stand on their own feet.

The NMYC indeed hopes to direct its usefulness to the rural folk. Mere presence of the regional office is not enough. Hence, special projects and other training programs, the RMTC and the office of vocational preparation will intensify the tactics and strategies of the RMDO. Its usefulness will be more deeply felt if its moves were supported by President Marcos as well as by the civic-minded rich and the masses — by the people of Southern Mindanao.