

04 April 2023 Tuesday



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



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mike about town
ATTY. MIKE TOLEDO

I cannot emphasize enough the strength of the relations between the Philippines and Japan. It is a relationship that has withstood the test of time and the ravages of history. It is both a friendship and a partnership that is *kode made yori mo tsuyoidesu* — “stronger than ever.”

Just recently, President **Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.** (PBBM) and First Lady **Liza Araneta-Marcos**, together with a huge delegation of government officials and business leaders, conducted an official visit to Japan, which, I understand, is a favorite among his travel destinations.

I thank the amiable and hardworking Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines, **Kazuhiko Koshikawa**, for the success of this trip.

This was PBBM’s first visit to Japan as President and head of state. During his visit, he and the First Lady had an audience with Emperor **Naruhito** and Empress **Masako**, as well as a working dinner and meeting with Prime Minister **Kishida Fumio**.

PBBM and Prime Minister Kishida had their first talk back in May 2022 and likewise had a summit-level working lunch during PBBM’s visit to New York City in September 2022.

Prior to his departure, the President said: “My bilateral visit to Japan is essential. It is part of a larger foreign policy agenda to forge closer political ties, stronger defense and security cooperation, as well as lasting economic partnerships with major countries in the region amid a challenging global environment. This visit (will also) seek to further strengthen the bonds of friendship with a close neighbor, like-minded and future-oriented like us in many ways, and a most reliable partner in times of both crises and of prosperity.”

One highlight of the Japan trip, of which I was part of as an official member of the business delegation, and which took place upon PBBM’s arrival in Japan, was the dinner meeting with executives of Mitsui & Co., which was hosted by Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC), led by its chairman, president and CEO, **Manuel V. Pangilinan**, or MVP.

Mitsui & Co. is a Japanese company that primarily engages in, among others, product sales, logistics and financing, infrastructure projects, iron and steel products, and information technology and communication. It currently operates in 128 offices in 63 countries, including the Philippines.

Joining the President at this dinner meeting were the First Lady, former President and now Senior Deputy Speaker **Gloria Macapagal Arroyo**, Senate President **Migz Zubiri**, Speaker **Martin Romualdez**, Finance Secretary **Ben Diokno**, Trade Secretary **Fred Pascual**, and Socioeconomic Planning Secretary **Arsi Balisacan**.

MVP was accompanied by PLDT-Smart president and CEO **Al Panlilio**; MPIC EVP, Chief Finance, Risk, and Sustainability Officer, and mWell CEO **Chaye Cabal-Revilla**; and Pilipinas Global Network president and CEO **Ernesto Sta. Maria**. Mitsui & Co. CEO **Kenichi Hori** was also present.

Other members of the business delegation who attended the dinner meeting were some of the country’s biggest and most influential businessmen, like San Miguel Corp. president and CEO **Ramon S. Ang**; Ayala Corp. chairman **Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala** and his wife **Lizzie**; Alliance Global CEO **Kevin Tan**; GT Capital vice chairman **Alfred Ty**; and Philippine Bank of Communications chairman **Eric Ongpin Recto** (now chairman and CEO of Alphaland Corp.).

At the dinner meeting, PBBM spoke about what he described as the “long-standing” partnership between Mitsui and the whole of Japan and the Philippines. He said, “We can point to so many of the



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Stronger than ever



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. with Manuel V. Pangilinan.



President Marcos.



Environment secretary Antonia "Toni" Yulo-Loyzaga.



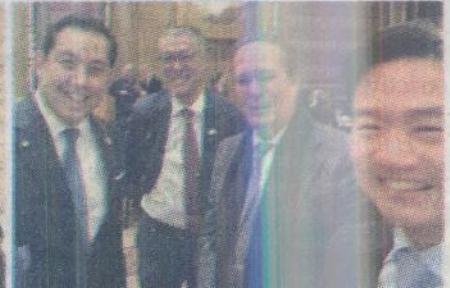
The author with GSIS president Jose Arnulfo "Wick" Veloso, former Japanese ambassador to the Philippines Koji Haneda.



Ramon S. Ang and Manuel V. Pangilinan.



Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala.



Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Michael Tan, Iñigo Zobel, and Alfred Ty.



The author with PAGCOR chair Al Tengco and Iñigo Zobel.

developments that happened in the Philippines with the assistance of the different Japanese funding agencies and government-to-government arrangements, the commercial arrangements — and these have been to the benefit of both our countries."

PBBM added, "We look forward to the discussions that we will be having here for the next few days, as we have great hopes that this will be a driver in the transformation of our economy."

Indeed, the Philippines was able to secure a \$600-million investment pledge through a signed agreement for its infrastructure projects from Mitsui & Co. and, of course, MPIC. Mitsui had committed to investing in the Philippines' agriculture, infrastructure, renewable energy, and digital transformation, which are among the Marcos government's priority areas.

During the next days of the visit, the country was also able to secure 35 signed letters of intent with Japanese companies engaged in manufacturing, infrastructure development, energy, transportation,

healthcare, renewable energy and business expansion. Some of the deals are "ready to go," according to Trade Secretary Fred Pascual, with some already registered with the Board of Investments (BOI).

Likewise, the official visit of the President and the First Lady yielded some \$13 billion in investment pledges to create about 24,000 new jobs for Filipinos. The visit has drawn an "unprecedented number" of business delegates from Japan and the Philippines, making it historic for an official visit of a Filipino leader.

At least 240 Philippine companies and 1,300 Japanese firms, composed of 3,472 business leaders, registered for the meetings held.

At his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, President Marcos was also able to have both sides committed to further strengthen the strategic partnership between the Philippines and Japan and mapped out a transformative future-oriented partnership that is responsive to new developments.

The President and the First Lady were also able to meet with the OFWs in Japan, who are now close to 300,000 in number. PBBM gave his assurance that his administration would be working diligently to create more domestic job opportunities so that going abroad would not be the only option for them but a career choice.

"Coming back, we have carried with us over \$13 billion in contributions and pledges to benefit our people and create approximately 24,000 jobs and further solidify our economic environment," the President said upon his return at Villamor Airbase in Pasay City.

That, in a nutshell, is why we are stronger than ever, with Japan as our *yoi tomodachi* ("good friend"). *Domo arigato gozaimasu!* ✨



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No illegal tree-cutting in in Freeport Zone, CDC says

CLARK Development Corporation (CDC) said it would continue its strict adherence and compliance to environmental laws in view of recent reports on two incidents of alleged illegal tree-cutting inside the Freeport Zone.

The CDC said the tree-cutting activities were closely monitored and supervised by the technical staff of DENR-PENRO and CDC-Estate Preservation and Recovery Division (EPRD).

A representative from DENR was also present during the cutting to ensure that the trees which were cut and to be earth

balled were the same as those specified in the permit.

The CDC further said the DENR Regional Office issued a Tree Cutting Permit (TCP) No. 2022-92 last December 2022. The official release was made last March 28, 2023 after CDC completed the delivery of 20,900 bamboo and narra seedlings to DENR's Clonal Nursery in Arayat, Pampanga as replacement for the 209 affected trees.

The CDC also said Miguel de la Rosa, CDC Vice President for Engineering Services (ESG) has already conducted an in-

quiry and has submitted a report on the tree cutting.

The first item involves 209 mango trees and other species located on the proposed connector road from McArthur Highway to New Clark City Airport Road, according to the CDC report.

The said area, which is within the Clark Special Economic Zone, is being cleared for the construction of an access road which will be connected to the extension of the Clark-Mabalacat -Angeles Road (CMAR) and the Dolores portion of McArthur Highway.



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NWRB justifies water allocation

for Maynilad, Manila Water

By **BELLA CARIASO**

The National Water Resources Board (NMWRB) has defended its decision to approve 50 cubic meters per second allocation for Maynilad Water Service Inc. and Manila Water Co. instead of the 52 cubic meters per second requested by the two water concessionaires amid warnings of prolonged water interruption.

In a radio interview, NWRB executive director Sevilla David Jr. said the NWRB board needs to assess the situation

amid the threat of the El Niño phenomenon, which is expected to hit the country during the second half of the year.

"Their request was 52 cubic meters per second from the original approved water allocation of 48 cubic meters per second. The Board deliberated it and decided to place it at 50 cubic meters per second," David said.

David noted that the approved allocation will be effective until April 15, 2023 to allow the La Mesa Dam and Ipo Dam to recover at a more comfortable level and address

some of the water supply issues of Metro Manila.

Maynilad has warned of extended hours of daily water interruption after the NWRB's failure to grant the original request coursed through the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Based on latest monitoring of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, as of 6 a.m. on Monday, the level of Angat Dam further dropped to 201.27 meters, 0.33 meters less than its previous level of 201.60 meters.

Manila Water vows 24/7 supply

East zone concessionaire Manila Water Co. has assured its 7.4 million customers of round-the-clock supply during the observation of Holy Week and the entire dry season with contingency and augmentation projects in place.

As an alternative source to Angat Dam, the company's Cardona Treatment Plant in Rizal, which draws water from Laguna Lake, is currently maximizing its operations to accom-

modate treatment of up to 110 million liters per day (MLD) supplying clean and potable water to several towns in Rizal.

The company also tapped other auxiliary sources such as the Marikina River through the 15 to 20-MLD Marikina Water Portable Treatment Plant and the 20-MLD Wawa-Calawis Water Supply System in Antipolo.

At Laguna Lake, the East Bay Water Supply System Project Phase 1 is expected to contribute 50 MLD for the municipalities of Baras, Binangonan, Cardona, Jalajala and Morong in Rizal.

Last January, Manila Water

inaugurated the Novaliches-Balara Aqueduct 4 in Quezon City, which will convey 1,000 MLD from the La Mesa reservoir.

The company is also implementing a backwash recovery program in the two water treatment plants in Balara, Quezon City.

The company is also ready to tap deep wells to provide additional sources when needed.

As it prepares for the dry months and El Niño, Manila Water said it ramped up maintenance of mainlines and rehabilitation of aging primary lines to minimize water lost to leakages.

- With Danessa Rivera



DURING HOLY WEEK

MANILA WATER CUSTOMERS ASSURED OF 24/7 SUPPLY

By Meg J. Adonis
@MegINQ

East Zone concessionaire Manila Water Co. Inc. on Monday assured its customers of continuous supply this Holy Week, even as its West Zone counterpart Maynilad Water Services Inc. warned of declining water supply in the La Mesa and Ipo dams.

In anticipation of high demand in the dry season, Manila Water said it had been executing

contingency and augmentation projects to ensure uninterrupted services as part of its P181-billion Service Improvement Plan.

According to the concessionaire, it has been utilizing its Cardona Water Treatment Plant in Rizal province, which draws water from Laguna Lake, to treat up to 100 million liters per day (MLD) and provide clean and potable water.

Both Manila Water and Maynilad source the majority of

their supply from Angat Dam.

As of Thursday, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said the elevation at Angat was at 202.56 meters, which was still within the normal level.

Maynilad confirmed, however, that leaks and illegal connections were found in the portals between Ipo Dam in Bulacan province and La Mesa Dam in Quezon City.

This led to less supply flow-

ing into the Novaliches Portal shared by Manila Water and Maynilad, prompting prolonged service interruptions in the latter's concession area.

Not enough for Maynilad

Water loss and the impending El Niño phenomenon encouraged the National Water Resources Board to grant an additional capacity of 50 cubic meters per second (CMS)—2 CMS higher than the usual 48

CMS—coming from Angat from April 1 to April 15.

But Maynilad noted that this may not be enough to supply its 9.5 million customers, as the MWSS previously asked for 52 CMS of additional capacity.

“At 50 CMS from Angat, water reaching the portal should be at 4,000 MLD. But we have not been receiving this amount, so this means there are losses,” Jennifer Rufo, Maynilad head of corporate communications, told

the Inquirer in an interview.

Once the 4,000 MLD supply from Angat reaches the Novaliches Portal in Quezon City, Maynilad gets 60 percent of the share at 2,400 MLD, while Manila Water gets 40 percent at 1,600 MLD.

The alleged supply anomaly triggered a cross-portal sharing agreement between the two major water concessionaires that began in the fourth quarter of 2022. INQ



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The Manila Times



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OIL LEAK HAS REACHED CORON – PHILSA

THE Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) released a new satellite image on Monday, April 3, showing that the extent of the oil spill coming from the sunken tanker MT Princes Empress in Oriental Mindoro has reached the island of Coron in Palawan.

"The map shows that possible oil from the sunken tanker MT Princess Empress continues to extend," PhilSA stated.

The oil slick located approximately 6.5 nautical miles east off of Coron measures approximately

33 nautical miles in length and 2.5 nautical miles in width. It covers an area of approximately 61.27 square kilometers.

Meanwhile, Coron's Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office head Engr. Fernando Lopez said during a phone interview that they will monitor and assess the waters off Coron on Tuesday morning together with the Philippine Coast Guard.

Lopez also said that improvised oil spill booms are on hand as a measure to contain the oil spill

and prevent it from reaching the shorelines of Coron.

He also said that the possible banning of water activities in Coron will depend on the results of the tests to be conducted on Tuesday.

"Maybe, if we see that the area is really affected, we will ban water-related activities in the area," Lopez said in Filipino.

"As we said, [the leak] should not reach the shoreline, because it will affect our beaches, especially our tourist destination spots."

Lopez said that the tourism office of Coron has yet to announce the expected number of tourists to visit the province for this year's Holy Week break, but he is expecting more tourists to arrive this year compared to the previous three years where restrictions have been imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the data from the Provincial Tourism Promotions Development Office, 100,828 tourists visited Coron last year.

JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL



'Oil spill dispersants pose risks to human health'

The chemical-based dispersants being used to clean the oil spill in Oriental Mindoro pose risks to public health, an official of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) warned yesterday.

"Aside from harming marine flora and fauna, dispersants also endanger human health as these contain 2-butoxyethanol, which can cause injury to red blood cells, kidney or liver with repeated or excessive exposure," CCC Commissioner

Albert dela Cruz Sr. said.

Although dispersants can help clear the oil spill, Dela Cruz said these could later damage the marine ecosystem in affected areas.

"While dispersants can clean the coastal waters of Mindoro and Batangas from the massive oil slick, the resulting chemical reaction of using these can become a major concern in terms of pollutants sinking into the marine floor," Dela Cruz said.

He said authorities are currently using chemical-based dispersants to clear the oil spilled by the sunken *M/T Princess Empress*.

The tanker was loaded with more than 900,000 liters of industrial oil when it sank in the waters off Naujan town on Feb. 28.

Dela Cruz, a biologist and environment protection specialist, said the dispersants could only remove oil from the surface of the water and could still pollute the sea bed and

the shore line.

Instead of using dispersants, he suggested the use of skimmers or the conduct of filtration to remove the oil from the water.

Dela Cruz had met with officials of the Philippine Coast Guard led by Admiral Artemio Abu to assess the situation.

During the meeting, Dela Cruz said the incident could be better addressed through filtration or the use of skimmers. — Helen Flores



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Oil slicks from sunken tanker reach Coron – PhilSA

By LUISA CABATO

Oil slicks from the sunken M/T Princess Empress tanker have reached the island of Coron in Palawan, the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) bared on Monday, April 3.

“The oil slicks cover approximately 61.27-square kilometers and have reached the island of Coron, Palawan. This map is still subject to field validation,” the agency said.

This estimation was according to a report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) based

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Oil slicks from sunken tanker reach Coron – PhilSA 1◀

on a satellite image taken on Sunday, April 2.

“The slicks located approximately 6.5 nautical miles east off of Coron measures approximately 33 nautical miles in length and 2.5 nautical miles in width,” it added. “Through the International Charter Space and Major Disasters (Disasters Charter), the NOAA contributed this map using the Copernicus EU’s Sentinel-2.”

As per NOAA, oil slicks located south and southwest of the tanker measure about 10.5 nautical miles (NM) in length and 1.8 NM in width.



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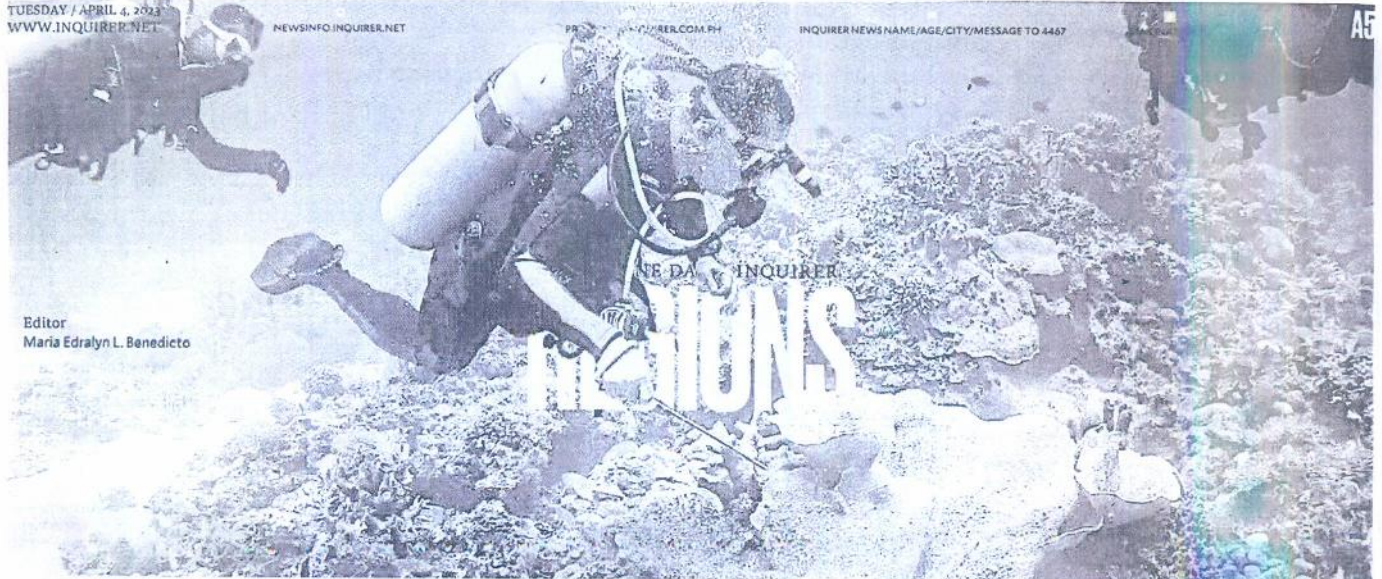
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Editor
Maria Edralyn L. Benedicto

UNDERWATER ECOSYSTEM Divers from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) inspect the coral reefs around Verde Island in Batangas City in this photo taken on Sunday. According to the PCG, the coral reefs remain "healthy and in safe condition" following the leak of industrial oil from the sunken MT Princess Empress some 100 kilometers from the island. —PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PCG-SOUTHERN TAGALOG



REGIONS

Verde Island's reefs safe from toxic oil

Coral reefs around Verde Island in Batangas City were found free of toxic industrial oil from the sunken MT Princess Empress, the Philippine Coast Guard said. An underwater inspection by Filipino and American divers on April 2 showed the corals near the island remained "healthy and in good condition" and had not been affected by the oil spill from the fuel tanker that sank off Oriental Mindoro on Feb. 28. —STORY BY DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

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'HEALTHY, IN GOOD CONDITION'

PCG: VERDE ISLAND'S CORAL REEFS ALSO SAFE FROM TOXIC OIL

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
@dtmallarijrINQ

Coral reefs around Verde Island in Batangas City were found free of toxic industrial oil from the sunken MT Princess Empress, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said on Monday.

Filipino and American divers, including Cmdr. Inocencio Rosario Jr., the PCG chief in Southern Tagalog, and Lt. Max Cuchen of the US Navy 7th Fleet, conducted the underwater survey on the island's coral reefs on April 2, according to the PCG-Southern Tagalog District.

The underwater inspection showed the corals near the island remained "healthy and in good condition" and had not been affected by the oil spill from the oil tanker that sank off Oriental Mindoro on Feb. 28.

A thin layer of oil had earlier found its way into the island's waters, raising concern over its effect on the six-barangay island under the jurisdiction of Batangas City, which sits in the middle of the Verde Island Passage, the biodiversity-rich body of water between Mindoro and Batangas.

Last week, however, the Batangas City public information office declared that the waters around the island were safe from the destructive impact of the oil slick based on a test made on March 20. The test also

showed that there was no oil contamination along the coastline of other areas in Batangas.

Verde Island is a popular tourist haven for its pristine, clear water and underwater treasures.

Last week, authorities said experts had started plugging the leak from MT Princess Empress, which was carrying some 800,000 liters of industrial fuel when it sank off Naujan town and was later found to have settled in the waters off the town of Pola, the worst-hit municipality in Oriental Mindoro.

Accountability

On April 1, environmental group Greenpeace renewed its appeal to the government to go after those responsible for the oil spill that has damaged coastal resources in Oriental Mindoro, Caluya Island in Antique province and some parts of Palawan province; and to make them pay for the disruptions they caused to the lives of affected communities, particularly fishers.

According to the group, more than 19,000 fishermen have lost their livelihood after the oil spill.

The Department of Tourism had also reported that about a dozen tourism-oriented establishments on Mindoro Island were affected by the spill. INQ



What to do to prepare for the next pandemic

It's a matter of when, not if



CLINICAL MATTERS
DR. EDEL MAURICET T. SALVANA

As the Covid-19 pandemic winds down and people go about their daily lives, the question that many people are asking is, "Can this happen again?" A new pandemic occurring is not a question of if but a question of when. There are things that can be done to delay the next pandemic and there are things that can be done to mitigate the effect of the next one. To maximize the impact of these measures, however, planning must start now. Here are three steps that we can take to achieve this.

1. Crack down on the illegal wildlife trade and stay away from wild animals.

New genetic information from China points to the raccoon dog, or tanuki, as the source of the first infections from the Wuhan seafood market. Raccoon dog DNA was found and mixed with ancestral SARS-CoV-2 genetic material from the wild animal storage areas in the Huanan Seafood Market from the earliest days of the pandemic. This strongly supports a zoonotic origin of the virus and effectively debunks the laboratory leak theory. Analysis of the earliest SARS-CoV-2 genomic material points to at least two separate transmission events with distinct lineages. This is consistent with a natural origin where



BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU EAT OR TOUCH Wild animals should be in their natural habitat, not on your plates, as many pandemics are started by an animal host like raccoon dogs, monkeys, bats, and dogs in a market

multiple transmission events are more likely to occur. There is no evidence of genetic manipulation of the SARS-CoV-2 genome and the unique mutations found in different parts of the virus can be explained through natural selection processes.

This is not the first time that a coronavirus of pandemic potential was transmitted by an animal host in a seafood market. This scenario is nearly identical to the origins of SARS-CoV, the causative agent of SARS. In the case of SARS, the animal implicated was the palm civet, although raccoon dogs were also found to have been infected. The original reservoir was likely bats in the forest from which those animals were captured and they served as an intermediary to transmitting the disease to humans.

The lesson that should have been learned the first time around is to

avoid close contact with wild animals who could be harboring viruses that can easily jump to humans. Keeping multiple species of wild animals together in close quarters increases this risk exponentially. Unfortunately, much of this trade in wildlife is illicit and difficult to regulate. Aside from the authorities cracking down on this illegal activity, people need to be educated regarding the risks of contracting potentially fatal diseases from interacting with or consuming wild animals. Closer to home, many cases of rabies still occur because of Filipinos eating stray dogs. The risk of rabies and other zoonotic viruses is also high for those who eat bats, especially in provinces where these are considered a delicacy. Ebola Reston, which is related to the deadly Ebola virus, was originally found in monkeys imported from the Philippines, and has caused local outbreaks in pigs.

Nurturing nature (2)

On Sept. 6, 1995, Lake Maughan, sitting atop the dormant Mount Parker in T'boli town, South Cotabato, overflowed. An estimated 30 million cubic meters of water quickly flowed downstream, reaching not only the low-lying municipalities of South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Maguindanao provinces but also many barangays in Cotabato City, where the floodwaters ended their journey.

One of these barangays, Rosary Heights, was where we used to live then. That day, one of our nephews had to carry my son on his back so he can go to school. Floodwaters reached our house making it impossible for my son, who was less than three feet tall, to wade through.

The reason for the overflowing of the lake? Mount Parker had been mined, both for landfill, gravel, and other prospecting (for gold and other minerals) purposes, not to mention that it has long been deforested. Consequently, the soil became loose so the whole mountain finally "collapsed" on Lake Maughan. It was like a basin that was already filled to the brim with water, yet soil from the collapsed mountain was added to it, causing an immediate overflowing of the lake's waters.

At least 53 people, including women and children, died in that incident, and 14 were reported missing by local and regional media in the aftermath. The local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office of South Cotabato later on assessed the total damage at P278 million, including infrastructure and crops that were destroyed along the floodwaters' path.

Local media also reported that a local of-



KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

RUFA CAGOCO-GUIAM

Official was indicted for allegedly causing the undue exploitation of Mount Parker, and this eventually also cost him the end of his political career in South Cotabato province. He lost in the local elections the year after the tragic incident.

At first, I wondered why our small village, located more than 100 kilometers away from Lake Maughan was reached by water almost immediately after it overflowed. My lessons in human ecology suddenly jogged my memory about the four informal laws of ecology according to biologist/environmentalist Dr. Barry Commoner in his 1971 book, "The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology." The first law states that "Everything is connected to everything else." This alone taught me that what happens in the upstream parts of our region will have immediate and long-lasting consequences for the villages downstream. The second one states: "Everything must go somewhere." With water, this is quite apparent. Even be-

fore civilization reached the level that we are seeing now, water has always shown that it "will seek its own level," a metaphor that demonstrates the fact that water in containers must be of the same level; if not, then overflowing occurs. When physical infrastructure constricts the movement of water, or when no structures are allowing for its natural flow, flooding is expected. This is the case of many of our highways, where roads are built first before constructing the drainage assembly that controls the flow of water in times of heavy rainfall. The installation of culvert pipes beside highways was and still is an afterthought: it follows several years after the roads are constructed, when flooding has become an almost daily occurrence, especially in low-lying localities.

The Mount Parker-Lake Maughan tragic incident that happened almost 28 years ago is now long forgotten. But for me, it was a wake-up call of how our actions as the most superior beings on earth have altered natural environments and habitats, causing a tragedy. It was not a "natural" disaster, as many environmental tragic episodes have been dubbed. It was not nature that caused it, but it was human or anthropogenic interventions causing the collapse of a mountain, resulting in the overflow of water.

Remember the catastrophic Chernobyl nuclear explosion that happened in April 1986? It was also caused by human error, and bad planning, according to a documentary by David Attenborough.

(To be concluded)

Comments to rcguiam@gmail.com



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Balabac Isl
in Palawa

Candidates of Miss Philippines Earth 2023 pose for a selfie during a media presentation at the Lime Hotel in Pasay City. Miss Philippines Earth searches for the next person to represent the country at the Miss Earth competition, which promotes environmental awareness, conservation and social responsibility. EDD GUMBAN