

Updates



People, Places, and Passages



Chapter News



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March 2024

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Our Cover



Top left: President Masatsugu Asakawa and Vice-President Bruce Gosper launching the “new” AFE office. Right: Malou Pasicolan celebrating her 20 years with AFE. Below: The Indonesia Chapter in November 2023.

AFE–ADB News

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AFE–ADB Updates

From the President

Jill Gale de Villa (ADB 1993–2005)



Behind the Scenes

A lot goes on in the AFE Executive Committee (ExCom) that is opaque to members as much of it is day-to-day management and organization work, with nothing earth-shaking or interesting to report, just the many small tasks needed to keep our AFE serving its members as best we can—Visregging, answering queries, liaising and attending

meetings with ADB pertaining to our benefits, arranging for the AFE Annual Meeting and attendance at ADB’s Annual Meeting functions, keeping members informed about ADB and AFE activities through various channels, the list goes on. The ExCom meets every 2 weeks (more often if necessary), in person and/or virtually. Each ExCom member does her or his tasks in between meetings. And all the work is back-stopped by our two admin staff: **Malou Pasicolan and Gerryveeve (Bheb) Dino**. Bheb joined us in September 2023.



Executive Committee and Staff. L-r: President Jill de Gilla, Treasurer Joy Viray, Malou Pasicolan, Secretary Bobbie Montesa, Bheb Dino.

Milestones

20 Years Service. On 19 February, **Malou Pasicolan** passed a milestone—she had been with AFE for 20 years. We thank her very much for her loyal and excellent service over the years.

Chapter Coordinators Guide. A major milestone for the 6 months of September 2023–February 2024 was the completion of A Practical Guide for Chapter Coordinators, thanks especially to the efforts of **Günter Hecker** and **Gam de Armas** with contributions from coordinators. The guide is available on the website.

AFE’s New Office. On 12 December we officially **launched the new AFE office** in rooms G301–304, with **Vice-President Bruce Gosper** saying a few kind words and **President Masa** cutting the ribbon. **Nanette Medina** deserves much thanks for doing a great job of putting this event together.

Preventive Healthcare Survey. In January, **Barbara Palacios** completed a survey of retirees, for information on preventive healthcare and Cigna Telehealth use. Based on this survey we are preparing a note to ADB/BPMSD requesting preventive healthcare coverage. For more information see Health Matters in this issue.

Major Work in Progress

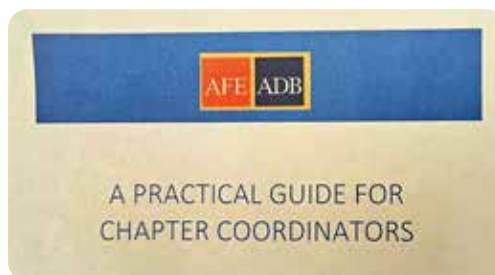
The Bylaws Review Committee (BRC), constituted in 2023 and headed by **Bruce Murray** and cochaired by **Eveline Fischer**, finished its extensive review and submitted it to the ExCom. The ExCom reviewed the results during 4 meetings, and prepared comments to discuss with the BRC for further consideration. The next step is finalizing what will go to members for a vote, currently slated for the 4th quarter of 2024.

The New Accounting System Fred Pascual and Nannette Amorado initiated now seems in place and usable,

after some delays. **Joy Viray** and **Malou Pasicolan** are working on the adjustments that continue to be needed. The once-



Malou Pasicolan with her Plaque of Appreciation from AFE for her 20 Years of Service.



Cover of the Practical Guide for Chapter Coordinators.



Launching the AFE Office: ADB President Masa Asakawa holds up the ribbon; Behind him r-l: Vice-President Bruce Gosper, DG BPMUSD Yasuto Watanabe, Haruto Takamura, Joy Viray, and Jill de Villa.

hoped-for link between the new accounting system and the directory and other member functions now appears impractical while not being completely ruled out.

The Website Revamp is ongoing, primarily delayed by the ExCom being engaged in other tasks as well and lacking a much-needed vice president. ■

Pension Matters

Hans-Juergen Springer (ADB 1972–2002)



Pensioners’ Representatives on ADB’s two Pension Committees are myself and Jill Gale de Villa.

Staff Retirement Plan. The Staff Retirement Plan (SRP) Pension Committee meeting on 21 November 2023 dealt with

- the interest rate for Discretionary Benefits (XB) Contributions for post-2017 contracts,
- a Pension Investment Committee update,
- incorporation of the part-time work modality in the SRP, and
- other business.

The **interest rate for XB contracts** (Discretionary Benefits) is decided annually by the Pension Committee. The Committee approved an interest rate of 5% per annum for staff who wish to make XB contributions in 2024. The rate is maintained until the staff member retires or leaves ADB. Another rate will be determined by the Pension Committee in 1 year staff contributions in 2025. The interest rate

for continuing Discretionary Benefits of current retirees is unaffected by these decisions on XB Contracts.

The **Investment Committee update** showed an increase of 11.2% of the SRP Fund for the pension year 1 October 2022–30 September 2023. While lower than the peak of 14.2%, it was still a very comfortable return on the fund’s investments. Pension funds are invested for the long term, and ups and downs are expected.

The **Retiree Medical Plan Fund** similarly showed a good return of 14.4% for the same period.

The Pension Committee was also informed that ADB as of 1 January 2024 would implement a **part-time work modality**. This will permit staff to work at 50%, 60%, or 80% of their regular 40-hour work week. The pensions of staff who choose shorter working hours will be adjusted accordingly, and the Board-approved pension document will be amended accordingly. Current retirees pensions will not be affected.

BPMUSD’s Retirement and Investment Unit informed the Pension Committee about two recent **Administrative Tribunal decisions**, both involving retirees. The decisions can be read at <https://www.adb.org/documents/index-administrative-tribunal-decisions>

Defined Contribution Plan. The Defined Contribution Plan (DCP) Committee meeting on 27 November 2023 dealt with six items for information and one item for approval.

The Committee approved the removal of a “US Dollar Cash Deposit Product” that 5 staff members had been involved in for a total of \$80,000. BPMUSD will continue dialogue with JTC (the DC Plan administrator) to find an acceptable depository bank.

JTC met all the targets specified in the service agreement in the pension year ended 30 September 2023. A major review of JTC as DC Plan administrator is planned for 2024. (4 December 2023) ■

Health Matters

Barbara Ejercito Palacios (ADB 1996–2012) and Jill Gale de Villa



In late January 2024, Barbara Palacios spearheaded an AFE survey of 1,726 pensioner members; 454 (26)% responded. The objective of the survey was to get information on members’ use of preventive care.

Respondents. Of the respondents to the survey, a bit more than half (53)% had been international staff and the rest were former national staff. In terms of

Respondents' Primary and Secondary Area or Country of Residence

Area	Primary Residence (%)	Secondary Residence (%)
Philippines	54.8	27.1
United States	10.7	13.9
Canada	4.9	1.7
Europe	4.9	8.7
South Asia	3.8	2.9
Australia	3.1	4.0
Japan	2.7	2.3
Others	15.1	39.4
Total	100.0	100.0

length of service at ADB, 81% had been on staff for 15 years or more and 62% had at least 20 years of service. More than half of the respondents lived in the Philippines and 173 of them had a secondary country of residence. The table shows the primary and secondary residence areas of respondents. Over 66% had no health insurance coverage other than ADB's insurance. Of those with other health insurance coverage, 39% had preventive coverage.

Respondents Want Preventive Coverage. Nearly all (96.4%) respondents wanted preventive medicine to be covered by ADB insurance.

Respondents' Use of Preventive Care. The survey covered a narrow spectrum of preventive care used, including 4 vaccines and 3 procedures/tests. Almost all respondents (97.1%) had been vaccinated for COVID-19, but only 67% were protected against flu, 50% against pneumonia, and 19% against shingles, which has serious implications. About a quarter of those unvaccinated against one or more of the four vaccines said it was too

Figure 1: Vaccinated (% of respondents)

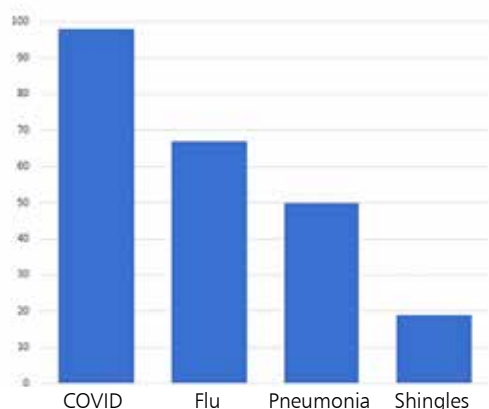
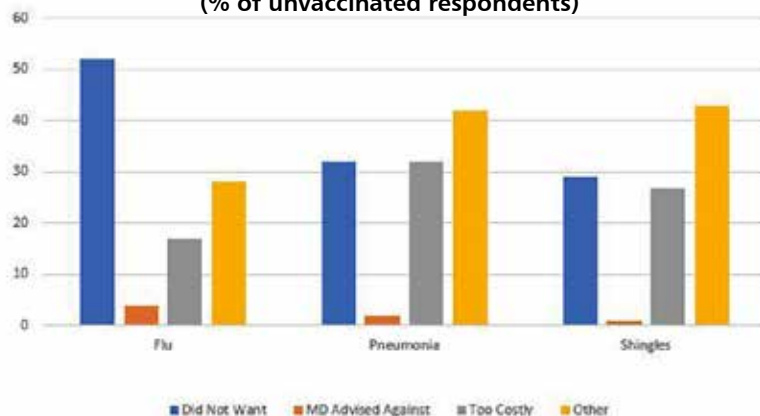


Figure 2: Reasons Stated for Not Vaccinating (% of unvaccinated respondents)



costly; other reasons included not wanting it, a few had doctors' advice not to vaccinate, some indicated there were other (unspecified) reasons (Figure 1).

The reasons for not having vaccines included not wanting to, doctor advising against having the vaccine, too costly, and other (Figure 2). For shingles, many respondents were not aware about the shingles shots and some noted it was not available in their primary place of residence.

The prices members paid for the vaccinations and procedures varied widely across countries and within some countries, and in some cases it was unclear whether the prices provided were the full cost or the amount paid after deducting the insurance. The full report is on the AFE website.

Use of Cigna Mobile App and Telehealth. About 35% of respondents had downloaded the Wellness App on their mobile phones. Only 16% of respondents had used the Telehealth services. Among them, 83% found it good or satisfactory. Of those who had not used Telehealth, 28% did not know about it, 16% were not comfortable using it, and 57% had not needed it. ■

Paying Dues

Malou Pasicolan

The best way for a pensioner to pay dues is to have them deducted from the pension—no hassle. Contact us if you need a form for this. Others may wish to pay for the next 2, 3, or more years to save on bank charges, and/or to consolidate payments from some chapter members and send them together through one or more options below.

- Other options are
 - PayPal (afe-adb@adb.org; add \$6 per transaction for fees and other charges);

- a US dollar check payable to “AFE–ADB” to AFE–ADB, Asian Development Bank, G980, 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City 1550, Metro Manila, Philippines;
- a US dollar bank draft (any service charge should be charged to your account);
- telegraphic or electronic transfer (transfer fee charged to your account; add US\$5 in the amount you send to cover the fee Metrobank [the receiving bank] charges AFE–ADB);
- pay via GCash (in PHP) to 0995 515 7143, and send proof of payment to AFE-ADB@adb.org, attn: Malou.

Account Name:	AFE-ADB
Account Number:	159-2-159-02090-2 (dollar) 159-7-15900071-7 (peso)
Bank:	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company
Address:	ADB Extension Office, 6 ADB Avenue Mandaluyong City 1550, Metro Manila, Philippines
SWIFT Code:	MBTCPHMM

Executive Committee

Chairman—Stephen Paul Groff
 President—Jill Gale de Villa
 Vice President—vacant
 Treasurer—Joy Macaaisa-Viray
 Secretary—Teresa (Bobbie) Samson Montesa

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Canada—Bruce Murray
 Ottawa Area—John Rive
 Toronto Area—Nida Rodrigo
 Vancouver Island—Alex Jorgensen
China, People’s Republic of—Min Tang
Europe—Richard Vokes, Sandro Pio
India—Shiladitya Chatterjee
Indonesia—Dimiyati Nangju
Japan—Kazu Sakai
Korea, Republic of—Se-Wha Moon
New Zealand—Eric Gordon Fox
Pakistan—Shahida Jaffrey
Philippines—Gamaliel de Armas, Jr.
 East Group—Marietta Domingo, Luz Tolarbas,
 Yi de Guzman, Regina Sy
 North Group—Rosalia Baeza, Maria Luisa Baleva,
 Aileen Francisco, Vic Rivero

South Group—Rebecca Regis, Fe de Leon,
 Josephina Balane, Merly Mallion
West Group—Sally Mabaquiao, Julie Guevara
Singapore—vacant
Sri Lanka—Sarath Lakshman Athukorala
Thailand—Suganya Hutaserani
United States: New York–New Jersey—Juliet Capati
United States: Southern California—Yola Adona
United States: Washington, DC—Frederick Roche

Standing Committees

Insurance Committee

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Barbara Palacios—Cochair	Fred Mesch
Francois Ausseil	Anne Sweetser
Ted Breckner	Axel Weber
Bernard Donge	Clay Wescott

AFE Committee on Pension

Hans-Juergen Springer—Head	Jill Gale de Villa
Nick Llave	Graham Walter

Publications Committee

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Elizabeth Cabuay	Hans-Juergen Springer
Gamaliel de Armas, Jr.	Marissa Wenceslao
Guia Estabillo	Judy Yñiguez
Anna Juico	Wickie Zveglic
Joy Macaaisa-Viray	

Special Committees

Bylaws Review Committee

Bruce Murray—Chair	Ma. Rosario O’Buckley
Eveline Fischer—Vice Chair	Elsie Louise Pfleider
Shiladitya Chatterjee	Bruce Alan Purdue
Peter Darjes	Kazu Sakai
Ophelia Iriberry	Hans-Juergen Springer

Surviving Spouses Information Committee

Hans-Juergen Springer
 Kazu Sakai

Chapter News

Japan

Kazu Sakai (ADB 1987–2014)



In the beginning of 2024, the Japan Chapter received very sad news—the sudden demise of Mrs. Asako Nakao, wife of former ADB President Takehiko Nakao. She passed away on 28 January from a brain hemorrhage at the age of 55. We were deeply shocked, all the more so as we had met Mrs. Nakao only a few months before, in the gathering of retirees and spouses in Japan

who were with ADB during President Nakao's time. In that gathering, Mrs. Nakao looked perfectly all right, with friendly smiles and a lively expression in her eyes, just as usual. It is so sad that such a kind, warm, and bright person has gone so young. We express our heartfelt condolences to Mr. Nakao and the family.

The gathering with President and Mrs. Nakao was the third gathering in 2023. The November 2023 issue of the *AFE News* covered the two previous gatherings.

President Nakao's group met on 6 November 2023 in Tokyo in a cocktail and light buffet dinner. About 40 persons attended and renewed friendships. While some of us were completely retired, many were still pursuing their professional careers on a fulltime basis, particularly those who had left ADB after relatively few years. Mr. Nakao was having busy days as Chairman of the Institute, Mizuho Research & Technologies, Ltd., owned by Mizuho Bank, one of the largest banks in Japan. He was publishing his opinions regularly on various issues in the Institute's newsletters and conducting interviews with leading thinkers in different fields. Mr. Nakao was also teaching as Visiting Professor at the National Graduate Institute of Policy Studies, and at the Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Tokyo. Ms. Harumi Kodama, former Chief Representative of ADB in Japan and presently Deputy Secretary, was in Tokyo on that day and briefed the gathering on recent developments in ADB, including the New Operating Model.

The gatherings included many AFE Japan Chapter members, and for the Kuroda and Nakao groups, the Chapter coordinated closely with the organizers. Discussions are going on about the possibility of gathering all retirees in Japan later in 2024, instead of separate gatherings.

Smaller groups of closer friends meet spontaneously from time to time. I attended one such gathering in 2023,



Gathering with Mr. and Mrs. Takehiko Nakao (center, front row), 6 November 2023.



Gathering of friends who were with ADB in 1990s, 4 October 2023.

in Tokyo on 4 October, when 14 retirees who had worked at ADB during the 1990s assembled.

A hot topic of conversation in that gathering was taxation of the ADB pension. Information and experiences exchanged were quite useful, and formed the basis for the information note on the subject sent to Chapter members in January 2024. Another major issue on which the Chapter worked in 2023 was the procedures for applying for the surviving spouse pension. With help from a couple of Chapter members and in consultation with ADB’s Pension Unit, an information note was circulated to Chapter members in August. On both issues—surviving spouse pension and taxation of the pension—we noted the vital importance of retired staff sharing information with their spouses. ■

Pakistan

Shahida Jaffrey (spouse of Tarik Jaffrey, ADB 1975–1989)



The Pakistan chapter organized one luncheon event in 2023 at the Islamabad Club, Islamabad, on 8 August 2023. It was very pleasant meeting among friends—Dr. Anjum Haq, Mr. and Mrs. Mohsin Hafeez, Mr. and Mrs. Shahid Mirza, Dr. Akmal Sadiq, and the author, Chapter Coordinator Shahida Jaffrey. ■

Canada

Bruce Murray (ADB 1980–2007)



The second half of 2023 was an active period for the Canadian AFE chapter with one Canada-wide Zoom and four major get togethers.

Zoom with Canadian Executive Director Don Bobiash. Canadian AFEers

appreciated an opportunity to interact with Canadian Executive Director (ED) Don Bobiash via Zoom on 25 July 2023. This provided an opportunity to learn first-hand about Canada’s perspectives on developments in ADB. ED Bobiash also appreciated the opportunity to speak with Canadians who had worked in ADB and had deep development experience. A total of 14 Canadian AFEers and AFE President Jill de Villa participated in a Zoom, which was made possible by Kathleen Moktan’s technical expertise. ED Bobiash felt that Strategy 2023 provided a sound framework for ADB moving forward with its emphasis on eradicating extreme poverty, inclusive growth, and climate change. Canada’s priorities were climate change, gender equality, and food security. He recognized that many borrowing countries placed a high priority on infrastructure development, particularly roads. There are sometimes differences of opinion at the Board level between borrowing countries whose priority for ADB is to be a source of financing and nonborrowing countries whose focus is improving ADB’s effectiveness and efficiency.



Vancouver Island lunch at the Villa Eyrie Resort, left from front—Yingou Huang, Ed Hourihan, Alex Jorgenson, Brigit Hourihan, Bruce Murray standing; right from front—Lucy Huang, Leslie Gold, Emma Murray, Dick Gold, Laura Jorgenson. 8/9/2023.

AFE Vancouver Island Lunch. Ten Vancouver Island AFEers got together at the Villa Eyrie Resort on 8 September 2023 to renew friendships after a long absence because of COVID and to share memories of ADB days: Alex and Laura Jorgenson, Richard and Leslie Gold, Ed and Bridgit Hourihan, Yingou and Lucy Huang and Bruce and Emma Murray.

The Villa Eyrie Resort has one of the best views of breath-taking scenery in all of Canada. Built in the early 1980s, the historical resort is perched atop the Malahat Mountain overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Finlayson Arm inlet. Everyone enjoyed the European cuisine at the Alpina Restaurant that infuses traditional ingredients and preparation methods from the Alpine regions of France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. We also enjoyed the panoramic views of the Saanich Inlet, Southern Vancouver Island, the year-round snow-capped Olympic Mountains and the view of Mount Baker.

During the business portion of the get together, I briefed those present on the Zoom with Canadian ED Don Bobiash, developments in AFE, pension and health matters, ADB/Canada interactions, ADB operations with an emphasis on climate change, developments in ADB, economic forecasts for the Asia and Pacific Region, and ADB operations in the Philippines.



L-r: Brigit and ed Hourihan, Akles abd Laura Jorgenson.

In October 2023, Ed and Bridgit Hourihan hosted Alex and Laura Jorgenson for a Danish get together.

AFE Ottawa Montreal Dinner. The Ottawa Montreal AFE Get Together was held at the newly renovated Coconut Lagoon Restaurant in Ottawa on 18 October 2023. The group was finally able to meet in person after 4 years of the country battling COVID. The group was smaller than usual because several members had to drop out at the last minute due to exposure to the latest COVID outbreak. However, that did not dampen the enthusiasm for the event.

The reception, annual meeting, and dinner at the newly renovated and “cool” Coconut Lagoon in Ottawa, brought together former colleagues, old friends, and like-minded spouses to celebrate shared experiences, laugh,



Ottawa dinner, l-r: Farrokh Kapadia, Marilyn Collette, Sue Hooper, Rita Kapadia, Ian Wright, Peter Maertens, Audrey and Vern Jorssen, and Robert Collette.

and generally reminisce about lives in Manila and the Asia region. The get-together rekindled the spirit of collegiality and mutual support that had defined our time working for ADB. It was also a great opportunity to enjoy Asian cuisine. The delicious food validated the conclusions of an earlier “taste-testing” mission of Jeanette Rive, Rita Kapadia, and Marilyn and Robert Collette, which gave a unanimous thumbs up to the Coconut Lagoon. A dozen people attended the event including Farrokh and Rita Kapadia, Marilyn and Robert Collette, Sue Hooper, Ian Wright, Peter Maertens, Vern and Audrey Jorssen and Sandra Loeden (see picture). Former AFE Ottawa Montreal Coordinator John Rive and Sharon Henry left before the picture was taken.

AFE Toronto Beetles and Buddy Holly Show. Led by Nida Rodrigo, the Toronto group continued to be the



Toronto celebrates the Beetles and Buddy Holly: 1st row: Jun and Malou Trasporto, Guia Estabillo, Cora Fegi-Tiu, Paz Ravadilla, Linda Trabulsi, Eden Santiago, Nida Rodrigo-Jugo; 2nd row: Jennie Amigle, Lea Gojo, Bernadette Sta. Maria, Mike Trabulsi, Dean Santiago; 3rd row: Ed Ravadilla, Joseph and Sara Rodrigo-Jugo, Boy Amigle. 4/11/2023.

most active Canadian AFE group. Several pot lucks and informal get togethers were hosted by various AFE Toronto members during the year, especially when out-of-country friends and colleagues were visiting Toronto.

The main Toronto AFE Get Together was the Beetles and Buddy Holly Show Tribute, held at the Old Mill Restaurant in Toronto on 4 November 2023. A total of 18 people attended the event. Everyone enjoyed renewing friendships, the fine dining, singing along to the songs of their youth, and dancing up a storm. The group headed home exhausted and happy.

AFE Vancouver Get Together. The Vancouver AFE Get Together was held at the River Rock Buffet on 26 November 2023. A total of 22 people attended: Rey and Lenn Castro, Angie Celetino, Tina and Alan de Jose, Jay and Loi Dimailig, Fremma and Nemy Esquejo, Bill and Christine Fraser, Carmen Lanzador, Bruce and Emma Murray, Jenny and Vir Palmiano, Dolores and Tony Telan, and Tess Zamora with Jeremiah, Neriah, and Jethromiah Zamora. The evening was a good opportunity to renew friendships, shared experiences, and fond memories. Everyone enjoyed the buffet with roast beef, roast pork, a wide variety of Chinese and western dishes, salads, and a generous desert table.

Two John Cole Memorial quizzes were held during the evening, one based on Christmas trivia and one based on Canadian trivia. Jeremiah Zamora and Tony Telan won the

first and second prizes for the Christmas trivia quizzes, defeating Neriah Zamora in a tie break. Bill Fraser and Fremma Esquejo tied for first place with perfect scores in the Canadian trivia quiz.

During the business portion of the meeting, I read the names of friends and colleagues who had passed away during the years and briefed the group on (1) the Zoom with Canadian ED Don Bobiash; (2) the review of the AFE By-Laws and the new coordinators manual; (3) the 2023 AFE Annual General Meeting in Incheon and the next AGM to be held in Georgia; (4) pension and health insurance developments; (5) ADB and Canada issues including President Masa’s meeting with Canada’s Minister of International Development and ADB Governor, Harjit S. Sajjan and the ADB delegation attending the Seventh GEF Assembly on 22–25 August in Vancouver, which was attended by Prime Minister Trudeau; (6) ADB operations; (7) ADB’s reorganization; (8) ADB’s capital management reforms that unlock \$100 billion in new funding capacity; (9) the beginning of the ADF Replenishment; and (10) ADB operations in the Philippines.

In addition to the formal AFE get together at River Rock, there were a couple of informal lunches in Vancouver where colleagues shared memories while enjoying Indian food. ■

Korea

Se-Wha Moon (ADB 1980–2008)



On 14 December 2023, the ADB Korea Chapter held its 2023 Annual General Meeting and Year-End Party in Seoul. During the meeting, Se-Wha Moon was appointed as the new President, succeeding former President Mee-Ja Hamm. The gathering was attended by 18 members, including former

Vice Presidents—Bong-Suh Lee (former chair of AFE–ADB) and Myung-Ho Shin. I also briefed the members about the events of the AFE Annual General Meeting 2023 held in Songdo, Republic of Korea, and urged members to actively and voluntarily participate in the activities of both AFE–ADB and AFE–ADB Korea Chapter.

The AFE Korea Chapter has been regularly holding a get-together lunch on the 2nd Thursday of every month, and



Vancouver AFE Get Together. 26/11/2023.



AFE Korea Chapter year-end party seated r-l: Sun-Ho Lee, Gyun-Tae Sul, Kyung-Woo Kim, Bong-Suh Lee, Myoung-Ho Shin, Dal-Hyun Kim, Yong-Hoe Lee, Jin-Gyu Park; standing r-l: Dong-Ho Park, Soo-Nam Oh, Cheol-Ghee Kim, Se-Wha Moon, Jong-Seop Cheong, Joong-Soo Seo, Gil-Hong Kim, Jong-In Kim, Cheol-Su Kim.

an annual meeting and year-end party in early December. Through regular meetings, the Chapter has been sharing AFE and ADB news, welcoming new members, and catching up with new developments among the members. In 2024, the Chapter also plans to expand its role through visits to Korean art and history museums. ■

Australia

Peter Carroll (ADB 1992–1999)



We have had an interesting time in Australia since our last reunion. After a huge amount of rain in 2022, by November of 2023 we had descended into a hot drought of unknown duration with a resurgent and ever earlier

and nastier bushfire season.

Many of our members have been travelling overseas to make up for being kept in isolation for so long during the COVID pandemic and we are all a year older! Maybe, not such a big thing for the younger people but a year can make a huge difference in the lives of older ones. These factors have all impinged on our 2023 Reunion.

Our Reunion was on Monday–Thursday 16–19 October 2023 in the lovely seaside township of Lorne in southeastern Victoria and near the beginning of the Great Ocean Road. Most of our activities took place in the Mantra Lorne Resort where all the participants stayed and our Welcome BBQ, Annual General Meeting, and Annual Dinner were held. We had a full-day bus trip down the Great Ocean Road to Apollo Bay (morning tea stop), then up into the Otways and Otways National Park to visit a grove of giant California Redwoods for a photo opportunity before driving to the small village of Forrest where we had lunch. Afterward we drove via the inland road back to our Resort in Lorne. On Wednesday after the Annual General Meeting, there were not enough golfers to conduct the Peter Pattison Memorial Trophy and instead everyone took part in an afternoon sightseeing tour around the historic town of Lorne. The Annual Dinner was held that final evening.



L-r: Rita O’Sullivan, Wendy Duncan, David Parker, Arnie Parker, Alan Hartley, Anne Whittle, Wouter Vochteloo, Loh Ai Tee, John Whittle, Isabelle Leonard, Keith Leonard, Peter Carroll, Chàn Carroll, Helen Pappas and Con Pappas.



California redwoods at Otways National Park.

Of the 25 people registered for the event, 6 had to cancel at the last minute due to illness (including the organizer, Ken Waller and his wife, Rosalie). The following 19 participants thoroughly enjoyed the proceedings: Charles and Karen Andrews; Peter and Chàn Carroll; Wendy Duncan; Keith and Isabelle Leonard; Ai Tee Loh and Alan Hartley; Rita and Kathy O’Sullivan; Con, Helen, and Sophie Pappas; David and Arnie Parker; Wouter Vochteloo; and John and Ann Whittle.

Our 2024 Annual Reunion will likely be held in the third week of October, in the regional city of Toowoomba, Queensland. *Ed: Per Google, Toowoomba is known for the Cobb & Co Museum, with its horse-drawn carriages; the Royal Bull’s Head Inn, an 1800s homestead with colonial-era displays; the Ravensbourne National Park’s towering red cedars and rainforest; and Crows Nest National Park, with a eucalypt forest, granite boulders, and Crows Nest Falls.* ■

Indonesia

Dimiyati Nangju (ADB 1978–2001)



Indonesia Chapter Coordinator Dimiyati Nangju, forth from left, with, from left former Chapter Coordinator Putu Kamayana, Michel de Ponteves, Normin Pakpahan, and Binsar Tambunan.

The new committee of the Indonesia Chapter began its work in January 2023 after it was elected in November 2022 meeting in Jakarta. The committee consists of Dimiyati Nangju as Coordinator, Michel de Ponteves as Assistant Coordinator, Soewartono (later replaced by Olly Norijono, after Mr. Soewartono passed away on 13 October 2023) as Secretary, and Utami Hendrarini (replaced by Dewi Utami when she resigned in July 2023) as Treasurer. Dimiyati Nangu replaced Putu Kamayana who resigned in 2022 due to ill health. He had been coordinator for 8 years following the resignation of Dimiyati Nangju in 2013.

The new committee planned three activities: a mid-term meeting in Jogjakarta, Central Jakarta, in June 2023; a sightseeing tour to the new Indonesia capital, Nusantara, in East Kalimantan, in August 2023; and an end-of-year lunch meeting in November 2023. However, only the latter could be held.



Participants in the lunch meeting on 25 November 2023: Sitting, l-r: Benny Kosinda, Normin Pakpahan, Lestari Pakpahan, Mrs. Eriko Tominaga, Indonesia Country Director Jiro Tominaga, Indonesia Chapter Coordinator Dimiyati Nangju, Michel de Ponteves, Nani Bhinekawati, Kus Harjanti; standing, l-r, second row: Siti Nur Aisyiyah, Olly Norojono, Putu Kamayana, Lydia Kosinda, Edy Brotoisworo, Ningti Asra, Dewi Utami, Ratih Norojono, Suzana, Wati Kamayana, Ida de Ponteves, Frieda Tambunan, Sari Wooster, Widowati Atmoko, Utami Hendrarini, Agnes and Barlev Hutagalung, Eddy Effendy; standing, l-r, third row: Abuzar asra, Zainal Sumadiradja, Binsar Tambunan, Aries Murwidono, Paul Wooster, Lisa and Chris Morris.

The End-of-Year Lunch Meeting was held successfully on 25 November 2023 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Gandaria Mal, Jakarta. About 35 members and their spouses attended. The committee had invited three distinguished guests to attend the meeting: Jill Gale de Villa, President of AFE-ADB; Bambang Susantono, Head of the New Capital Nusantara Authority; and Jiro Tominaga, Director of Indonesia Resident Mission. Only Mr. Tominaga accepted the invitation. Jill de Villa sent her apology and a message that was read at the meeting.

In 2024, the Committee plans three major activities: a mid-term meeting to be hosted by Dimiyati Nangju in his house in June 2024, an outing to an interesting and beautiful location not far from Jakarta in August 2024, and an End-of-Year Lunch Meeting in November 2024. ■

Europe

Alessandro Pio (ADB 1993–2012) and Richard Vokes (ADB 1991–2011)



Europe Chapter cocordinators and wives: L-r, Sandro and Sharon Pio and Sue and Richard Vokes.

The AFE Europe Chapter's held its 24th Business Meeting in Baden-Baden, Germany, on 24 September at 9:00-11:35am. **Chapter Co-Coordinator Richard Vokes** welcomed the 50 participants, including AFE-ADB **President Jill Gale de Villa**, Europe Resident Office Deputy Representative **Ilaria Caetani**, and guests from other AFE Chapters. He read the names of the AFE members who had passed away during the preceding year, and the meeting observed a minute of silence in their honor.

The meeting unanimously elected **Ursula Schäfer-Preuss** as the chairperson and adopted the agenda and the final minutes of the 2022 meeting. The chairperson thanked the meeting host **Marlis Hühne**, Europe Chapter coordinators, and their spouses for organizing the reunion.

Report of the AFE President

The President thanked the AFE Europe chapter for organizing the reunion. She noted that the AFE Annual Meeting in Incheon was attended by 110 people and was quite successful, and that the new Coordinators' manual, compiling good practices of coordinators, is available thanks to the efforts of Günter Hecker and Gam de Armas.

AFE Financial Situation. (1) Funds saved from the absence of travel during COVID were allocated to improving the accounting systems. (2) AFE's income is about \$64,000 per year, largely used to pay staff salaries and subsidies to chapters. (3) We may need to increase dues going forward—the last increase was 23 years ago. One-third of the more than 3,000 members joined when AFE only collected a one-time joining fee and they do not pay annual dues.

Health Plan. (1) Specific issues were addressed with the help of BPMSD. (2) ADB has not bid out the insurance plan because, among other reasons, a transition to a new company can be quite complicated. (3) Meeting participants (a) underlined the importance of maintaining universal coverage because many retirees travel extensively; (b) asked AFE to ask BPMSD to consider having the health plan fully cover the balance of medical charges (instead of just 75%) when national insurance is used first; (c) pointed out that in some cases (e.g., Germany) rejoining the national insurance system can be costly; and (d) Germany introduced a requirement to have long-term care insurance, but this requires participation in the national health system; therefore, it may become necessary for ADB to assist staff in certifying that the long-term insurance meets the German requirement.

Pension: Hans Springer reported that (1) The defined contribution (DC) plan committee met in April and the staff retirement plan (SRP) Pension Committee met in May 2023. As of September 2022, the SRP was fully funded at 105% of liabilities. While the value of assets declined by 17% in the previous year, the funding percentage is based on a 5-year average. (2) Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) are calculated for 30 pension currencies using International Monetary Fund statistics. Due to the recent inflation, 24 currencies had supplemental increases, from 0.4% to 33.9% (Sri Lanka). The supplemental adjustment for Euro pensions was 4.9%, on top of the guaranteed 3% annual adjustment. (3) Work is in progress on simplifying the procedures and forms to be submitted by the surviving partners. (4) Richard Vokes reminded retirees to "twin up" with others who can assist surviving spouses to navigate the transition of ADB benefits.



Participants at the Europe Chapter business meeting.

AFE Management. (1) The office has been moved to the ground floor and reconfigured. (2) Retirees should address e-mails to AFE–ADB and copy individuals as appropriate, to ensure continuity of records. (3) Candidates for vice president are being sought before formally requesting nominations.

AFE-ADB Europe Chapter Coordinator's Report and Discussion

Richard Vokes reported on developments since the last business meeting. (1) Günter Hecker represented AFE Europe in the Chapter Coordinators meeting at the Annual Meeting and was nominated as chair in preparing a coordinators' manual. (2) Organization of the reunion was the main effort. (3) The mailing list is being updated, and participants suggested allowing spouses to be included in the chapter mailing list.

Kazu Sakai, coordinator of the Japan chapter, pointed out that the issue of surviving spouses is quite relevant in Japan. Some of the ADB requirements (e.g., government-issued death or birth certificates) can be difficult to meet, and the process of restoring the pension can be lengthy. Some spouses do not speak English well, or understand the requirements and entitlements. Spouses should be encouraged to share information and prepare for the event of a staff death. The two forms that now need to be filled in should be included in the "Survivors' Manual".

It was suggested that some AFE members (Peter Fedon, Kazu Sakai) could support Hans Springer as needed in updating the Survivors' Manual.

Briefing by European Representative Office

Ilaria Caetani reported on the new operating model ("NOM") introduced in June 2023 and on changes within ADB to deal with the greater complexity of operations,

deliver \$100 billion of climate change investment by 2030, strengthen relationships with developing member countries through decentralization, and improve the knowledge content of ADB operations.

- Regional Departments now focus on country relations, economic and sector analysis, and development of the pipeline.
- The Solutions Department prepares and implements projects, with Senior Directors in charge of sectors, and Directors under them in charge of clusters of regions, with Communities of Practice under them. This has made the organization rather top-heavy, with many layers of reporting and decision-making, and adjustments may be introduced.
- As a result of this structure, interdepartmental review has been abolished and "One ADB" teams take full responsibility for projects. This should ensure greater accountability but risks reducing scrutiny of project quality. The "Market Solutions" group (public–private partnerships and nonsovereign operations) is separate but will eventually be integrated in the Solutions Department.
- Private sector staff have increasingly been deployed to field offices and the Solutions Department. This significantly reduced the size of regional departments at Headquarters, shifting the responsibility to Resident Missions in the field. The Solutions Department is under one Vice-President. The organigram is available on the ADB website.

Since the reorganization happened at the end of COVID when staff were returning to office, the President guaranteed that no staff members would lose their jobs, and even staff who were expected to retire were extended. The Office of Risk Management was involved in the review of ADB's capital adequacy. Climate change and integration of sovereign and nonsovereign operations continue to be

important areas of focus. ADB has also taken on more responsibilities within the G-20 process. Italy will be hosting the May 2025 Annual General Meeting, in Rome or Milano.

Future Reunions

The 2024 reunion will be hosted by Eveline Fischer and Meriatry Subroto, with support from Patrick Brandt and Walter Kolkma, and will be held in the Netherlands, in the Delft-The Hague-Rotterdam-Haarlem area, on September 19–23. From 2025 on, reunions may take place in the United Kingdom and Switzerland. ■

US Southern California

Yola Adona (ADB 1986–2013)



This is the first face-to-face gathering of SoCal Chapter after the pandemic. I was appointed Coordinator after May Seron Tigas vacated the post.

The event was held on 18 November 2023. It would have been sooner, but some members already had plans for the Thanksgiving Day festivities

and since Christmas was just around the corner, we had difficulties booking a venue for the event. Good thing one of the AFE–ADB members, Barnadette Agustin (Baba), lent her place for the event.



The party started at 11am and continued until late afternoon so that some members who drive a long distance could go home safely. All the members of the group had their own chores in order to make the event so much fun and memorable. Even though we had not seen each other for decades and some we had not met personally while we were working at ADB, the camaraderie was so bonded because of the commonality of unforgettable experiences we shared while at ADB. Thanks to the social media, especially FaceBook, for reconnecting each and every one of us.

We all can't wait for another get together, which we are planning to schedule some time in October. With such gatherings, our numbers are continuing to grow.

Mabuhay AFE–ADB SoCal Chapter! ■



L-r: Lolly Aban, Vhee Martin, Mayen Sacasas, William Tamidles, July Aban, Orlie Lacanlale, Yolanda Bravo Houtby, Nini Lacanlale, May Seron Tigas, Danny Panopio, Barnadette Agustin, Norman Pamintuan, Yola Adona, Letty Liong Gomez, Angel Adona (Husband of Yola Adona). Josie Panopio and Magdalena Pamintuan.

Philippines

Gam de Armas (ADB 1981–2000)



The Philippines Chapter held its annual meeting and get-together on 16 November 2023. We had a record attendance of 172, who came as early as 10:30 AM in their “havana night” costumes. A prime reason for the surge in attendance was the new venue, the Valle Verde Country Club, suitably located about a kilometer from ADB. The other reasons for the big attendance were the mini group gatherings held in 2022 and the infusion of new area coordinators, as well as the long period where members had not been together. That ADB’s executive dining room and other function rooms were not available turned out to be a blessing as it forced the organizers to look for other accessible venues. The area coordinators and I held about 8 Zoom meetings and visited several venues before the Valle Verde Country Club was finally chosen.

Emcees were Malu Baleva and Logee Tiamzon. After the invocation led by Becky Regis, a minute of silence



Dancing at the year-end party. L-r: Joy Viray, Bobbie Montesa, Malou Pasicolan, Bheb Dino, Vicky and Gam de Armas, Sally Baesa.

was observed for members who had passed away from 2020 to October 2023. I then welcomed everyone with special mention of the two new AFE officers: AFE Secretary Bobbie Montesa and Treasurer Joy Viray. I reported on the previous year’s successful group get-togethers and thanked the previous AFE Treasurer Nannette Amorado for the increase in the BPMSD subsidy. During 2022, each of the four groups was able to hold its own get-together in a place most convenient to its members, generating a big attendance. Attempts in 2020 and 2021 to set up Zoom Meetings had not pushed through.



Philippines Chapter members gather on 16 November 2023 for a year-end party.



Philippines South Group at the year-end party.

I also reported on the difficulty of reconvening area coordinators and the need to look for new faces to fill vacancies. After a long search of about 4 months in early 2022, 10 new area coordinators were recruited with 4 area coordinators staying in place. They are

- South Group: Becky Regis, Fe de Leon, Jo Balane, and Merly Mallion;
- East Group: Mayet Domingo, Luz Tolarbas, Yi de Guzman, and Regs Sy;
- North Group: Sally Baeza, Malu Baleva, Aileen Francisco, and Vic Rivero; and
- West Group: Sally Mabaquiao and Julie Guevara.

I acquainted the new coordinators with the policies and guidelines during several Zoom sessions. We also needed to update the directory of members for each group. Each area coordinator received a personal gift from me.

I reported on the efforts to prepare a manual to help chapter coordinators discharge their responsibilities and handle issues that may come their way based on the experiences in the past. A lack of enthusiasm to take on the chapter coordinator post was evident, and one of the reasons cited was the lack of understanding of the role of a chapter coordinator. Günter Hecker and I were chosen by the coordinators to lead the process. After several months, a resulting document titled, "Chapter Coordinators Guide," came out in September 2023 for final review and adoption, and is available on the AFE website, titled *A Practical Guide for Chapter Coordinators*.

There was general agreement to hold the next annual get-together in the same venue.

Bobbie Montesa read the message of AFE President Jill de Villa, who was abroad, and Joy Viray read the Report on Pension Matters by past President Hans Springer.

The meeting was spiced up by raffle prizes given out every half hour and dancing that brought everyone to the dance floor accompanied by a rock band. Group pictures were taken against the beautiful stage backdrop and photo booth. ■

Washington DC Chapter Report 2023

Fred Roche (ADB 1992–2007)



About 20 AFE members attended a cocktail party at the home of Emmi and Fred Roche in early November 2023. Our special guests included Alain Borghijs, NARO's Deputy Representative, Bill Silverman, BPMSD's recently retired Principal Human Resources Specialist (now an ADB consultant), and AFE's President

Jill de Villa. Alain provided a detailed update on recent developments in ADB as a whole, focusing on ADB's



L-r: Alain Borghijs, Karti Sandilya, Thelma Diaz, Trisha Moser.



L-r: Washington DC Chapter Coordinator Fred Roche, Donneth Walton, Bill Silverman, Karti Sandilya, Keichi Tamaki, Thelma Diaz, Caroline Ahmad, Jill de Villa, Trisha Moser, Anne Sweetser, Alain Borghijs, Bernard Donge, Kanbin Zheng.

ongoing reorganization. Jill briefed us on AFE’s work in Manila and other matters. As he has for several years, Bill provided the group with frank and clear responses to questions about health insurance issues. ■

India

Shiladitya Chatterjee (ADB 1994–2011)



The Twenty Eighth Annual Meeting of the AFE–ADB India Chapter was held in Puri, Odisha on 10 October 2023. It was inaugurated at 6:00 pm by Executive Committee Member Lakshmi Venkatachalam and Mrs. Shipra Ganguly lighting the traditional lamp. The meeting was organized in

hybrid mode with 24 members and spouses participating physically and 9 participating virtually, including AFE President Jill Gale de Villa. India Chapter President Barin Ganguli addressed the meeting, as did AFE–ADB President Jill Gale de Villa (virtually). The India Chapter Coordinator Shiladitya Chatterjee presented a detailed report on activities and finances and opened up the floor for discussions on various pensions and health insurance issues. ■



Shipra Ganguly and Lakshmi Venkatachalam light the traditional lamp.



India 2023 Annual Meeting. Sitting, l-r: Zeba Alam, Munawar Alam, Krishna Bagal, Rajani Bagal, Prodipto Ghosh, Meenakshi Dutta Ghosh, Sangita Terway, Rita Chatterjee, Shipra Ganguly, Sindhushree Khullar; Standing, l-r: Manoranjan Senapaty, C.R. Rajendran, Shyam Bajpai, Sudipto Mundle, Preeta Singh, Manju Senapaty, Shobhana Rajendran, Lakshmi Venkatachalam, Anil Terway, Ruchira Goswami, Arjun Goswami, Chapter President Barin Ganguli, Rajni Bajpai, Chapter Coordinator Shiladitya Chatterjee.

People, Places, and Passages

Beautiful Odisha

Shiladitya Chatterjee (ADB 1994–2011)



Gopalpur-on-Sea beach, l-r Shilo and Gopa Chatterjee and Prodipto and Meenakshi Dutta Ghosh

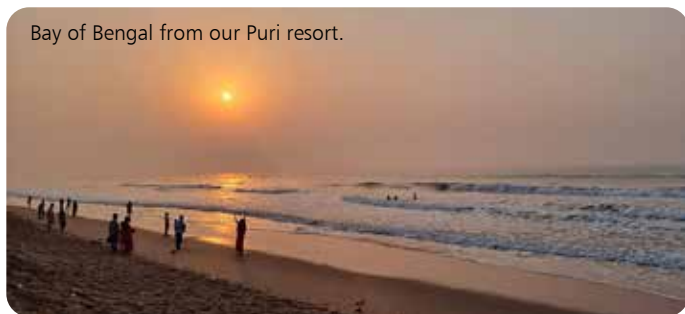
The India Chapter's reunion tour was on 9–14 October 2023, based in Puri, where the annual meeting was held. The state of Odisha was chosen for its great natural beauty and rich historical, cultural, and religious importance.

On the morning of our first day, we visited the crafts village of Raghurajpur, a few miles from Puri. It is a heritage crafts village known for its master *Pattachitra* painters, an art form dating back to 5 BCE; and *Gotipua* dance troupes, the precursor to the Indian classical dance

Puri Beach at sunrise.



Bay of Bengal from our Puri resort.



form of Odissi. The dance form has been performed in Odisha for centuries by young boys, who dress as young women to praise Lord Jagannath and Lord Krishna. We spent some time with local artisans, acquiring some paintings and other artisanry; thereafter, we were invited to a *Gotipua* dance school where we were regaled with performances by the students, all wearing colorful costumes and accompanied by local instruments.



Traditional Odisha dance troupe at Raghurajpur crafts village.

The second day of the tour was devoted to a visit to the Jagannath Temple in the morning. The famous temple was built from the 10th Century CE on. It houses wooden images of Jagannath (Lord of the Universe and a form of Vishnu) and of his sister Subhadra and brother Balabhadra. The temple is one of the four famous *dhams* or pilgrimage destinations for Hindus to achieve moksha (salvation). The temple also has beautiful images carved on its exterior walls.

The temple is in Puri's old town, and we had to take rickshaws to more easily navigate the crowded narrow lanes of the old city. Any darshan of Lord Jagannath is a challenge, but all of us were ultimately able to catch a glimpse of the three deities and returned satisfied and blessed. (Photography is not permitted within the temple.)

In the afternoon of the second day we visited the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Sun Temple at Konark, a small sea-side town about an hour's drive by bus. On the way we took a short break to visit a sand sculpture museum for which Puri is famous.

When we reached Konark, the sun was setting, bringing the intricate carvings on the temple into sharp relief. The Sun Temple at was built in the 13th Century CE and designed as a gigantic chariot of the Sun God, Surya, with 12 pairs of ornamented wheels pulled by seven horses. Some of the wheels are more than 3 meters wide. Only six of the seven horses still stand today. The structures and



At the Sand Sculpture Museum.

Konark Sun Temple.



Guide explaining a chariot wheel at Konark Sun Temple. The chariot is 100 meters high, and each of its 24 wheels is about 3.5 meters high.

elements that have survived are famed for their intricate artwork, iconography, and themes, including erotic motifs. Also called the Surya Devalaya, it is a classic example of the Odisha or Kalinga style of architecture.

At the end of each day of tours we met for a happy hour spent in reminiscences, recollections, and updates—a most enjoyable part of the tour.

The third day included a day-long tour first to the Asokan rock edicts and Peace Pagoda at Dhauri; and later to several famous temples near Bhubaneswar, the state capital.

As mentioned earlier, Odisha has several temples and religious monuments visited by both Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims from all over the world. Dhauri, a short distance from Puri, is the site of the Kalinga battlefields. Here King Asoka the Great (304–232 BCE), who unified India, fought the bloody battle of Kalinga where he defeated the Kalinga forces to annex the Kingdom.

But the destruction during the war caused him immense sorrow and he then renounced violence, decreeing that the sound of the war drum be replaced by the sound of



One of many happy hours in the evenings.

dhamma (piety, righteousness, duty). In subsequent years, he was drawn to Buddhism which he helped propagate across Asia. Some of his thoughts and edicts were carved into rocks during 269–233 BCE. The edicts are instructions from King Asoka informing the public to uphold the Buddha's *dhamma* principles such as prohibiting slaughter of animals, decreeing that slaves henceforth be looked upon as his children, introducing welfare measures for his subjects, expanding charity and medical treatment, requiring his subjects to do good deeds, and remaining at peace with neighboring kingdoms. The edicts were spread throughout his vast kingdom which included all of present South Asia including modern-day Afghanistan. Dhauri has a large number of Asoka's rock edicts.

A peace pagoda at Dhauri commemorates Asoka's transformation after the great Kalinga War. It was built in 1972 through a collaboration between Japanese and Indian Buddhist monastic orders. The Dhauri Shanti Stupa has four massive idols of Lord Buddha in various postures along with episodes from Gautam Buddha's life carved on stone slabs.

The afternoon was devoted to visits to famous temples in Bhubaneswar such as the Lingaraj, Mukteswar, and Raja Rani temples. Not all temples permit photography. The temples were built during the 10th and 11th century CE with intricate carvings, some of which have been well preserved.

Odisha has a very rich handicrafts and textile tradition and the opportunity to purchase some handmade garments could not be missed. Most participants spent the evening shopping at Bhubaneswar. Thereafter, it was back to the hotel at Puri.

The next day, while some participants departed, the rest continued to a resort on Chilika Lake which is about a 2-hour drive from Puri. Chilika Lake is the largest brackish water lagoon in Asia and second largest coastal lagoon in the world. The lake is a beautiful expanse (over a 1,000 square kilometers) of blue water surrounded by forests and rolling hills. It also has highly diverse fauna. Over a million



Above: Garden of rocks with King Asoka's edicts inscribed on them.



Left: Dhauli Peace Pagoda built by Kalinga Nippon Buddha Sangha to commemorate Emperor Asoka's change of heart after experiencing the results of the battle of Kalinga.

Below: Anil and Sangita Terway at Mukteshwar Temple in Bhubaneswar.



migratory waterfowl and shorebirds winter here. It is home to the Irrawady dolphins at the eastern end where the lagoon opens up to the Bay of Bengal. The lake supports fisheries that are the lifeline of the community.

After an evening's rest and relaxation we commenced exploring the lake next morning. The first was a trip by boat to an island in the middle of the lake which has the Kalijai Temple—the Goddess Kalijai is considered as the protector of the lake. The boat trip was refreshing and we kept a lookout for dolphins, but not surprisingly didn't see any as most keep to the eastern end.

In the evening we went to the bird sanctuary at Mangalajodi. The sanctuary was about an hour's drive by bus from our resort. The sanctuary has to be traversed on country boats. The couple of hours we spent at the sanctuary was quiet and most peaceful. In order not to

disturb the birds, one had to keep quiet as the boats glided through the shallow waters, paddled silently by the boatmen. With the help of binoculars the boatmen shared with us, we were able to see a large number of birds—mostly domestic—but there were some migratory birds too although it was a little early in the season for those.

One of the most magnificent sights was the sun setting over the still waters across the vast landscape.

On return, a sumptuous dinner of traditional Odiya cuisine awaited us. Among other things, Odisha is known for the exquisite cuisine that local chefs turn out for visitors, served on banana leaves and made exclusively from local ingredients and fresh Chilika fish.

That brought a very enjoyable Reunion Tour for all of us! ■



Boat trip to the middle of Chilika Lake.



At Kalijai Temple on the island in the middle of Chilika Lake.



Exploring the bird sanctuary at Mangalajodi, l-r Manoranjan Senapaty, Ranji Bajpai, Manoranjan Senapaty, C.R. Rajendran, Shyam Bajpai, Manju Senapaty, Shyam Bajpai.

2 NGOs, Children, Art

Geert van der Linden (1978–2006)



Two unrelated van der Lindens, my wife Didit and Hetty, have NGOs to benefit children through art. Didit first met Hetty in September 2023.

In 2009, Didit founded **ACAP**, an NGO for street children, and uses art to help build their self-confidence and deal with their traumas. And when the time is right, ACAP enrolls the children in public schools and

monitors their performance and health. See <https://www.acap.ph/> for more on ACAP.

In 2002, Hetty had the brilliant idea to use children’s art to raise money for them. This is how her **Paint a Future** works: Hetty visits a poor community and asks children to make drawings that reflect their hopes and aspirations. She then brings together a group of established artists who use the children’s art as an inspiration for their own paintings. Those paintings are then sold at an exposition and the proceeds go back to the children and their community. See <https://www.paintafuture.org/>



[paintafuture.org/](https://www.paintafuture.org/) for some striking examples. Hetty did this first in Buenos Aires and later in several other countries.

Didit and Hetty are now working together on a *Paint a Future* initiative in the Philippines. The plan is to select one of ACAP’s poor communities in Parañaque and a Bagobo community on the slopes of Mount Apo, near Davao City. The children in the two communities would make their drawings in July, artists from the Philippines and around the world would come together in August, and their work, inspired by the children’s art and aspirations, would be sold at an exhibition in the Leon Gallery in Makati in the second half of September. Didit is now working hard to bring the project to fruition. See the websites above for more information, updates, and some of the art created in Hetty’s NGO. ■

Love and Adventure

Jeanette Thomson (wife of Bill Thomson, ADB 1970–1980)



Bill and Jeanette in South Africa.

Bill was in the process of finishing his autobiography, when he departed unexpectedly on 8 October 2022 and I gained the courage to finish the memoir for him.

Bill had a strong personality. He

was our walking encyclopedia and the book explains it all, exploring his fascination for cricket, his travels to exotic places including Azerbaijan; Canada; the People’s Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Malaysia; the Philippines; South Africa; Thailand; Viet Nam; and the United States; and his love for and devotion to his family.

Finishing Bill’s book has been very inspiring and humbling at the same time. I was faced with a few challenges; nevertheless, it was a relief to see it through. Huge thanks to Bill’s friends



and our children who contributed to finishing the book. I am extremely grateful for their commitment in sharing their memories of Bill including Barbara Suzuki, Habib Faris, Rick Adkinson, Philip Mappin, Brian Britton, Christine Brooks, Ron King, Ken Waller, and our children—Craig, Alison and Alistair.

Ed: Amazon notes the book is a memoir about:

Adventure—*Exhilarating journeys where travel and adventure intertwine, awe-inspiring destinations, daring escapades, and transformative experiences that will leave you yearning for your own extraordinary odyssey.*

Love—*The quest for love transcends borders. Follow Bill's serendipitous journey across continents, revealing the remarkable tale of finding love on the other side of the globe.*

Family—*Delve into the vibrant tapestry of Bill's multicultural family. Witness the rich blend of traditions, languages, and identities, celebrating the power of diversity and unconditional love.*

The book is available in Kindle and print at <https://www.amazon.com/Shared-Memoir-Love-Adventure-ebook/dp/B0CP9T4PHJ/> ■

Bowling On

Lydio “Jun” Trasporto (ADB 1978–1989)



My dream as a bowling coach has been completed after serving as a national bowling coach for my birth country Philippines in 2010 for the Asian Games in Guangzhou, People's Republic of China (PRC) and in October 2023, I coached the national bowling team of my adopted home country, Canada, during the IBF World Bowling Championship in Kuwait ... I can't ask for more.

Start-up. I was first introduced to the sport of bowling when I joined ADB in 1978. I was recruited by Cora Bolaños to join her team for the ADB Bowling Club tournament. As I was a beginner bowler in a top team, I ended up mostly as a bench warmer with Jess Arnuco serving as the cheering group of the team.

This inspired me to learn the game by reading every bowling instructional book I could put my hands on, as I had no clue where to get a professional



A photo collage from my ADB Bowling Club days that always brings back happy bowling memories ... the induction of Bowling Club Officers in 1984 by Robert Bakely, the photo of the team and trophies that we gathered when the ADB team participated in the 1st Bankers Athletic Association, and the news clipping about ADB's dominance from the start.

bowling lesson during that time. Just by learning through books, in a short time I became one of the ADB Bowling Club's top bowlers and started winning local bowling association tournaments in Manila. I served as the chairman of the ADB Bowling Club for multiple years until I resigned from ADB in 1989 and migrated to Canada.

Following my Heart. It was recession period in 1989 when I arrived in Canada, which led me to accept a job in the production line of a pharmaceutical firm. I was earning a decent income but wasn't motivated at all, so



AFE Toronto bowlers.

I decided to switch to my “Plan B,” which was to find something that I would enjoy and obviously it had to be related to bowling. First, I worked as an afternoon shift manager at a minimum wage in a bowling center outside Toronto, but I didn’t mind the long drive as I enjoyed the job plus the perks of being allowed to practice bowling for free.

After a year, I found an opportunity to open my own bowling pro shop in a bowling center in Toronto. There was a lot of competition, as almost all major bowling centers in Toronto had their own in-house pro shop. Under the circumstances, I had to do my best to establish a very good reputation as a pro shop operator–technician and bowling coach in order to attract bowlers across Toronto to visit and try the services of my shop. The rest is history.

The bowling center where my shop was located used to be the favorite venue of the AFE Toronto group for our bowling party night out get-togethers. In 2010, I closed the store when I could no longer personally supervise the operation because most of the time I was out of Canada coaching.

Global Coaching. My first international coaching job was in 2006 in the Republic of Korea, when Storm Bowling Company recommended me to be the technical coach for the national team. I coached the Men’s National Team to the 2006 World Championships held in Busan. The team made history in this tournament by winning both the gold and silver medals of the Trio Event.

In the same year, I also coached both the Men’s and Women’s National Team to the 15th Asian Games 2006 in Doha, Qatar. The team gathered 4 gold, 4 silver, and 3 bronze medals, a total of 11 medals, which was almost double the number of medals won by the second place finisher in the tournament overall standing.

The following year, 2007, Qatar recruited me to be their national team coach and I stayed there until 2009. My coaching in Qatar was highlighted when the team won the Bowling Grand Slam during the 2007



Coaching the Qatari national bowling team, 2007.

Arab Games in Cairo, Egypt. This had never happened before during the Arab Games. Also in 2007, I was also included in the *Bowlers Journal International* magazine’s prestigious list of Top 100 Coaches for 2007 and again included as one of the 10 noteworthy international coaches for 2009.

I left Qatar when I accepted the offer from the Philippines to be the Head Coach of the national team for the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, People’s Republic of China. Bowling won the first gold medal for the Philippines in the Asian Games that year; we won gold and bronze medals for the singles event.



Coaching the Philippine national team to gold in Guangzhou, 2010.

In 2013, I joined Oman as their head coach and assisted the Oman Bowling Committee to develop and design a bowling program for their national bowling team.

Last year, I was elated and proud to be one of the coaches of Team Canada for the 2023 International Bowling Federation World Bowling Championships in Kuwait, with high hopes that I could help the team bring honor to my beloved adopted country. My wish was fulfilled when our team garnered a total of 5 medals (2 golds, 2 silvers, and a bronze) ■



Coaching Canada: Team Canada celebrated winning our first Gold Medal in the Team Event in the World Bowling Championships, Kuwait, 2023. Photo shows the women’s team displaying their silver and bronze medals.

Europe: Basking in Baden-Baden

Elizabeth V. Reyes (spouse of Hans-Juergen Springer, ADB 1972–2002)



It was a healthful AFE European Chapter reunion: in Baden-Baden, a gracious spa town in the Northern Black Forest near the French border. Renowned as a hot-springs town and fashionable playground for royalty and the rich and famous of the 19th century, today Baden-Baden is a popular tourist destination with fine thermal baths, lovely parks and gardens, and a classy

casino. In July 2021, Baden-Baden made UNESCO's World Heritage list as one of the "Best Spa Heritage Towns of Europe." In September 2023, AFE's Europe Chapter drew 92 participants to a bubbly warm reunion in the very elegant setting of Baden-Baden.

Most participants were billeted at the central Atlantic Park Hotel. From Hans's and my little balcony on the third floor, we looked across at the *Festspielhaus*, the largest opera theater in Europe. Our leafy view through the trees felt like the pointillist impressionist painting—*A Sunday Afternoon*—by Georges Seurat, with well-dressed people, bikers, and horse-drawn carriages trickling by all day long.

AFE's handouts directed us to reflect on ancient times, as the ruins of old Roman baths still lie beneath Baden-Baden's streets. A guided walking tour showed us where, many centuries ago, men in togas trod on cobblestones over hot springs and where soldiers nursed their war wounds in the mineral waters. There are many layers of imperial history to peel back to appreciate the history of the lovely, healthful town today.

The Black Forest and Its Mermaids. Baden-Baden, a town of 55,000 residents, is in the 800–900-meter-high foothills of the Black Forest (*Schwarzwald*), which is a 100-kilometer-wide range of forested mountains surrounded by rolling countryside. A day trip by bus took us to explore this vital ecosystem that is the *Schwarzwald*. Our tour guide, Octav, a multilingual Romanian, introduced (in English) Baden-Baden as the hot springs village so named in 1936. The double-pronged name ties the small spa town (Baden) to its then province (Baden).

Just 2 years ago, Baden-Baden was named one of the best spa towns in Europe!

We imbibed more history during our tour. After defeating the Allemanni tribes, Romans settled in the Black Forest, which they called the *Silva Negra*, and, starting in 1150 AD, built monasteries. From the 14th to the 19th centuries, the mountain residents sold Black Forest lumber to Holland for shipbuilding. Today, the boon of the *Schwarzwald* is providing visitors with the experience of green, pristine nature. We noted the wind farms and solar panels everywhere, the grasslands that keep the Black Forest from taking over completely, and the round hay rolls that are locally called "lunchboxes for the cows." And we heard about the area's three cultural icons in world records:

1. Black Forest *Schinken*—fine leanest ham;
2. Black Forest gâteau—made with cherries soaked in liqueur (*Kirschwasser*); and
3. the finest cuckoo clocks—with the world's biggest one in Triberg.

Later we heard of another Black Forest icon: the Advents-Kalendar with 24 windows—which set a Guinness World Record in 2014.

In the 1960s, Baden-Baden built the **Black Forest Open Air Museum** (*Schwarzwälder Freilichtmuseum*) in Offenburg, a winery town by the River Kinsig. All but one of the houses at the museum had been transferred whole from other sites. We explored 2 of the traditional farmhouses at the museum. The older farmhouse (the *Vogtsbauernhof*), dated to about 1600 AD, was the only house in the museum still on its original site. It featured a steeply pitched roof of reed, the sturdiest material from the forest, and was built on a hillside. The upper floor was a vast sheltered area, from which workers, tools, and carriages could exit via ramps onto the upper ground level. Below was the homestead where generations of an extended family had lived in a communal tradition, including the workers. We were informed about some interesting laws of continuity and inheritance. While all male adult siblings lived together and shared the work, the youngest son usually inherited the homestead. If there were no sons around, the house went to the oldest unmarried girl, because she would usually be married quickly (for her assets)!

Our second stop was at the **Mummelsee**, the highest glacial lake in the Black Forest. We AFE retirees strolled around it in about 30 minutes and mused about the little mermaids of legend. It's said the *Mummelein* (little *fraulein* mermaids) come out at midnight and dance on the waters—'till King Neptune takes them back to the depths! During our walkabout, we met just one solitary *Mummelein* sitting wistfully on her rock at lake's edge. Several two-legged humans went out there for photo-ops with the



Houses at the Black Forest Museum date from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The largest (top) was the only farmhouse on the site until the museum disassembled old houses from the region and rebuilt them here for the museum. The house is three storeys high, with dwelling space for farm animals below, kitchen and smoke area; the third floor is a work area that exits directly onto the hillside behind. The roofs are thatched. Bottom right: Museum staff dressed in period attire typical of married women. The pompoms on the hats may weigh up to 2 kilograms. Single women wear red pompoms.

fish-tailed *Fraulein*. The Mummelsee's souvenir shop was a large treasure house full of cuckoo clocks, mountain *kaffee*, dancing puppets, and Black Forest cakes.

But our spa town of Baden-Baden called us back. Our two dinners in the Atlantic Park Hotel comprised fine gourmet meals of trout and salmon and Black Forest beef.



Mummelein at the Mummelsee—with visitor.

Walking Baden-Baden. The next day we took a Baden-Baden walking tour with a charming guide in a red stewardess suit and matching red cap. During our long stroll along the Lichtentaler Allee, she mentioned her own favorite *kuchen* (cake) countless times: the delicious *Black Forest gateau* made with cherry liqueur. She also mentioned that the people of the Black Forest live the longest lives in all Germany! Later she spilled secrets about horse chestnuts (used for laundry) and showed us antique gas lamps still lit by hand. (*Ed: horse chestnuts are high in saponin, a natural detergent and foaming agent that effectively removes grease, dirt, and grime.*)

Standing in front of the stately white Kurhaus, we heard choice snippets of early imperial history. 1779–1826 was the era of Maria Louisa, a beautiful Baden-Baden



Fountain near the Lichtentaler Allee, a lovely walk in central Baden-Baden.

princess. In 1793, when she was 14 years old, she was married off to the Russian Emperor Alexander; became Elizabeth Alexeyevna—and brought Russian blood to her birthplace. Perhaps thanks to the town's proximity to France and Russian imperial influence, Baden-Baden grew into a cosmopolitan resort town in Germany's Black Forest.



Guide informing our group about the history of Baden-Baden and the Kurhaus behind.

We learned the social history of Baden-Baden in the 19th century, at the height of the city's foreign influence. The Prussian Queen Augusta often visited and frequented the thermal waters for her gout, rheumatism, paralysis, neuralgia, and skin disorders. The ducal government subsequently subsidized the resort's development, adding many facilities—luxury hotels, the casino, horse racing venues, and the gardens of the Lichtentaler Allee. Starting in 1838, a visionary French businessman, Edouard Bènazet (said to rival Queen Augusta's influence) refurbished the casino in the Kurhaus, constructed a new opera theater, and landscaped the Lichtentaler Gardens. Augusta may have been the Empress, but Bènazet was the "King of Baden-Baden." He enabled his town to become a sophisticated international gaming resort. The Bènazet family also donated two church towers and attracted the religious and cultural elite to frequent this Summer Capital of Europe.

In 1872, when gambling was banned in the German Empire, the city responded by returning to its centuries-old bathing tradition: erecting in 1877 the **Friedrichsbad Therme**, a monumental bathing temple built near the earlier spa quarter. Today this spa temple is replete with painted murals, a high roof, and columns along a grand hallway, as well as the sculptured bust of Friedrich, Grand Duke of Baden-Baden. During our tour stop inside the Friedrichsbad, our red-capped guide showed us a porcelain vessel from which one traditionally imbibed the thermal waters (and noted the waters are no longer potable). She reminded us of ancient times when wounded soldiers were sent here to heal amid the mineral waters. (Today, partakers in the thermal waters of the Friedrichsbad follow to the 19th century tradition of "mixed gender, textile-free" bathing. So, no togas allowed.)

After Friedrich's spa-temple, we walked to the old quarter, seeking the ruins of the original **Roman baths**. Along the way, we paused at a small balcony bearing the



The stately Trinkhalle (pump house) with Kaiser Wilhelm I's bust in front: once a healthy drink, the water it now pumps has to be treated before it is potable.

bust of Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky—who had been a compulsive gambler in the town's casino. We heard of the European artists who took part in the town's cultural fabric—writers such as Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Turgenev; composers such as Brahms, Liszt, and Schumann.

The museum for the ruins of the old Roman baths is under the Friedrichsbad spa, a traditional spa and one of Baden-Baden's 15 hot springs. The museum comprises a small humid space with a boardwalk over the ancient stones and a video explaining the technology used to harness the healing waters during the Roman age.

On the walk, Christine Wallich gushed: "I'm thoroughly impressed. I love this town—cause its people love their town, are proud of themselves, have respect for themselves and the lifestyle they've inherited and built upon. They're practical and wholesome."

Dining and Gaming. Later that evening, we donned our finest garments and enjoyed a splendid Gala Dinner in Baden-Baden's fine white Kurhaus. After the three-course gourmet dinner and annual salutations, properly attired participants drifted on to the Casino (which had a dress code)—and contributed to the resort's economy.

Luxuriating. Caracalla Spa is the sleek water temple for modern bathers in ordinary textile suits. I visited the neoclassic white building in my private time for a taste of Europe's best spa heritage. I luxuriated under Caracalla's awesome glass dome built over giant pools and faux-stone grottoes gushing with warm-temperature waters. Outside, I wallowed under cascading waterfalls and in bubbling jet pools teeming with fellow spa aficionados. After 2 hours, I emerged feeling warmly mineralized and thoroughly cleansed, washed of my civilized knots. After the Caracalla cleansing, I stopped for my last slice of delicious Black Forest *gateau* at the patisserie near the spa, before bidding a fond *adieu* to the healthful and elegant Baden-Baden. ■

Nusantra

Dimiyati Nangju (ADB 1978–2001)



Reasons For Moving the Capital. For more than 60 years, the Indonesian Government has been planning to move the current capital from Jakarta to another location. Jakarta was founded by a Dutch company in 1621. In the 1960s, the Government planned to move the capital to nearby

Bogor (South of Jakarta) or to another city outside Java. The late President Soekarno proposed that the new capital should be in Palangkaraya in Kalimantan Tengah (Central Kalimantan), but nothing had happened with this plan until the current President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo suddenly decided to move the capital on an urgent basis from Jakarta to a new site called Penajam Paser in East Kalimantan. President Jokowi proposed that the new capital should be called "Nusantara" which means archipelago or fatherland. Without much debate, in 2019 the Indonesian Parliament approved the Government's request to move.



Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo inspecting the site of the new capital.

Nusantara will be between North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartangera Districts in East Kalimantan, not far from Balikpapan (Figure 1). It is about 1,500 kilometers from Jakarta. It will be built in an area largely made up of forest interspersed with logging concessions, plantations, coal mines, and villages. Some environmental experts have raised serious concerns about the possible adverse impacts on the wildlife and forest land in the area unless the Government acts to minimize the impacts prior to or during the plan's implementation.



The Capitol Move from Jakarta to Nusantara in East Kalimantan.

The government cites four reasons for moving the capital to East Kalimantan:

- The very dense population in Java, where Jakarta is located. In 2015, Java held 56.7% of the country's population.
- High population concentration and rapid urbanization in Jakarta. In 2013, Jakarta was the world's 10th most densely populated city, and it became 9th in 2017. Jakarta's population is estimated at 10.56 million; its metro area population is estimated at 33.9 million.
- Critical shortage of clean water for Jakarta: Drinking water in Jakarta and Java has deteriorated due to pollution in rivers and lakes and dwindling resources of high-quality groundwater and surface water.
- Increased threats of calamities: Several risks are increasing—flooding (Jakarta is flat and sinking); earthquakes; volcanic eruptions (Jakarta is near two active volcanoes—K Krakatau and Gunung Gede); and seawater intrusion (from rising sea levels due to climate change).

The Capital Development Project. The plan and development process for Nusantara has set off heated debates among policy makers and the general public but the Jokowi administration has resolutely proceeded. Nusantara is envisioned to be a “forest-smart city.” It will cover about 324,000 hectares (ha) divided into several sections: a development area of 199,000 ha (61%); capital city Nusantara area of 56,180 ha (17%); Central Government Core Area of 6,671 ha (2%); and other strategic physical infrastructure (20%).

The mega project will take at least 15 years to develop. The first phase (2020–2024) focuses on the initial relocation, such as constructing the Presidential Palace, the People's Consultative Assembly, Parliament Buildings, basic infrastructure, and civil service housing. The next phase (2025–2035) will focus on developing core areas such as innovation and economic centers, priority economic sectors, and complete transfer of government to the new city. To implement the project, the Government has established



Proposed new presidential palace in Nusantara.

Nusantara Capital City Authority chaired by former ADB Vice-President and current AFE member Bambang Susantono. He is a transport engineer and economist with considerable experience in the Ministry of Transportation under the former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The city is planned as a superhub consisting of eight large clusters—six economic clusters (clean technology, integrated pharmaceutical, sustainable agricultural industry, ecotourism and health, chemical and derivative products, and low-carbon energy) and two supporting clusters (education cluster and smart city and industrial).



Proposed city center of Nusantara.

Total Cost and Financial Plan. In 2019, the National Development Planning and Development Agency (Bappenas) estimated that the total cost for establishing Nusantara would be about Rp486 trillion (\$32.6 billion). The project could increase the gross regional domestic product by 0.1% and create thousands of new jobs and growth in the construction sector, especially infrastructure.

The Government plans to provide Rp93.5 trillion (19.2% of the total), with the rest to be financed by *Kerjasama Pemerintah dengan Badan Usaha* (KPBU) or Government and Private Entity Cooperative Venture (Rp 265.2 trillion or 54.6%) and private companies (Rp127.3 trillion or 25.2% of the total).

Major Constraints. Although the megaproject was approved in 2019, its implementation only started in early 2022 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government has to hasten the project’s implementation to achieve its target to move the key legislative and executive agencies to Nusantara in early 2024, before the end of the Jokowi administration in December 2024.

Another constraint was the sudden withdrawal of the Japanese SoftBank Group in 2022. Leaving a \$30 billion hole to fill. The Government has appealed to several countries but had no response due to COVID’s impacts, wars, a world-wide economic slowdown, and high inflation rates. In 2023, the Nusantara Capital City Authority noted huge interest in the project, adding that the 921 ha of land available for initial investment had been oversubscribed by 44 times. But businesses have said that they are unlikely to invest money until a new government has been formed after the 2024 election. Consequently, several analysts have expressed skepticism that Jokowi’s goal of making Nusantara the country’s capital in the first half of 2024 would succeed.

In the meantime, as plans to build Nusantara take shape, the once sleepy settlement of Surkaraja is being rapidly transformed. Village head Rizki Maulana Perwira Atmadja said land prices near the new presidential palace had quadrupled. Some farmers had “suddenly bought a new car.” after selling parts of their palm or rubber plantations. His own business, a guest house and café in front of palm trees, has also thrived with an influx of workers, and several homes had been turned into shops (*Jakarta Post*, 16 March 2023). Four years after the President announced plans for Nusantara, construction is picking up.



Completed toll road to Nusantara.

However, some fear the transformation. Yati Dahlia, 32, of the area’s indigenous Balik tribe, has been trying to purchase land somewhere nearby, knowing her current home is where government buildings are due to be built. But she said prices had soared to 10 times the Government compensation for her land and a blue plywood shack where she now sells food. “We feel like

the government is killing us slowly,” said Yati. She and other members of the tribe are appealing for more compensation, but many Balik people do not have proper documents for their land, which reduces their leverage during negotiations with the government.

Lessons Learned from Other Countries. Several countries that have moved their capitals, with varying degrees of success. These include Brazil (from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia), Kazakhstan (several times from Astana to Akmolinsk, to Tselinograd, to Aqmola, and finally to Nur Sultan), Ivory Coast (from Abidjan to Yamoussoukro), Myanmar (from Yangon to Nay Pyi Daw), and Malaysia (from Kuala Lumpur to Putra Jaya).

Of these five examples, Malaysia is probably the most successful. Its government created, with adequate planning and funding, a new modern capital not far from its former capital, Kuala Lumpur. In contrast, the government in Myanmar has completely failed to make Nay Pyi Daw a success: it constructed wide streets but failed to attract business and commercial activity. As a result, the city is almost a ghost town.

On 21 March 1983, the first postcolonial president of the Ivory Coast, Felix Houphout-Boigny, issued a decree to move the capital of the country from Abidjan, in the coastal area in the south of the country to the village of his birth, N’Gokro, which is strategically at a crossroads in the center of the country. Four decades on, the former agricultural village has become a big city of 300,000 people but with few national institutions, as only the Senate and the national chamber of traditional chiefs and kings have been transferred while most other national institutions have remained in Abidjan. The construction of the National Assembly, Presidential Palace, and other buildings has been abandoned due to lack of financial resources. The country cannot obtain loans for the project from international markets. Fortunately, the city is already a tourism magnet due to its stately canals filled with alligators, modern stylish buildings, and the imposing Our Lady of Peace Basilica, which at 158 meters high, is one of the tallest religious structures in the world.

The major lessons learned from the past capital relocations are:

- Formulate well-planned policies and strategies together with all the stakeholders prior to the relocation.
- Ensure adequate financing is available to complete the mega project in a timely manner.
- Encourage the private sector to invest in the new capital to ensure that adequate education, housing, health, commercial, and entertainment facilities are available so that government workers and the general public are willing to move to the new capital.

For Indonesia to successfully establish Nusantara, Deni Eriawan from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies suggested that the Government should formulate well-planned policies and strategies that encourage the creation of agglomeration economies during the early stages of its development. “Agglomeration economies” refers to the concentration of economic activities in a specific geographic location to encourage economic growth, improve residents’ quality of life, and enhance the overall success of the new capital city. To accelerate the formation of agglomeration economies, the government should:

- develop physical and social infrastructure (e.g., transport networks, housing, and education and healthcare facilities) crucial for attracting and retaining investments, businesses, and industries;
- provide ample incentives, such as tax incentives and long periods of land tenure, to attract well-established firms in the key sectors, functioning as anchors and catalysts for forming clusters of interrelated industries;
- create a transparent, efficient, and effective governance structure, legal and regulatory framework, and strong institutions that are favorable for business and economic growth;
- support research and development activities and provide funding to promote collaboration and innovation leading to knowledge spill-over among firms and workers and the development of new technologies and business models; and
- encourage entrepreneurship by creating a favorable business environment and providing tax incentives, access to capital, and support services that promote the growth of small and medium enterprises and create a strong and diverse economy.

Recent Developments. In March 2023, the Government of Indonesia took some steps to achieve agglomeration economies. To attract investment, government concessions included corporate income tax exemptions, decade-long permits for bringing in foreign workers, and land rights nearly a century long. Such generous stipulations are urgently needed to overcome the private sector’s lack of interest in the mega project.

Other Government initiatives include:

- obtaining agreements with several Chinese private companies to invest in Nusantara;
- forming a consortium of local investors to construct housing, hotels, shopping malls, groceries, hospitals, and education facilities (for an investment of Rp20 trillion [\$1.3 billion]);

- amending the new capital law to include a guarantee that the construction of the new capital city would continue as planned until 2045 regardless of changes in administration; and
- breaking ground for the first private investment in Nusantara Capital City on 21 September 2023.

The main obstacle will be how to transport thousands of public servants and their families to Nusantara from Jakarta, some 1,500 km away, so that they can begin to administer Indonesia from the new capital. The logistics will be enormous. In addition, whether they will eventually settle down in Nusantara remains a big question, until adequate and high quality education, health, public transport, shopping, and other essential facilities are available. It is hoped that Dr. Bambang Susantono, the Chairman of Authority, and other government agencies will be able to address these challenges successfully together.

Jakarta, 26 September 2023

Ed: reduced by about 1/3rd, from 2,943 words to 1,987. ■

Shearing Time

David Parker (ADB 1980–2004)



During lockdown at home in Manila, I wrote a poem about shearing time in a woolshed (or shearing shed). The poem is a reminiscence from my childhood, quite unlike that famous Australian song “Click Go the Shears.” As country kids on a rural property in Australia, my brother and I frequently wandered across from our family’s cottage to the nearby woolshed, sheep yard, cow yard, or hayshed, either to play or to watch any work being done there. We enjoyed going inside the woolshed at shearing time in spring, when the shearing team was hard at work. The shearers, with their backs bent over the sheep, were skillfully cutting off the fleeces of wool. They held a handpiece consisting of a comb and fast-moving cutters powered by an engine in the grey wooden engine room beside the woolshed. The busy work of the shearers, together with the other related jobs, made shearing time exciting to watch, especially for two young boys.

The stately woolshed.



Shearing Time

In a lush green paddock with rolling hills,
A stately woolshed stands sublime.
And the sheep yard next to the shed is full.
The sheep are there. It's shearing time!

The big woolshed suddenly springs to life.
The engine driving all those shears
Is producing now an enormous sound.
You cannot help but hold your ears!

It is great to watch all the action there:
The shearers at their shearing stands
As they shear the sheep at a rapid pace
With quickly moving arms and hands.

And each sheep once shorn, looking white and thin,
Slides down a chute, and out again!
But the shearers sadly cannot yet stop.
They long to rest, those busy men!

As a fleece is cut, a young handler runs
To fetch it near the shearer's feet.
And upon the wool table he spreads it out,
All "outside up," so nice and neat!

Then the 'classer picks out the dirty bits,
Decides what class the fleece is in
(For example, medium, coarse or fine),
And puts it in its proper bin.

One should also watch how the wool press works.
As from those bins of sorted wool,
It is filled right up and then presses down
Until the bale below is full.

The full bales of wool are all moved away
And stacked upon the trucks outside,
Which will take them off to the town for sale:
The farmer's joy, his work, and pride!

Those were things my brother and I both watched
When we were little country boys.
We would sometimes be in the shed by 10
Amid the bustle and the noise.

And a little later, at smoko time,
We watched the shearers take a break
For a well-earned rest and their morning tea,
With scones plus jam and cream, and cake!

When the shearers asked if we'd like to join,
We grabbed some scones with jam and cream,
And with smiling faces, we had some cake,
We loved to join that shearing team!

They were soon all gone. Then in three more weeks
We saw the sheep with little lambs
In the grassy paddocks or under trees,
Or resting near the creeks and dams. ■

New Members

AFE–ADB extends a warm welcome to the following new members of the Association (country of residence is indicated in parentheses):

July 2023

Cruz, Maria Celina (Philippines)
De Jesus, Anne Marie (Philippines)
Lavasa, Ashok (India)
Rose, Timothy (Thailand)
Van Rijn, Hans (Portugal)
Verma, Ritu (Canada)

August 2023

Gunatilake, Herath (Sri Lanka)
Orendain, Maria Cynthia (Philippines)
Penjor, Sangay (India)
Ramiro, Cecile (Philippines)
Saeed, Ahmed (United States)
Tilakaratne, Kokmaduwa (Sri Lanka)
Uy, Dennis Joseph (Philippines)
Zafra, Zarah (Philippines)

September 2023

Alejandro, Angelica (Philippines)
Liboon, Marie Michele (Philippines)
McGrory, Brian (United Kingdom)
Valmores, Elizabeth (Philippines)

October 2023

Gutierrez, Ronald (United States)
Hidalgo, Ma. Kristina (Philippines)
Phanvongsa, Phoneviva (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Shah, Syed Ali – Mumtaz (Philippines)
Tenefrancia, Vicente III (Philippines)
Vongthevanh, Sirisopha (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

November 2023

Aban, Julio (United States)
Burrel, Alix (Philippines)
Hiraoka, Rie (Philippines)
Lacanlale, Orlando (Canada)
Parkash, Manmohan (India)
Villareal, Maria Theresa (Philippines)

December 2023

Asistin, Flordeliza (Philippines)
Khamudkhanov, Mukhtor (Uzbekistan)
Xu, Yi (People's Republic of China)
Yokoyama, Kenichi (Japan)

January 2024

Arico, Ruby Socorro (Canada)
Baguisa, Maria Nieva (Philippines)
Fernandez, Harry (Philippines)
Gupta, Ishita (India)
Hossain, Javed (Australia)
Ito, Yukiko (Japan)
Kho, M. Teresa (United States)
Kotamraju, Ana (United States)
Manlulu, Lilia (Philippines)
Martinez, Cynthia (Philippines)
Sinsiri, Newin (Thailand)
Windisch, Eleonora (Austria)

Senior Appointments at ADB

As noted in AFE News #63, the reorganization has resulted in a lot of staff movement (physically as well as in terms of organizational position). Further, many of the abbreviations have changed. Abbreviations repeated below are BPMSD = Budget, People, and Management Systems Department; CTL = Controller's Department; CWRD = Central and West Asia Department; EARD = East Asia Department; ERDI = Economic Research and Development Impact Department; IED = Independent Evaluations Department; ITD = Information Technology Department; OAI = Office of Anticorruption and Integrity; OMDP = Office of Markets Development and Public–Private Partnership; OPR = Office of the President; PARD = Pacific Department; PPMFD = Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department; PSOD = Private Sector Operations Department; SARD = South Asia Department; SEC = Office of the Secretary; SERD = Southeast Asia Department; SG = Sectors Group; SPD = Strategy and Policy Department; TD = Treasury Department.

Mio Oka—Country Director, India Resident Mission, SARD, assumed office 5 February 2024.

Valerie Lisack—Advisor, BPMSD and Head, Strategic Workforce Unit, BPMSD, effective 22 February 2024.

Ruth Farrant—Director, Public Financial Management Division 2, Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department (PPFD), effective on assumption of office.

Tobias Hoschka—Senior Advisor, Office of the Treasurer, concurrently Assistant Treasurer, Financial Policy and Planning Division, Treasury Department (TD), effective 12 December 2023.

Samuel Tumiwa—Representative, North American Representative Office, Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department (SPD), assumed office 11 December 2023.

Bouadokpheng Chansavat—Regional Head, Operations Coordination, Operations Coordination Unit, South Asia Department (SARD), effective on assumption of office.

Paul Curry—Director, Culture and Talent Division, Budget, People, and Management Systems Department (BPMSD), effective 15 December 2023.

Takeo Konishi—Director General, SARD, assumed office 11 December 2023.

Kenichi Yokoyama—Special Senior Advisor to the President, Office of the President (OPR) assumed office 11 December 2023.

Asel Djusupbekova—The Secretary, Office of The Secretary (SEC), assumed office on 8 December 2023.

Muhammad Ehsan Khan—Director General, East Asia Department (EARD), assumed office 8 December 2023.

M. Teresa Kho—Special Senior Advisor to the President, OPR, assumed office 8 December 2023.

Niny Khor—Director, HR Business Partners Division, BPMSD, effective 8 December 2023, concurrently Advisor and Head, Strategic Workforce Unit BPMSD.

Samantha Foley—Assistant Controller, Trust Fund and Administrative Expense Division, Controller’s Department (CTL), assumed office 13 November 2023.

Mayank Choudhary—Director, Infrastructure Finance Division (PSIF) 1, Private Sector Operations Department (PSOD), effective 1 November 2023.

Daniel Wiedmer—Director, PSIF2, PSOD, effective 1 November 2023.

Mohammed Azim Hashimi—Director, Advisory Division 1, Office of Markets Development and Public-Private Partnership (OMDP), effective 2 October 2023.

Andrew Brubaker—Director-Designate, Thematic and Country Division, Independent Evaluation Department (IED), assumed office 25 September 2023.

Lesley Bearman Lahm—Country Director, Georgia Resident Mission, Central and West Asia Department (CWRD), assumed office 21 September 2023.

Jeanette Ozdes—Advisor (IT Governance and Data Management), Office of the Director General, Information Technology Department (ITD), effective 1 September 2023.

Lisa Kelaart-Courtney—Advisor, Office of Anticorruption and Integrity (OAI), effective 9 August 2023.

Shannon Cowlin—Country Director, Mongolia Resident Mission, EARD, assumed office 7 August 2023.

Jong Woo Kang—Director, Regional Cooperation and Integration Division, Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI), effective 7 August 2023.

Sofia Shakil—Director, Human and Social Development, Human and Social Development Sector Office (SG-HSD), Sectors Group (SG), assumed office 1 August 2023.

Don Lambert—Country Director, Armenia Resident Mission, CWRD, assumed office 31 July 2023.

Said Zaidansyah—Country Director, Papua New Guinea Resident Mission, Pacific Department (PARD), assumed office 1 August 2023.

Robert M. Schoellhammer—Advisor, Office of the Director General, SG, assumed office 31 July 2023.

Zheng Wu—Country Director, Kyrgyz Resident Mission, CWRD, assumed office 28 July 2023.

Ron Slangen—Deputy Country Director, Viet Nam Resident Mission, Southeast Asia Department (SERD), assumed office 27 July 2023.

David Hill—Advisor, Office of the Director General, PARD, effective 1 August 2023.

Shantanu Chakraborty—Country Director, Viet Nam Resident Mission, SERD, assumed office 24 July 2023.

Kanokpan Lao-Araya—Country Director, Uzbekistan Resident Mission, CWRD, assumed office 14 July 2023.

Karin Schelzig—Director, Human and Social Development Sector Office (SG-HSD), SG, assumed office 10 July 2023.

Obituaries

With deep regret and sorrow we announce the death of the following AFE members. Our heartfelt and sincere condolences to their families.

Rafaelita Nuñez, former Secretary, passed away on 5 January 2023 at the age of 79. Condolences may be sent to her sister Socorro Joven at nsjoven@gmail.com.

Tin Win, former Senior Treasury Officer, passed away on 19 August 2023 at the age of 90. Condolences may be sent to his daughter at ommarwinmd@gmail.com.

Ravi Nangia, spouse of Rita Nangia, passed away on 15 September 2023. Condolences may be sent to his wife Rita Nangia at rita.nangia@gmail.com.

Rolf Westling, former Senior Investment Officer, passed away on 17 September 2023 at the age of 78.

Condolences may be sent to his wife Mrs. Anna-Leena Westling at alwestling@yahoo.com.

Edgardo Rodriguez, former Principal Evaluation Specialist, passed away on 30 September 2023 at the age of 76. Condolences may be sent to his children, Yumi R. Belanga at Ybelanga@gmail.com and Dylan Rodriguez at dylanrodriguez73@gmail.com.

Paul Krukowski, former Country Manager, passed away on 8 October 2023 at the age of 79. Condolences may be sent to his son at nkrukowski@hotmail.com.

Peter King, former Advisor, passed away on 9 October 2023 at the age of 74. Condolences may be sent to his daughter Natasha King at a.natasha.king@gmail.com.

Eleanor M. Batistil, former Assistant Project Analyst, passed away on 21 October 2023 at the age of 74. Condolences may be sent to her spouse Orlando O. Batistil at bot5304@yahoo.com.

Meeja Hamm, former Principal Project Specialist, passed away on 24 October 2023 at the age of 73. Condolences may be sent to her daughter Hongjoo Jae at catherinehj27@gmail.com.

Horst Kaminsky, former Senior Evaluation Specialist, passed away on 4 November 2023 at the age of 86. Condolences may be sent to his wife Leonila Kaminsky at horstkaminsky@t-online.de.

H.S Soewartono, former Senior Project Officer, passed away on 13 October 2023 at the age of 67. Condolences may be sent to his wife Ardiyanie Soewartono at srihadiardyanie@gmail.com.

Renato Cunanan, former service as Clerk (Senior-Mails), passed away on 19 November 2023 at the age of 86. Condolences may be sent to his daughter Rachel Cunanan at 09954706646.

Peter Hunt, former Senior Project Implementation Officer, passed away on 29 November 2023 at the age of 82. Condolences may be sent to his daughter Elaine Hunt at elaineasjhunt@gmail.com.

Fernando Macadangdang, former Assistant (Shift-Mechanical), passed away on 23 December 2023 at the age of 88. Condolences may be sent to his daughter Eva Albarillo at marvi_lma@gmail.com.

Asako Nakao, wife of former ADB President Takehiko Nakao, passed away on 28 January 2024 in Tokyo at the age of 55. Condolences may be sent to adbjro@adb.org for forwarding to Mr. Nakao.

Kazi Jalal, former Chief, Office of Environment and Social Development, passed away on 8 February 2024 at the age of 83. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Syeda Khairun Nisa, E-1103, Prateek Stylome Apartments, Sector 45, Gautam Buddha Nagar, NOIDA, U.P. 201301, India; Ms. Jashed Kazi at jamshed.kazi@unwomen.org; Mrs. Saima Kazi Louis at saimalouis2019@gmail.com; and/or Mr. Kazi Ahmed at kazimoto@gmail.com.

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- (2) Articles that are accepted will be edited for language, content, and length that the Publications Committee deems appropriate for the readership. Articles will preferably be 250–1,000 words. Articles for publication should be sent in MS Word as e-mail attachments to afe-adb@adb.org.
- (3) Images must be of print quality (minimum 280kb file size or 600 dpi). Please send each image in a separate file.
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Articles for publication should be sent in MS Word as e-mail attachments to afe-adb@adb.org.

Comments that will help improve *AFE-ADB News* are most welcome.

Acknowledgements

Josephine C. Jacinto, AFE-ADB's able former assistant, and Angelika Trisha J. Aquino, provided invaluable help, including typesetting and layout. Beth Cabuay, Guia Estabillo, David Parker, and Jill de Villa edited and proofread. AFE sincerely appreciates ADB's Department of Communications and Knowledge Management and the Printing Unit for assistance with finalizing the magazine.

Announcements

ADB's Annual Meetings

2024 Annual Meeting of the ADB Board of Governors

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will hold its **57th Annual Meeting** of the Board of Governors in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 2–5 May 2024.

Chapter Events

The Korea Chapter holds a get-together lunch on the 2nd Thursday of every month and an annual meeting and year-end party early in December.

The Canada Chapter's Vancouver Island group will get together during the 2nd quarter and the Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver groups will hold get-togethers during the 4th quarter. Contact Bruce Murray at bmurray.xadb@gmail.com for information.

The New York/New Jersey Chapter plans to have a summer get together either in NY or NJ in July 2024 and another reunion, likely a dinner dance, at the end of September. Contact Juliet Capati at jpcapati@hotmail.com for information.

The Indonesia Chapter plans to hold a Sightseeing Tour in August/September 2024 and End-of-Year Lunch Party in November 2024, hosted by Chapter Coordinator Dimyati Nangju. Contact him at dimyannangju@yahoo.com for details.

The Europe Chapter reunion will be in the Netherlands on September 19–23. Participants will be based in The Hague, and will in addition visit charming Delft, Europe's largest port in Rotterdam and Haarlem. The reunion will include the annual business meeting, gala dinner, and tours. For information contact Alessandro Pio at pio.alessandro@gmail.com.

The USA–Southern California Chapter will hold a 2024 Get-Together Party in October 2024. For details contact Yola Adona at ycvilla57@gmail.com.

The Australia Chapter expects to hold its Annual Reunion in the regional city of Toowoomba, Queensland during the 3rd week of October. Contact Keith Leonard at keith.leonard@gmail.com for more information.

The India Chapter's 29th Annual Meeting will be held at Aurangabad, Maharashtra, on 16 November 2024. A Reunion Tour is also being organized on 15–20 November 2024, including the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Ajanta and Ellora and the pilgrim center of Shirdi. Contact Shilo Chatterjee at shilochatterjee@gmail.com for details.

The Philippine Chapter will hold its annual get-together on 21 November 2024 at the Valle Verde Country Club. Contact Gam de Armas at gamdearmas@yahoo.com.

The Sri Lanka Chapter will have a dinner meeting during 2024. Contact Lakshman Athukorala at slathukorala@gmail.com for information.

The Japan Chapter is considering holding a gathering, together with other retirees in Japan, later in 2024. Contact Kazu Sakai at kazusakai.tokyo@gmail.com for information.

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Please send, by June 2024, articles, photos, updates, or comments for publication in our next newsletter. For guidance, please refer to the inside back cover of this newsletter.

Annual Association Dues

Members who have not yet settled their annual dues are requested to do so.

Keep Your Address Updated with AFE–ADB

Please keep us informed about any change in your address, telephone numbers, and e-mail address. We don't want to lose touch with you. Also, if you know of any member whose address and other contact details are not listed in the directory, or are incomplete or wrong, please inform us.

AFE–ADB

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