

Why wasn't the
philippines better
prepa



Jerry Yakking, Tactical's vice mayor, told Reuters that "some people just did not believe us because it was so sunny. Some were even laughing." Many local men reportedly stayed in their homes to protect their belongings from looters. "People were warned about the storm surge," said Toby Monsoon, an economic CSS professor at the University of the Philippines in Manila. "Though, many probably thought that it would be one meter high, not five.

This storm was off the scales," she told NBC News.

Many are now blaming not just the reportedly 175 MPH winds, but the flimsy construction of homes and buildings in the Philippines - and the years of government corruption which prevented the building of anything better. Built Marquee / AP A resident walks inside a damaged home in Tactical on Nov. 10. Shacks instead of reinforced concrete Antonio Lilies is a residential home builder in Manila who has spent the past week like most Filipinos - glued to his cellophane, accounting for family members and making sure friends and employees are safe.

He's also watched every video clip he could find on TV and YouTube of Super Typhoon Hanna, one of the most devastating storms ever to hit land. Lilies says he was shocked to see Alfredo Remodeled, the mayor of Tactical - the wordsmith city within the disaster zone - telling the BBC that he and his family decided to ride out the storm in their second level beach house. "What really angers me is that, if the mayor didn't think seriously about evacuating Tactical himself, I assume he didn't ask his [220,000] people to evacuate either and seek higher ground," Lilies said.

He noticed the rolling hills in the background of many of the apocalyptic images.

“ Why didn't people, especially car owners, drive up the slopes or away from the coast? It must mean they didn't know about the 1 foot tsunami heading their way, or just didn't care. ” Even Monsoon admitted that lessons need to be learned if the Philippines is to avoid -? or at least limit - such devastating loss during future typhoons. “ Historically, Filipinos so adapt to the climate,” she said. They get through the storms and rebuild faithfully. BUT this is not sustainable in the long run. ” Recalling the eerie images of a few reinforced concrete structures jutting out from a morass of twisted metal and smashed plywood, she said: “ We need to invest in technological solutions like low-cost housing with disaster-resistant materials.

We've seen this in places like Guam. ” Courtesy of Roberto Lilies Architect
Roberto Lilies, right, talks with the foreman at a construction site in Valley Verdi, a suburb of Manila.

Roberto Lilies, Notation's older brother and a successful architect, agrees that much of the wreckage from dozens of typhoons that strike each year could be greatly reduced if low-cost, disaster-resistant housing replaced the traditional flimsy wood and tinwork. “ There is disaster-resistant housing that can resist the storms. But most people in those coastal areas are so poor, they still can't afford them,” he explained. But if private builders like the Lilies brothers find low-cost housing schemes profitable, why doesn't the Philippine government subsidize them? In a word: corruption.

History of government corruption President Benigno Aquino III, known as "Annoy," the scion of a non-political family, some compare to the Clinton or Bush dynasties, was elected in 2010, above all, to eradicate the endemic corruption that drains some \$50 billion a year from state coffers. He was seen as the only man for the job: his father, Senator Benigno Aquino Jr., was assassinated in a plot by alleged loyalists of dictator Ferdinand Marcos; his mother, Corason Aquino, led the "People Power" revolt that toppled Marcos and became both the nation's first female president and a living symbol of democracy.

But Annoy Aquino now finds himself implicated in his own "pork barrel" scam. While there's still no smoking gun, Aquino has been accused by association of using more than \$500 million in public funds - including money meant for local infrastructure, like roads and bridges, in the very areas that took the brunt of Hanna - to buy off key senators' loyalty.

Last week there were nationally televised hearings on the scandal just as the storm was barreling toward the Philippines. Aquino has strongly denied the accusations, but his approval rating has plummeted.

And critics say the scandal has left him too distracted and on the defensive to deal with the nation's perennial problems - poor urban planning, an exploding population, climate change and systemic poverty - all contributing factors to the death and destruction inflicted in the super typhoon's wake. For his part, Aquino stands by his record, telling CNN earlier this week that Hanna's death toll could have been much higher without his government's

evacuation of more than 750,000 people. "But, of course, nobody imagined the magnitude that this super typhoon brought on us," he said.

But it must be said that the roots of the Philippines' losing battle against infomousey bad weather long predates this Aquinas administration. Amelia Marco's, the larger headline former first lady who is notorious for her elaborate shoe collection, hails from Elite proving, ground zero for the storm surge. But during some 20 years of the Marco's regime, while Elite was blessed with a massive shrine (where Mrs.

Marco's kept her shoes) and a big pink church, no one built lowest housing or paved roads for the people. Unnecessary disaster?