

15 October 2022, Saturday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

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THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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**WORLD WITHOUT WASTES** – Coca-Cola Public Affairs, Communications, and Sustainability Director Cashmer Dirampaten, President, Coca-Cola Foundation Maria Cecilia Alcantara, Coca-Cola Public Affairs and Communication Director Jonah de Lumen Pernia, Executive Director Indorama Ventures Sanjay Ahuja, President and CEO Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines Inc. Gareth McGeown, Sen. Cynthia A. Villar, DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, and Coca-Cola Corporate and Regulatory Affairs Director Juan Lorenzo Tañada join Coca-Cola Philippines on Friday, Oct. 14, 2022, as the company shares with stakeholders and media the four-year progress of its world without wastes goal, the company's global sustainable packaging initiative to support circular economy to eliminate waste through the continual use of packaging as valuable resource. Villar commended Coca-Cola for their initiatives. (Office of Sen. Cynthia Villar)



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## COCA-COLA PH RAMPS UP OUTPUT OF RECYCLING FACILITY

By Alden M. Monzon  
@AldenMonzonINQ

The Philippine unit of beverage giant The Coca-Cola Company said on Friday that its first polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic bottle recycling facility in the country has begun operating at full capacity, a major transition to make

their business in the country more sustainable and environment-friendly.

Coca Cola Beverages Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) said their recycling plant, dubbed PET-Value, in General Trias, Cavite, has gone full-throttle as of last month, and will be able to process approximately two billion pieces of used clear PET plas-

tic bottles per year.

"We aim to develop a circular economy, to eliminate waste through the continual use of these as valuable resources. This is our way of tackling the packaging waste problem here in the Philippines and all over the world," said Tony del Rosario, CCBPI president and vice president for the east

A11

## COCA-COLA PH RAMPS UP OUTPUT OF PLASTIC BOTTLE RECYCLING FACILITY

**FROM A12** franchise operations of Coca-Cola Asean and South Pacific.

"As a beverage company, we recognize that we have a responsibility to help accelerate collective action to promote the circularity of packaging materials," he added.

The P2-billion recycling facility was established in partnership with Bangkok-based Indorama Ventures, and has been granted pioneer status by the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Board of Investments last year, making it eligible for tax incentives.

Del Rosario said the company aims to make 100 percent of their packaging recyclable by 2025, and to be using at least 50 percent recycled material in

their packaging by 2030.

He also announced that beginning next year, the Coca-Cola original taste and the Wilkins Pure bottled water brand will begin using 100 percent recycled PET plastic packaging, excluding the cap and the labels.

Back in 2019, CCBPI began using 100 percent recycled PET plastics for its Viva! water bottle product, as well as shifted its Sprite 500 milliliter bottle to 100 percent recycled PET plastic.

Today, CCBPI uses returnable glass bottles for about 50 percent of its product lineup in the Philippines.

The Coca-Cola executive said they have established over 800 collection hubs for used packaging, which will promote segregation and collection of used PET bottles for recycling. INQ



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## DENR underscores livability in cities

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sees the need to improve the livability of cities in Southeast Asia to effectively help their residents adapt to the impact of climate change.

This was underscored by Environment Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs Jonas Leones in his keynote address on behalf of Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga before the research and development (R&D) specialists from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its development partners who gathered in Manila for a three-day conference on urban parks and green cities.

More than a hundred R&D specialists from Malaysia, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, India and the Philippines took part in the three-day conference.

Leones urged the participants to work quickly and smartly in creating more partnerships on formulating science-based policies and implementing strategic work on the ground.

He also urged them to not merely conduct and release research results in a timely manner, but also communicate the scientific information generated more effectively to our target stakeholders.

DENR Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Foreign Assisted and Special Projects Marcial Amaro emphasized the overarching goal to make cities green, livable and sustainable.

"Urban parks and green cities are integral to the health of people to build a sustainable future for all," Amaro said.

"Strategies must focus on rethinking

the development of cities, its parks and their contribution to the protection of ecosystems, infrastructure, economy and communities," he added.

Significant topics related to urban and green cities were presented by two plenary speakers, Dr. Simplicia Pasicolan, former DENR-Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau chief science research specialist; and Dr. Gem Castillo from the Resource and Environmental Economics Foundation of the Philippines Inc.

Also present were the two other plenary speakers, Prof. Yun Hye Hwang of the National University of Singapore; and Dr. Zulkiflee Abd Latif of the University Teknologi MARA in Malaysia. The two presented their papers on the management and impact of urban parks and urban governance, and policies for greener cities, respectively.

The conference revolved on the three elements of green cities and parks, built environment or infrastructure, nature and citizens.

A total of 39 papers on green and resilient urban communities; urban biodiversity, ecosystem and economics; and management and impact of urban governance and policies for greener cities were presented during the conference.

An exhibit was held featuring 35 poster presentations that provided various strategies and measures toward attaining green cities for sustainable urban future.

The conference ended with a tour at selected urban parks in Metro Manila.

**BELLA CARIASO**



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## DPWH's Bonoan grilled on Manila Bay reclamation area ROW and flooding

BY BUTCH FERNANDEZ

SENATOR Cynthia Villar is questioning the jurisdiction of the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) over other government agencies upon learning that the PRA reportedly blocked the Department of Public Works and Highways' (DPWH) move to set up a field district in Manila Bay's reclaimed area.

The senator stepped in to clarify the situation, raising the issue during the Senate deliberation on the proposed P718.36-billion DPWH budget Thursday, wondering why the PRA, a government-owned and -controlled corporation (GOCC) attached to the Office of the President, had refused the construction of a DPWH Field District Office in Las Piñas, Villar's bailiwick.

In turn, DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan

sought to clarify that the department has an obligation to pay P4 billion right-of-way (ROW) to PRA and promised to settle the amount next year.

Villar noted the Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland, on the other hand, is a legislated protected area and its maintenance should be done by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"You have to give me a briefer to file a resolution investigating the PRA for what they are doing to us here in Las Piñas," Villar said.

At the same hearing on the DPWH budget, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr., chairperson of the Committee on Public Works,

asked DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan if the department has a task force to look into the flooding problems of provinces, cities and municipalities nationwide.

"Please look into this, especially those places that experience floods. We should know the cause of flooding," said Revilla, adding, "You should also consider the dredging of river to widen the water lanes."

Revilla noted during the Finance Subcommittee A's deliberation of the P718.36 billion 2023 proposed DPWH budget has been provided for "ongoing projects and programs to address the perennial flooding in the country."



### **Reclamation projects sa Manila Bay, binubusisi ng DENR**

Iniimbestigahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang planong reclamation projects sa Manila Bay.

Ito, ayon sa DENR ay bilang reaksiyon sa pahayag ni Sen. Cynthia Villar hinggil sa pagkakaloob ng DENR Environmental Compliance Certificate sa reclamation project sa bahagi ng Manila Bay.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia "Toni" Yulo-Loyzaga, pinag-aaralan na ng ahensiya ang 21 reclamation projects sa Manila Bay upang matiyak na akma ang naipairal na reclamation policy sa lugar.

Umaasa si Loyzaga na magiging maayos ang proyekto oras na mapasimulan na ito ng gobyerno.

Una nang sinabi ni Villar na hindi dapat ituloy ang pagtatambak ng lupa sa bahagi ng Manila Bay na sakop ng Las Piñas dahil magdudulot ito ng pagbaha. (Angie dela Cruz)



## CHR favors Bulacan mining ban

BY CHERK BALAGTAS  
*@tribunephil\_cherk*

The Commission on Human Rights is backing the continued suspension of mining, quarrying, and other types of extractive operations in the province of Bulacan.

The agency said that that it lauds the resolve of the provincial government of Bulacan led by Governor Daniel Fernando and the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office to tackle illegal mining and quarrying in their province.

To recall, Fernando issued the ban on 16 August 2022 in response to the discovery of illegal mining and quarrying activities in Bulacan.

This demonstrates that they give due primacy to the safety and welfare of the people and the long-term state of the environment.

"Protecting the environment, which supports the enjoyment of many basic rights, also ensures the welfare and dignity of the community that inhabits it. On the contrary, the degradation of our environment leads to many issues, including loss of human lives, conflict over resources, food insecurity, public health crises, among others," the CHR said.





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## CHR backs Bulacan mining ban

By **CZARINA ONG KI**

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has expressed its support for the continued suspension of mining,

quarrying, and other extractive operations in Bulacan since it will help ensure the safety of affected communities.

It said Bulacan Gov. Daniel Fernando issued the ban last

Aug. 16 after illegal mining and quarrying activities were discovered in the province.

**(Turn to Page 3)**

### CHR ...

(From Page 2)

It pointed out that the ban was also important especially after the onslaught of Super Typhoon Karding last September which left five rescuers dead due to flash floods.

"This devastating incident underscores the tragic consequence of environmental abuse notwithstanding the damages it can bring to the livelihood, shelter, and general well-being of affected families and communities," the CHR said in a statement.

With the ban, the CHR said that the province of Bulacan is upholding the right to a

healthy environment and gives primacy to the safety and welfare of the people.

"The Commission cites the resolve of the provincial government of Bulacan led by Gov. Fernando and the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) to tackle illegal mining and quarrying in their province," the CHR said.

"Considering the serious implications of mining to the environment compounded by the regular onslaught of typhoons in our country, we reiterate our reminder to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the interagency body cited in the Executive Order No. 79, s. 2012, to implement and operationalize the mining policies," it added.



### 9 arestado sa illegal quarry sa Bulacan

**MALOLOS CITY, Bulacan** - Naaresto ng pinagsanib na puwersa ng Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) at Marilao Police ang 9 na lalaki matapos maaktuhang illegal na nagku-quarry sa Sitio Batya, Brgy. Lambakin, Marilao, Bulacan nitong Miyerkules ng hapon.

Ayon kay Atty. Julius Victor Degala, hepe ng BENRO, ang mga nahuling suspek ay nag-quarry ng mamahaling volcanic rock na ginagamit sa landscaping.

Ayon naman kay PCol. Rely Arnedo, acting Bulacan Police director, naaktuhang naghuhukay ng volcanic tuff o escombros ang mga suspek sa nasabing lugar nang salakayin ng mga operatiba ng BENRO ang quarry site.

Ang escombros, ayon kay Degala ay isang uri ng mineral na ginagamit sa paggawa ng simbahan at kadalasan ay mabili ito sa mga negosyante ng landscaping.

Napag-alan pa na nagkakahalaga ng P150-600 kada isang bloke ng mineral.

Nakumpiska sa mga suspek ang dalawang palakol na pantistis sa escombros, 3 double na palakol, isang sledgehammer (maso), apat na pala at 100 sinsil (chisels).

Kakasuhan ng paglabag sa Section 103 ng RA 7942 (Philippine Mining Act) at Sec. 71-A o Provincial Ordinance Code ng lalawigan ng Bulacan na pansamantalang pagbabawal o pagsuspindi sa lahat ng illegal quarry sa Bulacan. (Omar Padilla)



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## PH dumps 2.7M tons of plastic waste into the sea

THE Philippines generates at least 2.7 million metric tons of plastic wastes, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said on Friday, underscoring the urgency to strongly enforce a law making firms responsible for the plastic packaging they produce.

In her speech during the launch

► PlasticA8

### ■ PLASTIC FROM A1

## PH dumps 2.7M tons of plastic waste

of the Coca-Cola World Without Wastes project, Yulo-Loyzaga said that 20 percent of the country's plastic wastes end up in the oceans.

"Our own DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) data shows that the country produces 7,000 metric tons of plastic wastes daily. Addressing this issue needs a comprehensive approach. There is therefore a need for strong policy direction and action toward effective implementation of EPR," Yulo-Loyzaga said. EPR is the "Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022" (Republic Act 11898).

Yulo-Loyzaga added that consultations are ongoing nationwide for the drafting of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the EPR Law.

"We are looking to finish the consultations by the end of this month and the drafting of all the inputs first week of November, and hopefully we will be able to submit something for the senators' review before the middle of November. We have 90 days to come up with the IRR," Yulo-Loyzaga said.

Sen. Cynthia Villar, who attended the event, said the EPR Law requires large enterprises to be responsible for the proper and effective recovery, recycling, or disposal of plastic wastes.

"The law is certainly a big step toward the right direction. It's not perfect, but we are starting to solve the problem," Villar said.

She noted that the Philippines is the world's third-biggest producer of plastic wastes.

"It is about time we turn this ethical responsibility into a legal one with the EPR Law. The law expects citizens to segregate wastes. Larger enterprises should be able to recover or recycle at least 20 percent of all packaging wastes at the end of 2023. This target rises to 40 percent in the second year,

50 percent in the third year and 80 percent by 2028," Villar said.

The senator lauded Coca-Cola's target to recover 100 percent of its plastic wastes by 2030.

"Coca-Cola said they hope to recycle all their wastes by 2030. You are in sync with the Extended Producer Responsibility Law. It is my hope to fast-track the implementation of the law and go beyond the compliance target," Villar said.

RA 11898, which lapsed into law on July 30, also amended RA 9003 or the "Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000."

Under the new law, companies must establish EPR programs for plastic waste reduction, recovery and diversion.

Through EPR, "obliged enterprises," or through their Producer Responsibility Organizations, must recover or reduce their generated plastic product footprint by 20 percent in 2023 to 80 percent by 2028.

Among the plastic packaging covered by the EPR Law are single or multi-layered plastics such as sachets, rigid plastic packaging products like food and drink containers, single-use plastic bags, and polystyrene.

Penalties range from P5 million to P20 million, or "twice the cost of recovery and diversion of the footprint or its shortfall, whichever is higher."

The law also reconstituted the composition of the National Solid Waste Management Commission and enhanced the functions and duties and changing of the guards of the National Ecology Center.

The law also provides for the expansion and simplification of fiscal incentive schemes to encourage stakeholder involvement both for solid waste management and EPR activities.

The Pollution Adjudication Board hears cases relating to EPR obligations under RA 11898.

BELLA CARIASO



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**CONTROVERSIAL PROJECT** Security guard Gerson Marcelo conducts his regular roving at one of the tunnels of the Laiban Dam in Sitio Manggahan, Barangay Laiban in Tanay, Rizal on Thursday, Oct. 13, 2022. The Laiban Dam is part of the New Centennial Water Source (NCWS) project. Another dam that is part of the NCWS project is the Kaliwa Dam, whose construction suffered a blow after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources put on hold the issuance of an environment compliance certificate for the infrastructure in Quezon province, citing issues related to lands of Indigenous Peoples. PHOTO BY MIKE DE JUAN



## Green cities, urban parks to prevent climate change

By **CORY MARTINEZ**

**RESEARCH results on policies and strategic work to combat the adverse impact of climate change must not only be released on time but should also communicate the scientific information generated more effectively to target stakeholders.**

This was the appeal of Jonas Leones, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs, to the participants of the recently-held "R&D (Research & Development) Conference on Urban Parks and Green Cities: A Sustainable Future in Southeast Asia".

The conference, which was organized by the DENR's Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB), was attended by more than a hundred R&D specialists from Malaysia, Cambodia, Timor

Leste, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Singapore, Thailand, United Arab, India, and the Philippines.

Leones, who was tasked to deliver the keynote address on behalf of Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, also urged the participants to work quickly and smartly in creating more partnerships on formulating science-based policies and implementing strategic work on the ground.

The DENR highlighted the need to improve the livability in Southeast Asian cities to effectively help them adapt to the impact of climate change.

Meanwhile, Marcial Amaro, DENR assistant secretary for Policy, Planning, and Foreign Assisted and Special Projects, emphasized in his welcome remarks the overarching goal to make cities green, livable, and sustainable.

"Urban parks and green cities are integral to the health

of people to build a sustainable future for all," Amaro stressed.

"Strategies must focus on rethinking the development of cities, its parks, and their contribution to the protection of ecosystems, infrastructure, economy, and communities," he added.

The conference revolved around the three elements of green cities and parks—built environment or infrastructure, nature, and the citizens.

A total of 39 papers on Green and Resilient Urban Communities; Urban Biodiversity, Ecosystem, and Economics; Management and Impact of Urban Parks; and Urban Governance and Policies for Greener Cities were presented during the conference.

There was also an exhibit featuring 35 poster presentations that provided various strategies and measures toward attaining green cities for a sustainable urban future.



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# Marcos: PH to rely on science in addressing climate change

By BETHEENA V. UNITE

**R**ecognizing the role of science and technology in addressing the many problems faced by the country and its government, President Marcos said the Philippines must now rely on science to find solutions to its problems.

Speaking at the 8th annual Balik-Scientist Program Convention on Friday, Oct. 14, Marcos said the pandemic has proven that "it is science that will provide for us the answers to the future."

He said the pandemic also prompted leaders to now listen to what scientists say about long-standing global concerns like climate change.

"We have been confronted by a pandemic that again look to science for solutions, for vaccines for protocols, for strategies, for technologies that would help us out of that particular problem," he said.

"I think we have come to learn better and better. We have learned the lesson better and better, that we must look to science, we must look to raw data, we must look to actual results, we must look to the scientific method

for the answers that we are searching for," he added.

Marcos stressed that climate change "is now the primordial problem, of not only the Philippines but of the entire world."

"And again, it has been something that scientists have been warning us about for decades, except we chose not to listen," he said. "We are listening now, and that's why we look again on this very important aspect because climate change, as you well know, affects every single part - every single part of governance."

The Chief Executive pointed out that for every plan the government makes, it must take climate change into account.

He highlighted that the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) holds a critical role in addressing the perennial issues in the country through research and development initiatives.

He told the department to continue strengthening the implementation of the Balik-Scientist Program and find ways to provide more incentives to encourage more Filipino scientists to

come back to the country and share their expertise.

"It is my hope that you will sustain and augment the short-, medium-, and long-term benefits for our balik-scientists and their families provided for under the law and beyond. These benefits do include allowances, education assistance for their minor children,

participation in grants-in-aid projects, amongst many others," he said.

Marcos also urged the DOST to develop more initiatives to inspire young people to pursue scientific and technological courses as he cited that the country does "not do very well" in this field.

"Let us turn that around. And the

Balik-Scientist Program will have a very important part to play because we can always present to our young people, our young students, look at this Filipino who has made a name for himself and who has done a lot of good work, and his or her good work has helped very, very many people. You can do this, too," he said.



## Can we achieve climate justice in an unequal society?

**T**HE latest World Risk Report ranked the Philippines as the most at risk to disasters among 193 countries representing 99 percent of the world's population. For a country that already belongs to the top 10 in terms of experiencing the impacts of climate change, this poses a major concern.

India, Indonesia, Colombia, Mexico, Myanmar, Mozambique, China, Bangladesh and Pakistan completed the top 10 at-risk list. The report, published by Bundnis Entwicklung Hilft and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict, assessed countries based on risk, exposure, vulnerability, susceptibility, and their coping and adaptive capacities.

Without sufficient resilience, coping or adaptation capacities, populations will continue to face risks where hazards from extreme natural events, or the negative



### ALL ABOUT CHOICES

**LUDWIG O. FEDERIGAN**

impacts of climate change exist.

The words of Hoesung Lee, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), during the virtual launch of the Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability report half a year ago continue to resonate with me. He described the IPCC report as a dire warning about the consequences of inaction and said that "our actions today will shape how people adapt and nature responds to increasing climate risks."

With the world's population estimated to increase by 2.5 billion and reach almost 10 billion by 2050, the IPCC report pointed

out that 90 percent of the growth would take place in Asia and Africa. As a result, the number of people highly exposed to climate change impacts will also increase dramatically. The global south will be more vulnerable to climate-induced risks because of informal and sprawl-type development coupled with lack of adaptive capacity.

Inequality, according to the International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, is a phenomenon of unequal and/or unjust distribution of resources and opportunities among members of a given society. At present, inequality is becoming more pronounced in the climate space. The World Inequality Report 2022, a work of more than 100 researchers on social, economic and ecological disparities, declared that inequalities among nations, societies and populations were increasing.

The report said that the richest 10

percent of the global population accounted for 52 percent of global income while the poorest half earned a measly 8.5 percent. The richest 10 percent also owned 76 percent of all wealth while the poorest half possessed just 2 percent.

The report further detailed the connection between the global income, wealth and ecological inequalities to those in contributions to climate change. On average, humans emit 6.6 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per capita per year. The report said that the top 10 percent of emitters were responsible for close to 50 percent of all global greenhouse gas emissions while the bottom 50 percent produced only 12 percent. Addressing inequality is essential in tackling the climate crisis.

With insufficient adaptive capacity, the poorest face the most extreme conditions. They will struggle to adapt to increasing cli-

mate impacts, with many living in areas that are close to the limits of human habitability. Most of these poor societies will be reeling from rolling shocks of floods, extreme heat, drought and crop failure.

Widespread inequalities are causing deep instabilities in societies. If humanity wants to achieve prosperity for all within planetary limits, inequalities must be a priority for immediate action.

The Club of Rome's new book *Earth for All: A Survival Guide to Humanity* — a sequel to *The Limits of Growth* published 50 years ago — identifies "five system-shifting steps" — inequality, ending poverty, empowering women, transforming food systems and transitioning to clean energy — that must be urgently addressed.

The *Limits of Growth* reported on the predicament of mankind and the implications of continued economic growth. It concluded

that the earth's interlocking resources, the global system of nature in which we all live, probably could not support economic and population growth rates.

Humanity today is standing at the edge of a cliff. With the present system left unchanged and impeded by continued inaction, social tensions will continue to increase and human well-being will keep being diluted. There is no climate justice in an unequal society.

*The author is the executive director of the Young Environmental Forum, and a nonresident fellow of the Stratbase ADR Institute. He completed his climate change and development course at the University of East Anglia and an executive program on sustainability leadership at Yale University. You can email him at ludwig.federigan@gmail.com.*



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# Urban mobility at the cusp of disruptive change

**T**otal carbon emissions have now exceeded pre-pandemic levels because of rebounding economies. This is despite the scarcity and rising costs of fuel as well as global efforts to curb carbon emissions.

While the energy and climate crises have been pushing the transition to clean energy, our current economy is still largely dependent on non-renewable sources of energy. Primary energy demand is still supplied largely by fossil fuels.



## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

AR. JOEL LUNA

### TRANSFORMATIONAL SHIFT

The crisis is pushing urban mobility to the cusp of a major transformational shift.

In some countries such as the United States, China and portions of Europe, electric vehicles (EVs) and their hybrid variants have been gaining market share. Some experts predict the mass adoption of electric vehicles in the US and other developed countries by 2040. Advances in EV technology—coupled with conflating issues of fuel cost, climate change and public health issues due to pollution—are shifting public opinion and government policies against conventional motor vehicles.

Norway leads the pack in the shift to EVs with over 90 percent of new car registrations in 2021. The city of Copenhagen, which has successfully weaned itself from automobile dependence since the '70s, plans to create zero-emission zones where only electric or hydrogen-fueled vehicles are allowed.

Elsewhere, a different form of transformation in urban mobility is taking shape. As developed countries shift from internal combustion engines (ICE) to EVs, developing countries in Asia and Africa are seeing growth in motor vehicle consumption. Developing countries may also be the recipients of second-hand ICEs which are being phased out.

At the same time, cultural perceptions could reinforce this growth as developing nations progress, given the prevailing bias for car ownership as a symbol of success. On top of these, the lower costs of con-

ventional cars, the absence of subsidies for EVs and the lack of infrastructure will constrain the shift to EVs.

In other developed cities another trend is emerging—the move towards reduced use of private vehicles altogether, electric, or otherwise.

Some cities such as Hamburg plan to be totally car-free by 2030. Barcelona has introduced car-free streets by consolidating its grid of streets to form Superblocks with limited car accessibility. Some cities such as Paris aim to be 15-minute cities, an urban model wherein residents can access essential needs (work, shops, schools, leisure) within a short walk or bike ride.

Here, the focus is on accessibility and proximity, not just

mobility, thus enabling car-optimality.

### ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE MOBILITY

A closer look at Metro Manila may yet reveal another trend—active mobility and inclusive transport.

Cycling has become a necessary mode of transport for many Metro Manila citizens due to the lockdowns and the inadequacy of public transportation. Over the last two years, there have been documented increases in use and ownership of bicycles.

Notably, inclusive mobility advocates and citizen-led mobility groups have grown in number and influence. The shift is logical given that there are only 700,000 private





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continue Urban mobility at the cusp of disruptive change

registered in the NCR where the population is over 14 million. The overwhelming majority still go around by public transport, cycling or walking.

These different trends are carried by two divergent currents leading to different outcomes for our city centers. One leads to increasing car dependency, more automobile infrastructure and continued consumption, while the other is citizen-led, prompted by the need for safer streets, more accessible cities, lower costs and better communities.

### CRISIS-INDUCED TRANSFORMATION

The last time city mobility was at the cusp of radical transformation was in the 1890s at

the dawn of the automobile.

Transportation in cities such as New York was predominantly by horse-drawn carriages. Horse population in NYC reached a peak of at least 150,000, creating problems in sanitation, congestion and pollution with horse manure and horse carcasses littering the streets. These problems led to laws that regulated horses in the city and contributed to the mass adoption of the "cleaner and cheaper" motor car and subsequently the creation of an entire ecosystem of highways, vehicles, factories, suburbs and a global car culture that has prevailed for more than a century.

Copenhagen experienced another form of crisis-induced transformation. It became a cycling city due to the oil embargo in the 1970s. Scarcity, along with

citizen demonstrations that demanded prioritizing bikes, led to policies that disincentivized the use of private cars and shifted investments away from building highways and towards cycling infrastructure. To date, Copenhagen ranks as one of the most livable cities in the world.

These examples show two different responses to crises and therefore two different outcomes, each with a lasting effect on the city and its residents. They also show how crises can trigger the mass adoption of outlier ideas.

No one in 1890 would have predicted how entrenched and pervasive motor cars would be. Neither could anyone predict before 1970 that Copenhagen will become a bike-friendly city. Crises created tipping points that allowed incipient ideas to cascade exponentially until they became mainstream. These events are hard to predict because we tend to think linearly, dependent on the momentum of the past.

In our current situation of scarcity, we again wonder where the currents of change will lead us. Amid these unfolding transformations is the future of the city street. We can choose to think differently and radically about urban mobility and build our infrastructure accordingly. It will all just depend on who we will choose to build them for.

The author is founder and principal of JLPD, a master planning and design consultancy firm



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## Climate finance must benefit developing nations

**THE Climate Change Commission has stressed the importance of setting a global climate finance target that complements the needs of developing countries.**

This, as CCC vice chairman and executive director Robert Borje, during the recently-concluded preparatory meeting for the 27th Session of Conference of the Parties, said the New Quantified Goal on Climate Finance must include the "key elements on transparency, responsiveness, and scale".

"Towards substantial progress in climate finance delivery by 2025, VCED Borje highlighted that discussions stressed that the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance must be anchored on the needs of the developing nations, and entail key elements on transparency, responsiveness, and scale," the CCC said in a so-

cial media post.

"The Philippines likewise emphasized that climate finance must be accurately reported while being needs-based, and commensurate to the need of potential recipients," it said in another post.

Borje served as co-facilitator of discussions on global agenda for climate finance during the PRECOP27 held in Kinshasa, Congo from October 3 to 5.

The climate finance session, co-lead by Poland, was also attended by Angola, Argentina, Chad, Denmark, Germany, Ghana, Japan, the Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the United States, Zambia, and the European Union Commission.

The participants, the CCC said, discussed the fulfillment of the \$100-bil-

lion financial commitment by developed countries under the Paris Agreement, as well as the need to set a higher climate finance target through the New Collective Quantified Goal of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

The CCC said the Philippines, as co-facilitator, helped ensure that discussions were anchored on developing nations' resolve to support developing countries, particularly those "at risk and vulnerable," as provided in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

"From the \$100-billion climate finance commitment of developed countries under the Paris Agreement, the New Collective Quantified Goal must set a higher target for climate finance to help implement climate change-related strategies and measures," it said.



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# 'Very, very serious': Understanding climate change

BY POCHOLO CONCEPCION  
@pocholoconcepc1

Robert Borje is worried. The vice chairperson and executive director of the Climate Change Commission said the unusual change in weather patterns, especially the last typhoon, is a very serious issue that needs to be addressed immediately.

In a recent interview with *Daily Tribune* Editor-in-Chief Gigie Arcilla on *Straight Talk*, Borje explained his office's role in helping find solutions to avert the worst effects of climate change.

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**D**aily Tribune (DT): What is the simplest definition of climate change?

Robert Borje (RB): Climate change is about temperature that's above the natural threshold. Burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas produces greenhouse gas.

*Dahil sa greenhouse gas, na-ta-trap 'yung sunlight na dapat sana ma-release, so umiinit lalo ang mundo. 'Pag umiinit ang mundo, nagbabago ang klima... 'Yung summer may mga episodes ng rainy season, sa ibang bansa nag-kaka-heatwave ng mas matagal.*

Climate change is not just a one-time thing. *Ang sinasabi ng experts, it's cumulative, it's been happening in the past centuries. 'Yung industrial revolution. Yung paggamit ng coal... It has led us to this tipping point in history. Kailangan talagang i-address natin ito at kailangang malaman ng tao.* Climate change is serious issue and it's happening now. We're all affected by it. The recent typhoon shows how worrisome climate change is. From category 2 or category 3 *biglang naging* category 5 over 24 hours.

That's very, very disconcerting, and very, very, very serious. Because that timeframe of 24 hours may not be enough for people to prepare. *Ang climate change is an issue of buhay at kabuhayan, lives and livelihoods at stake.*



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continue very very serious understanding

**DT:** Give us a background what the Climate Change Commission is.

**RB:** The Climate Change Commission was created by virtue of Republic Act 9729, or the Climate Change Act of 2009. It is the lead government agency in charge of policy, coordination, and formulation of all issues regarding climate change.

The law recognizes climate change is not a sectoral issue, it's not an agency issue. It's a multi-government or multi-agency issue. The solutions to climate change require the whole of society, the whole of government – the whole world approach to effectively address it.

Climate Change Commission *ang nangunguna sa pag-coordinate ng ating mga ahensiya ukol sa mga polisiya* to address climate change and also to provide recommendations on what to do. It's many things, including our negotiations at the international level.

*Nangunguna din ang Climate Change Commission when it comes to monitoring and evaluation. May mga dapat tayong ginagawa para maipakita sa nando 'yung level of commitment, understanding, at implementation ng ating international commitments.*



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CLIMATE Change Commission vice chairperson and executive director Robert Borje with 'Daily Tribune' editor-in-chief Gigie Arcilla.



continue

From page D25

*Nangunguna din ang Climate Change Commission when it comes to monitoring and evaluation, May mga dapat tayong ginagawa para maipakita sa mundo yung level of commitment, understanding, at implementation ng ating international commitments.*

**DT:** Climate change din ba yung previous years, 'pag nagkakaroon tayo ng typhoon that lasts for days? Parang ito kasi (Typhoon "Karding"), in one day there was an announcement and then people were expecting the following day medyo umaaraw na. Is it still climate change?

**RB:** We can say the weather is continuously evolving. And there are climate change drivers that make things happen. We want people to know it's not just quick onset events like typhoons. It's also slow onset events, for example, drought sa Northern Asia. In China, the rivers are drying up. That's attributed to climate change... Sa atin, typhoons. Sa ibang countries, floods. In the northern hemisphere, it's the melting of glaciers. All of those are connected.

**DT:** How challenging is it to make Filipinos understand the effects of climate change and practical ways to deal with it?

**RB:** I have a communications and diplomacy background. If we want behavioral changes, we have to come up with effective communication strategies. Hindi naman natin mababago ang ating mga polisiya kung hindi naiintindihan ng ating mga leaders. Kung hindi naiintindihan ng ating lokal na pamahalaan, hindi naintindihan ng ating mga citizens kung ano yung problema.

Ang maganda lang ngayon is that President Bongbong Marcos has been very clear about the importance of addressing climate change, the commitment to work not just with the government and stakeholders, but in

# 'Very, very serious': Understanding climate change



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UN

'WE have to be willing to do our part to contribute to the adaptation mitigation of climate change and its impact.'

the international community.

We want to assist our LGUs to make sure they come up with their own climate adaptation plans... Gusto rin nating merong supporting mechanisms, including the people's survival funds, para may budget para sa mga nangangailangan na LGUs. Ang importante diyan is to strengthen our partnerships, not just within the Philippine government, but also with other sectors, including higher education institutions and state universities and colleges. And of course, our partners in media. I was a former member of the media. We'll work closely together to really make sure our strategy and vision for a climate-resilient and smart Philippines is achieved.

**DT:** What are the current priorities



continue very very serious understanding

**and initiatives of the Commission?**

**RB:** We've resolved to be a working Climate Change Commission. It entails strengthening our partnerships with other stakeholders... We're working with the Department of Interior and Local Government especially now, because we just got off from an election cycle.

So, the new leaders have to know what they have to know about climate change and what we need to do, because climate change adaptation plans are required, *na gusto natin mapataas ang* submission.

In the same manner, we have to strengthen our partnership with government agencies because, as I said earlier, we need a whole of government approach. What we want is *ma-identify ang* budget within each government institution, and we've successfully increased it. It's now around P420 billion in the national expenditure program, *yung na-allocate ng* NGIs or national government institutions for climate change.

*Importante rin ang* partnerships with strengthening the national panel of technical experts at making available sila especially for local government units that do not have the capacity to undertake projects. And *importante dito*, when it comes to this people's survival fund, it's a P1 billion fund that is available to LGUs to bolster their funding *para sa* climate change adaptation programs.

Right now, the utility rate is about 35 to 36 percent. And we want to increase it and we want *na magamit yung* fund *na yun* very quickly for their adaptation projects. It all boils down to energy use. So, *yun yung* focus *natin* and we're strengthening our mechanisms right now, our coordination with government

agencies, particularly with those that are preventive in nature.

We're working very closely with the Departments of Energy, Environment and Natural Resources, Agriculture, DILG and DepEd for information and education campaign.

So, again, it's a multipronged approach. *Puwede kang mahula*, or you can embrace it, and make sure that our country is able to respond to these challenges.

**DT:** For ordinary Filipinos, what do you think are the practical ways for them to help address climate change?

**RB:** Of course, *importante ang* individual responsibility. For example, we have to address the issue of the culture of waste. *Kailangan masinop tayo at hindi waldas at maaksaya. Kailangan alam natin na inaalagahan natin ang ating* environment, *dahil pag hindi natin ito inalagahan ay hindi rin tayo aalagaan.*

For example, the Sierra Madre, we need to protect our forests and our mountain ranges because they're there for a reason.

About plastics, in the production of plastics alone, *may* greenhouse gas emission. Now, *nakita sa* Typhoon "Karding" *yung dami ng* garbage, that's an indication of our profligate and wasteful human behavior. *Sabi ko nga* when we were at the International Coastal Cleanup, *maganda na* we get to clean up together our coast, but maybe the more important question is, why do we have to clean up when we can clean in the first place?

We have to be very conscious of what we can do. If we can walk, bike, you know, but again, it becomes a whole of government issue and whole of society problem because people will say, 'You want us to do this *pero among* options *meron tayo?* You want us to use mass transportation... All of these are being addressed. It will require time. So, in the meantime, while we work on fundamental changes, we have to be willing to do our part to contribute to the adaptation mitigation of climate change and its impact.



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## Phl co-facilitates global agenda for climate finance

The Philippines took on the role as one of the moderators during the discussions on the global agenda for climate finance and urgent actions needed to bolster assistance to developing countries.

This comes after the country — represented by Climate Change Commission vice chair and executive director Robert Borje — was chosen to co-facilitate and lead the pre-discussion of the agenda for the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat and the Arab Republic of Egypt — the incoming Presidency of the 27th Session of Conference of the Parties — requested the Philippines to co-facilitate the pre-COP27 meeting with Poland, tackling climate finance on 13 October in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At least 17 countries, including Angola, Argentina, Chad, Denmark, Germany, Ghana, Japan, the Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the United States of America, and Zambia, as well as the European Union Commission have attended the session steered towards ideas and strategies to move forward the agenda on climate finance.

This includes the fulfillment of the \$100 billion financial commitment by developed countries under the Paris Agreement, and the need to set a higher climate finance target through the New Collective Quantified Goal of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

During the discussions, Borje recommended strategies for expeditiously mobilizing climate finance.

As a co-facilitator, the Philippines made sure discussions were anchored on the commitments of developed countries to support developing nations, particularly those at risk and vulnerable nations, as provided in the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

Borje cited the need to require transparency, responsiveness and scale throughout substantial progress in climate finance delivery by 2025.

He added the countries involved must be “innovative, creative and flexible” in tapping financial resources both from public and private sources in regard to low-carbon and climate-resilient development — consistent with Article 2 of the Paris Agreement. LADE KABAGANI

During the discussions, Borje recommended strategies for expeditiously mobilizing climate finance.



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# Real estate in the green of things

**S**ustainability is a hot topic nowadays due to the growing impact of climate change and as the world continues to recover from the pandemic. Preparing for the future is more urgent than ever.

An article by Cheyenne Hollis in *dotproperty.com.ph* mentions property developer Lendlease as seeing more investors reflecting on the effects of climate change in the property sector.

Hollis' report mentions Eric Chan, head of Practices, Asia and project director of TRX Residences, as saying: "In our conversations with investors over the years, it is very clear more are not just aware of the impact of climate change but also asking what developers are doing to adapt to it. The focus is now about resilience, both in how the asset is equipped to deal with the physical aspects of a changing climate but also how the asset can adapt to corresponding changes in the way society will live, work and play.

"We believe that there has to be a combination of the two elements of built environment and its community to create good levels of resilience," Chan continues.

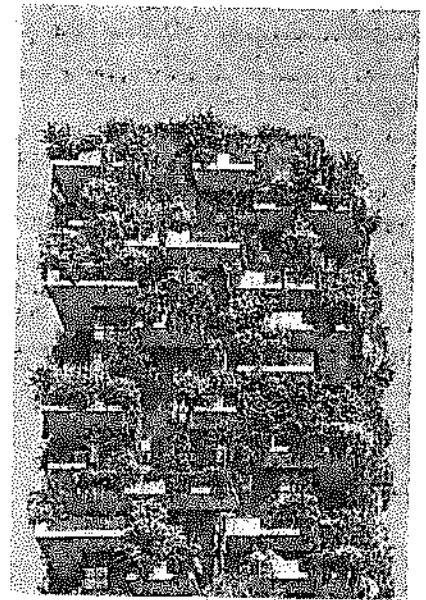
Hollis call on property developers to "examine what a developer is doing to ensure their projects have the resiliency necessary to achieve strong returns and capital appreciation both today and well into the future."

According to Chan, "That is precisely why they need to pay heed to a development's sustainability credentials because their goal is to secure good returns on their investments over the long run, up to decades. They need to know the buildings they invested in will stand the test of time and are designed to be adaptable, resilient and sustainable."

Hollis added that climate change is not bound by borders. He surmised, "For a developer like Lendlease that is active in multiple countries, the firm must not only understand how its impact varies from location to location, but they also must consider local regulations."

The report underscored the importance

The report underscored the importance of keeping the developer's eye on the premise that people will want to live in such sustainable structures or properties. "Resilience is one aspect of the residential experience. Livability is another important element that needs to be factored into the equation," Hollis noted.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF UNSPLASH/VICTOR DEVELOPERS built properties that will stand the test of time and are designed to be adaptable, resilient and sustainable.

of keeping the developer's eye on the premise that people will want to live in such sustainable structures or properties. "Resilience is one aspect of the residential experience. Livability is another important element that needs to be factored into the equation," Hollis noted.

Chan said: "Sustainability is not just about going green. Especially for homes, it should be about placemaking — to enliven the spaces and communities around the home. This is a collaborative process because every community has its own nuance and quirks, and the development has to mesh seamlessly with the location it sits within to thrive and be a place you want to live in.

"And it goes without saying that homes should be well-connected. There should be provisions for alternate commuting modes to and from the home — not just public transport and roads but end-of-trip facilities if you should choose healthier options like biking or running."

The report concludes that project developers need to go beyond just going green but also to aim for longevity, creating spaces that will proactively respond to the risks of climate change.





# Stakeholders push wider RE adoption

BY BELLA CARIASO

**V**ARIOUS stakeholders are backing the wider adoption of renewable energy in the country.

During the Renewable Energy (RE) Congress attended by representatives from the national government, the diplomatic community, civil society organizations, electric cooperatives, RE developers, the academe, youth, women and the labor sector, participants issued a statement calling for people-centered, just and sustainable transformation in the power sector.

"We stand side-by-side with the millions of Filipinos who are electric power end-users — and the several millions more who do not enjoy electricity at home — in calling for people-centered, just and sustainable transformation in the power sector," the post-Congress statement stated.

The workshop also underscored the key role of renewable energy in addressing the Philippines' current issues of food insecurity, rising fuel prices and providing alternative employment for the growing number of unemployed and underemployed Filipinos.

"This can be done by speeding up the shift to renewable energy in the power, transport and agri-fish-

ery sector; and promoting energy democracy through renewables to ensure inclusive and effective governance," the participants added.

Energy Regulatory Board Directors Sharon Montaner and Gaspar Escobar, representing the Department of Energy, said that current RE policies and programs such as net metering, renewable portfolio standards and the related green energy auction program contribute to the efforts to push for renewable energy.

Congress organizer Center for Empowerment, Innovation and Training on Renewable Energy (CentRE) highlighted key actions to achieve renewable energy.

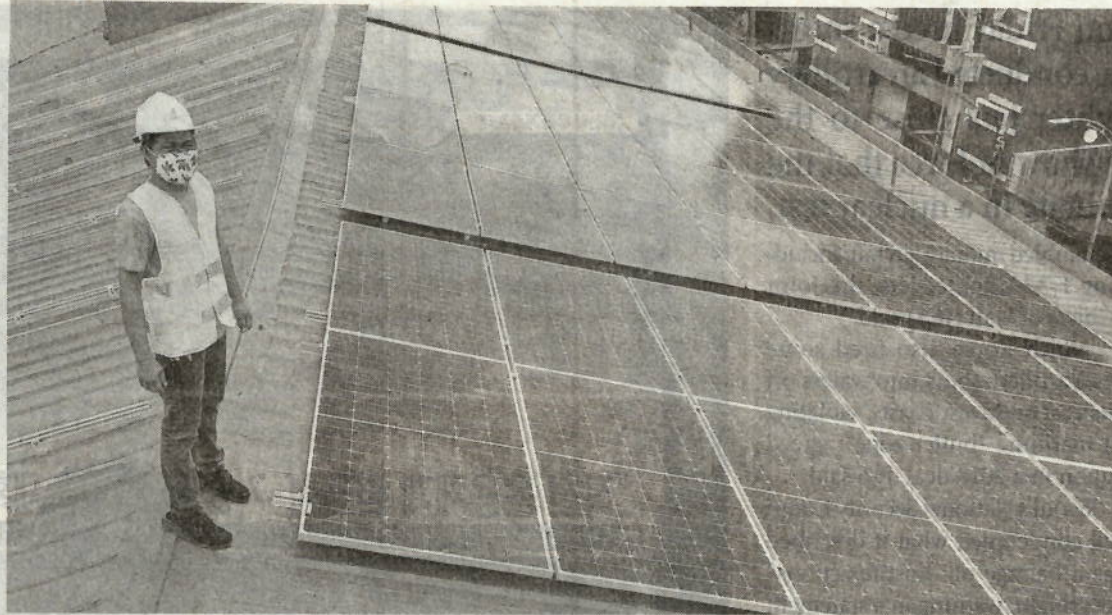
These include getting new capacities from renewable energy and giving priority to deployment of flexible and modular capacity; mandatory decommissioning of aging and inefficient coal and petroleum power plants; thorough evaluation of liquefied natural gas as a bridge fuel; and pursuing electrification using renewables through micro-grid systems, especially in geographically isolated areas, among others.



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■ WeGen Distributed Energy installs early this year a solar photovoltaic system on the rooftop of Mary Johnston Hospital in Tondo, Manila. The hospital has a strong advocacy for the environment. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CentRE added that energy democracy could be achieved through representation and consultation with stakeholders in energy planning and policymaking; transformation of rural electric cooperatives (RECs) into genuine cooperatives by ensuring that member-owners participate actively in management and enhance the technical and financial capabilities of RECs; and, ensure inclusive and participatory local energy planning and implementation, with increasing awareness and active role of end-users, especially women.

### Strategies for RE adoption

CentRE and WeGen Distributed Energy President Charlie Ayco stressed the need to promote distributed energy resources for power generation.

In his presentation, Ayco said this could be achieved by building "thousands of small solar installations which are integrated into the grid through net metering and encourage small storage systems."

"[This] stabilizes the grid since the additional power will not be added into it. By producing electricity at or near where it will

be used, customers will have reliable and much cheaper renewable energy source," he added.

This can be achieved by encouraging and supporting households that install solar power systems so they can be energy self-sufficient. Any excess power generated can be supplied to the main grid.

Ayco said that in India, subsidies are given to those who take part in its Solar Subsidy Program, hence mandates and incentives, especially from the government, can encourage more households in the Philippines to install solar power units.

In his presentation, Ambassador-

Designate Franz-Michael Mellbin of the Embassy of Denmark shared lessons from his country's experience on renewable energy.

"Long-term planning. You need a long-term plan for energy transformation. Don't be the country that didn't," Mellbin said.

Mellbin highlighted that a just transition to renewables involves not only regulation, but also jobs, distribution and fair pricing.

For her part, Maria Teresa Diokno of the Center for Power Issues and Initiatives and a member of Women in Inclusive and Sustainable Energy (WISE) initiative enumerated priorities for RE adoption.

"One, put money in RE. The budget for RE is small. This is not the budget we need. Two, prioritize RE in the new capacities to be planned and adopted in the country so that renewable energy share in power generation is higher than 50 percent. Third, the Philippines is rich in RE, thus we should focus on this," Diokno said.

She added that the government should put people first or at the center of policymaking, address energy poverty and make room for all small players to participate.

"Let small people participate in RE development, give them space," she appealed.

Diokno noted that over 1 million households in the Philippines do not have electricity.



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# Flooding can get worse as 'Neneng' nears northern Luzon

President Marcos calls for 'close monitoring' of areas in the storm's path

By Delfin Mallari Jr.,  
Villamor Visaya Jr.  
and Nestor Corrales  
@Team\_Inquirer

LUCENA CITY—Tropical Depression "Neneng" already triggered severe flooding in Quezon province on Friday ahead of its projected landfall off Batanes Island, as it spawned heavy rains that prompted officials of the town of Quezon on Alabat Island to suspend classes at all levels.

Wind signals were poised to be raised over parts of extreme northern Luzon as Neneng was projected to develop into a tropical storm category on Saturday, the state weather bureau said.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), in its 11 a.m. bulletin on Friday, said Neneng was last located 835 kilometers east of extreme northern Luzon, packing maximum sustained winds of 45 km per hour (kph) and gustiness of up to 55 kph.

### 'A little stronger'

President Marcos on Friday said the government was "closely monitoring" the possible impact of Neneng in northern Luzon.

The President said Neneng looked a "little stronger than the previous" one, referring to



RAVAGED TOWN The flood-ravaged farms in Allacapan, Cagayan province, following the onslaught of Tropical Depression "Maymay" are shown in this aerial inspection on Wednesday. —PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLACAPAN MAYOR HARRY FLORIDA

Supertyphoon "Karding" (international name: Noru) that lashed through Luzon on Sept. 25, adding that an estimated 10,000 people would be affected by Neneng.

"But once again, I think the key to all of these is to watch it very closely because typhoons now have a new feature," Mr. Marcos told reporters in an interview in Pasay City.

He assured the public that government assets and relief goods were already prepositioned in areas which could be hit by the typhoon.

"The estimate now is that 10,000 people will be affected by this Neneng. So that is what we are—those are the kind of

numbers that we are preparing for," he said.

### Possible landfall

The state weather bureau said Neneng could still make a landfall or pass near Babuyan Islands or Batanes province.

In Quezon town, the municipal disaster risk reduction management council (MDRRMC) said many parts of the locality located on the southern part of Alabat Island were affected by the floods spawned by Neneng.

Quezon is among the three towns on the island, situated between the Pacific Ocean and Lamon Bay. Aside from Quezon, the island also hosts the municipalities of Alabat and Perez.



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CONT. FLOODING CAN GET WORSE AS 'NENENG' NEARS  
NORTHERN Luzon

Classes in the two other towns, however, were not suspended.

Pagasa said Neneng slightly weakened while moving over the Philippine Sea but was forecast to reach the tropical storm category by Saturday evening or early morning on Sunday before exiting the Philippine Area of Responsibility by Monday.

**Still suspended**

In Cagayan province, classes remained suspended on Friday in the towns of Sanchez Mira, Lal-lo, Allacapan, Aparri and Abulug due to the widespread flooding on Wednesday in the aftermath of Tropical Depression "Maymay."

Rogelio Sending Jr., Cagayan provincial information officer, said cleanup operations were still underway in these areas, which were also near the path of Neneng.

Allacapan was placed under a state of calamity on Thursday following the extensive damage to farms and infrastructure caused by Maymay. At least 22 villages in the town were affected by up to 3-foot floods, affecting 1,025 families or 3,849 people, according to its MDRRMC.

Two fishermen in Cagayan died after they drowned while at sea during the onslaught of Maymay, which caused intense rainfall and strong winds in the province on Tuesday. *INQ*



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## Gov't urged: Expedite renewable energy projects

BY EDJEN OLIQUINO  
@tribunephil\_gao

A lawmaker on Friday is urging the government to expedite the establishment of renewable energy projects in the country that would help to lessen the country's vulnerability to worldwide oil price shocks after the mega increase last Tuesday.

Senator Risa Hontiveros — a prominent proponent of renewable energy — made the statement following local oil companies' announcements of price rises for diesel, gasoline, and kerosene as a result of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' drastic production reduction.

"In one major oil firm, the prices went up by as much as P6.85 for diesel, P1.20 for gasoline, and P3.50 for kerosene, reversing the impact of small price rollbacks in previous weeks," Hontiveros said.

She claimed that the current state of affairs demonstrates how vulnerable the country is to shocks in the price of oil and if nothing is altered, it will always be at the whim of the market and its most influential players.

"The government's action cannot be just price monitoring. We need to speed up the rollout of renewable energy projects that will benefit our countrymen," Hontiveros said.

Veteran lawmaker Rufus Rodriguez on Thursday also pushed for the establishment of the Philippine Renewable Energy Corp. which will focus on renewable energy.

To recall, Cagayan de Oro Second District Representative Rufus Rodriguez on Thursday pushed for the establishment of the Philippine Renewable Energy Corp. which will focus on renewable energy that is seen to minimize the country's reliance on imported fossil fuels and the adverse effects of climate change.

Rodriguez said there is also an urgent need to undertake electrification projects by developing renewable energy sources in underserved, unserved, and missionary areas.

Likewise, it is also crucial that the government play a more active role in ensuring an adequate electricity supply through renewable energy sources.

Hontiveros, meanwhile, had the same sentiment and said that by investing more in renewable energy projects such as solar, offshore wind, small and medium hydroelectric, and geothermal, the country would significantly reduce our reliance on imported oil.

According to the senator, the recent oil price hike should serve as a wake-up call that the country's current setup of importing oil for its energy needs is unsustainable and anti-consumer.

She added that the government should tap into the wealth of indigenous resources for its energy needs to break the vicious cycle of reliance on imported oil.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, meanwhile, acknowledged the proposal and agreed on the importance of implementing changes that will promote investments in local renewable energy projects and technologies during a recent hearing on the yearly budget of the Department of Energy and affiliated agencies.



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# Imee: Engage, don't fight

The DFA maintained that the country is open to discussing joint exploration in the West Philippine Sea as long as it will not violate the Philippine Constitution.

BY JOM GARNER  
@tribunephil\_jom

Senator Imee Marcos on Friday expressed her support for the revival of discussions on joint oil and gas exploration between the Philippines and China in the West Philippine Sea.

Marcos, chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, underscored the importance of keeping the door open to China in discussions on resource-rich WPS, being claimed wholly by Beijing.

"Yes, I think it is important for us to engage (with) China in every way. We do not have anything against them; why are we fighting against them?" she said in a media briefing at Kamuning Bakery Cafe in Quezon City.

"At all times we should be engaging each other, at all times we should be talking whether it is on the formal,

government-to-government, bilateral, multilateral talks or the more friendly people-to-people exchange," she added.

On Thursday, Senator Robin Padilla said that China is still open to exploration talks at WPS or the South China Sea, as per Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian's statement during his recent visit to the Senate.

In June, a week before he stepped down from office, former President Rodrigo Duterte ordered then Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. to terminate the discussion on joint exploration with China.

"Three years on and we have not achieved our objective of developing oil and gas resources so critical for the Philippines but not at the price of sovereignty; not even a particle of it," Duterte said then.

## '60-40'

Despite being open to discussion with China on joint exploration in the WPS, Senator Marcos said it should be studied thoroughly, including the sharing scheme.

The DFA has said that the agreement was deleterious to the interest of the Philippines.

"But we will not allow that it

## China

will be disadvantageous for us. Of course, we will talk to them seriously to make it fairer," she added.

To recall, the Duterte administration earlier announced that it will pursue a 60-40 sharing scheme, which means Manila will receive 60 percent of the oil and natural gas deposits while Beijing will get the remaining 40 percent.

Meanwhile, the DFA maintained that the country is open to discussing joint exploration in the WPS as long as it will not violate the Philippine Constitution.

"As conveyed by Secretary (Enrique) Manalo to Chinese SCFM (State Councilor and Foreign Minister) Wang Yi when they met in July, the Philippines is open to discussing joint exploration of energy resources in the West Philippine Sea," DFA spokesperson Tess Daza told *Daily Tribune*.

"Such talks must be anchored on the Philippine Constitution and conducted within the framework of overall bilateral relations," Daza added.



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# Tourist rest areas for Phl's top destination — Cebu

*Cebu*  
The TIEZA is tasked to fund and construct the infrastructure for the rest areas. While the DoT acts as the overall overseer of the program, the LGUs are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the place. Upon turnover, the LGUs are allowed to lease certain portions of the TRA to the private sector to possibly recoup the cost of its sustainability.

The Groundbreaking and Memorandum of Agreement signing for the series of the Department of Tourism and Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority's Tourist Rest Areas continued last 8 October in Cebu towns of Carmen and Medellin.

"We are breaking ground on the tourist rest areas in Carmen and Medellin. President Bongbong Marcos has said that tourism has the potential to become a major economic pillar for the Philippine resurgence. And he has clearly identified tourism as a priority in his administration," said Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco during the MoA signing in Barangay Poblacion, Carmen.

"The establishment of the Tourist Rest Areas fulfills the objectives that we have set out in the Department of Tourism including improving the overall tourist experience. This is a very strategic place to put the TRA because it

is right along the highway and Carmen, (Cebu) is the middle point to the rest of our destinations here in Cebu. Our goal is to ensure that our tourists feel comfortable in their journey as they travel across the country," the Secretary added.

Secretary Frasco likewise underscored the necessity of putting in place a Tourist Rest Area for travelers in Cebu, a province that has consistently figured in the top three most frequented destinations in the past three years according to data submitted to the DoT by accommodation establishments across the country.

As had been noted during the earlier TRA launchings, the rest areas are meant to deliver comfort and ease of travel to tourists and transients traveling to different tourist destinations in the country. Other than the crucial restrooms that are a necessity to the traveling public

the TRAs will also include a coffee shop, pasalubong and souvenir store, information center and a charging station.

The program is a joint undertaking by the DoT, the TIEZA, and the Local Government Unit where the establishment is located.

The TIEZA is tasked to fund and construct the infrastructure



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## CONT. TOURIST REST AREAS FOR PHIL'S TOP DESTINATION - CEBU

for the rest areas. While the DoT acts as the overall overseer of the program, the LGUs are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the place. Upon turnover, the LGUs are allowed to lease certain portions of the TRA to the private sector to possibly recoup the cost of its sustainability.

As announced by Secretary

Frasco, the maintenance of the Tourist Rest Areas will be incentivized. A specific criteria is provided to the LGU to ascertain the proper maintenance of the area. LGUs that will be able to comply 90 percent of the criteria set as target by the DoT will be given financial incentive or a project for the

LGU. Periodic assessment and monitoring of the rest areas will be done by the regional office of the DoT.

Both events were graced by Cebu Governor Gwen Garcia who said, "Today's event is truly groundbreaking literally and figuratively. A while ago we were across the street to break ground on a project that is truly most meaningful and useful. But also figuratively, this is a groundbreaking first for the Secretary of Tourism to break ground a project in Cebu with in her first 100 days."

"(The Secretary's) listening tours in the past days were important to gather enough inputs (to her administration). There must always be coordination with national and local government units because we cannot believe that we have exclusivity of knowledge, but from these inputs we are able to craft good policies," the Governor added.



SIMALA Church in Cebu.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UNSPLASH/HITOSHI NAMURA





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### ASEAN, Phl ink ecotourism deal

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna – The International School for Sustainable Tourism, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture forged an agreement to collaborate in the International Ecotourism Travel Mart – the first-ever green travel mart and selling fair in the world organized by the Asian Ecotourism Network.

The biggest ecotourism-focused fair is set on 29 March to 2 April 2023 in Cavite province.

“This celebration of green technology and sustainable practices in the tourism industry signifies an opportunity towards a better normal and a more resilient community as the world slowly re-opens,” said the group.

For a region as naturally diverse and culturally rich as the ASEAN, tourism contributes significantly to economic growth and local livelihoods.

Acknowledging the tourism sector's vital role in recovery, the ASEAN has declared the revival of the tourism sector as an imperative in the region's overall recovery efforts in its comprehensive framework.

“The Covid-19 pandemic has catalyzed the growing awareness that nature is part of the solution to public health and environmental challenges,” said Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the ACB.

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## Suarez bats for national water use plan to help irrigate PH farmlands

HOUSE Deputy Majority Leader David C. Suarez (2nd District, Quezon) has urged the government to come up with a comprehensive program on the proper and cost-effective use of water systems to address the perennial problem of water shortage for farmlands and subsequently, ensure a more efficient national food security program.

Suarez, vice chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, said the creation of a National Water Use Plan will provide farmers with accessible water supply to improve their productivity and boost their incomes.

"Kailangan ng ating mga magsasaka ang mabisang plano na magsisiguro ng maayos at tuloy-tuloy na supply ng tubig at irigasyon sa kanilang mga sakahan. Mahalagang mabuo agad ng pamahalaan ang National Water Use Plan nang sa ganun ay maging mas kampante ang ating mga magsasaka," Suarez said in a press statement.

"Ayon sa datos mula sa National Irrigation Administration o NIA, halos 36 porsiyento ng ating 3,128,631 total irrigable areas ay walang matinong irrigation system. Kailangan muna nating resolbain ang ugat ng problemang ito. Dito papasok ang pagkakaroon ng isang National Water Use Plan na siyang sagot sa kakulangan ng tubig sa ating mga palayan," Suarez said.

Upang maabot ang food security para sa bansa mahalaga na isabay sa pagpapatupad ng national farm to market road plan and national water use plan. This will ensure we optimize our natural resource towards sustainability and security," Suarez added.

The comprehensive water program, the lawmaker said, would complement the National Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) masterplan, which President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has asked agriculture officials and experts to create the soonest time possible.

OPINION BY DAVID C. SUAREZ



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# Group backs upgrade of Pasig River ferry system

A transport advocacy group has expressed support for the government's plan to upgrade the Pasig River ferry system instead of pushing through with a proposed expressway.

"The way to maximize the ferry system is for the government to give attention and allot funds for

its development instead of building an expressway over the Pasig River that will further contribute to its decay," The Passenger Forum (TPF) convenor Primo Morillo said in a statement.

He added that their group is happy that the Department of Trans-

portation is listening to their suggestions.

Morillo hopes the government will develop the ferry system "by making bigger terminals, adding more stations, acquiring additional waterbuses, among other things that will make commuter experience better."

The TPF has been pushing for the expansion of the ferry system and thumbed down the proposal for the Pasig River Expressway (PAREX).

The group said that PAREX only prioritizes private cars and is not environment-friendly, which could be worrisome for the rehabilitation

of the waterway.

"It also endangers multiple heritage sites and historical buildings in Manila, especially inside Intramuros. Even their environment impact assessment report has been suspected to be plagiarized," Morillo said.

- Romina Cabrera



# 7 STEPS TO AN ECO-FRIENDLY HOME

**T**he Philippines is one of the countries that is most vulnerable to climate change. Extreme rainfall and drought will affect availability of water and food; rising sea levels will flood coastal areas and dislocate millions of people.

However, simple acts done every day by millions of people can help reduce climate change. This is the principle behind the SM Green Movement – a collective effort among customers, communities, and partners to make “greener choices” that will protect people and the planet.

Here are some easy and affordable changes you can make right now to make your home and your lifestyle more environmentally friendly.

## 1. Unplug appliances when not in use.

Appliances that are on standby or idle power mode can still use electricity. Be mindful of energy waste in your daily routine: for example, leaving a laptop plugged in even when it's fully charged, or forgetting to turn off the coffee maker. You can also use a power strip to group appliances – such as TV, gaming console, powered speakers – so you can turn them all off at the same time.

## 2. Invest in energy-efficient lightbulbs.

Start by replacing five of your most commonly-used light fixtures with LED lights.

LED lights use from 75 percent to 90 percent less energy compared to a traditional bulb, and last 50 times longer than incandescent lights and 10 times longer than fluorescent lights. Since lighting typically accounts for 15 percent of a home's average electricity use, switching to LED can also save you a lot of money.

## 3. Change the way you take a bath.

A 10-minute shower can use up to 25 gallons (or almost 114 liters) of water. You can save water just by turning off the water while you soap and shampoo or using a pail and tabo. If you get a low-flow shower head, you lower water consumption by 40 percent or more.

## 4. Think of greener ways to beat the heat.

Air conditioners use a lot of electricity, and fluorocarbons that deplete the ozone layer. Inverter air conditioners use less energy, but it's still important to minimize use. To keep your home cool, you can:

Get blackout curtains. The thick lining can block up to 99 percent of light and 100 percent of UV rays.

Get air coolers. These are fans that blow hot air into a wet pad, so the water evaporates and cools the air. You can find some on SM online, and even more choices in the department store.

Use your fans creatively. Open the window and point fans towards it so it blows hot air out.

Adjust ceiling fan settings to counter clockwise, so it pulls hot air up and pushes cool air down.

## 5. Choose eco-friendly, sustainable products.

It is now easier and more convenient to find eco-friendly products. You have thousands of choices at SM Supermalls. Watsons has over 1,200 sustainable health and beauty products. Body Shop uses ethically-sourced ingredients, and has even switched to 100 percent recycled hair care bottles. Kultura has handmade products with natural or recycled materials – and you can find even more eco-friendly cooking and cleaning products in SM Home.

No time to compare products? Ask an SM personal shopper to do it for you, then either pick it up or have it delivered to your doorstep.

## 6. Compost your food waste.

Composting reduces the amount of trash that goes to landfills and yields a rich fertilizer that you can use for your garden.

You don't need to have a lot of space to start composting. You can use a 10-gallon plastic bin that you can put in your yard. Adding scraps of shredded newspapers or cardboard can help balance the mix of wet and dry and prevent it from smelling.



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Continue 7 steps to an eco-friendly home

**7. Reduce, reuse, and recycle plastic.**

Plastic takes up to 450 years to decompose in a landfill, and most of it, ends up in the ocean and kills marine life. While it's impossible for most homes to stop using plastic completely, you can use it conscientiously.

Buy commonly-used cooking ingredients in big sizes to minimize packaging

Bring an eco-bag and sturdy plastic containers when you go to the market to hold produce, meat, and fish.

Bring recyclables to SM Supermalls' Trash to Cash recycling market every first Friday and Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. You can find a list of participating malls and the locations of the recycling booths in this SM Green Movement page.

The Philippines may be vulnerable to climate change, but Filipinos can make a difference. "The choices we make in our own home can protect our common home, the planet. SM is committed to making it easier for everyone to follow a green lifestyle and become an eco-warrior," says SM Supermalls president Steven Tan.