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ABS CBN

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By: David Dizon

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SUNSTAR

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THE MANILA TIMES

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MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Myrna Velasco

As Christmas greetings made the rounds, so did quieter whispers of an unsettling rumor: that a major mining company shareholder is allegedly being groomed to take the helm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

MANILA STANDARD

[Photo Release] Collective Action

Climate Change Commission vice chairperson and executive director Robert Borje, Commissioner Albert Dela Cruz, executive director Sustainability and Risk Management Unit of Ayala Corporation Ma. Victoria Tan, Tebtebba executive director Helen Biangalen-Magata, Mayor Alfredo Coro II of the Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao, PLDT and Smart chief sustainability officer Melissa Vergel de Dios, UN Women Philippines Project Coordinator – Women Peace Humanitarian Fund Vanessa Vianca Pallarco-Yu, UN Food and Agriculture Organization Philippines representative Lionel Dabbadie, Cong. Anna Veloso Tuazon of Leyte's third District, Cong. Jose Manuel Alba of Bukidnon's first District, and Mayor Jose Joel Doromal of Maramag, Bukidnon join the symbolic signing of the Unity Board during the CCC Climate Consciousness Week Solidarity Night.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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Don't put away your Christmas sweaters just yet, Kapamilya. According to PAGASA climate monitoring and prediction section chief Ana Liza Solis, Filipinos should expect a cold surge this month of January, with some areas experiencing temperatures as low as 7.5 degrees Celsius.

"Mas malamig pa sa mountainous areas sa Cordillera Administrative Region. Wala tayong ibang stations sa pinakamatataas na lugar. Mas mababa pa sa 7.5 degrees," she said in a DZMM interview.

Historically, the coldest temperature ever recorded in the Philippines was 6.3 degrees Celsius in Baguio City in 1961. The lowest temperature recorded for 2025 was 9.4 degrees Celsius in La Trinidad, Benguet.

PAGASA is also predicting between 2 to 8 tropical cyclones affecting the Philippine area of responsibility during the first half of 2026.

Solis said the northeast monsoon caused recent heavy rains in Metro Manila, with the shear line and easterlies also causing rains in parts of the country.

The weather bureau has also released a new list of tropical cyclone names for 2026.

• Ada

• Basyang

• Caloy

• Domeng

• Ester

• Francisco

• Gardo

• Henry

• Inday

• Josie

• Kiyapo

• Luis

• Maymay

• Neneng

• Obet

• Pilandok

• Queenie

• Rosal

• Samuel

• Tomas

• Umberto

• Venus

• Waldo

• Yayang

• Zeny

The PAGASA official said the names Agaton, Florita, Karding, and Paeng have been “decommissioned” after leaving at least 300 fatalities or one billion pesos damage in agriculture and infrastructure.

Ada, Francisco, Kiyapo, and Pilandok are the new replacement names for 2026. Solis said there are also auxiliary names that will be used if more storms hit the country.

She said PAGASA held a contest for the new storm names to make it more gender-balanced.

SUNSTAR

MACCII braces for climate change, policy disruptions

By: Minerva Zamora-Arceo

Businesses in Central Luzon are bracing for the disruptions brought about by climate and regulatory changes that have affected their operations in 2025.

Thus said Elizabeth Carlos-Timbol, president of the Metro Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MACCII) recently.

She stressed that climate-related disruptions have affected supply chains, logistics, agriculture, and tourism last year.

“We see that these challenges will likely continue in 2026, especially climate-related disruptions affecting supply chains, logistics, agriculture, and tourism. We are preparing to overcome the challenges this year although the MACCII members have already started implementing mitigations and green initiatives last year,” Timbol said.

She added that they will remain vigilant on global concerns on energy, food price, and policy disruptions. “We will monitor electricity costs, , food price swings, possible policy or regulatory changes, and overall business and consumer confidence."

Timbol said that in the Philippines, the year 2025 was marked by economic uncertainty and uneven demand.

“There were high interest rates raising borrowing costs and making expansion and working capital harder, especially for MSMEs. Weather disruptions like typhoons and flooding also affected operations and supply chains. Slower and more closely scrutinized government infrastructure disbursements further tempered confidence in the second half of the year,” Timbol explained.

According to her, the mostly-hit sectors are those in the construction and public-works related suppliers. She said they were heavily affected as slower infrastructure releases created project delays and weaker pipelines.

Timbol added that consumer-facing sectors like retail, food services, and discretionary goods faced softer demand as households became more cautious.

She also said that logistics, transport, and import-reliant manufacturing also felt pressure from higher operating costs, disruptions, and global and forex-related risks.

Timbol said MACCII members became more disciplined by closely managing cash flow, planning inventories better, and strengthening collections.

“Many of us diversified suppliers, renegotiated contracts, and offered more flexible pricing or product options, while accelerating digital selling and customer engagement. Members also leaned on the Chamber for shared learning, referrals, and collaboration to sustain operations and protect jobs,” she said.

On a positive outlook for 2026, Timbol said that inflation eased late in 2025 and rate cuts began, which may gradually support activity through lower borrowing costs and improved cash flow.

Timbol said the sectors expected to expand include logistics, warehousing, cold chain and fulfillment, tourism and experience-based services, health and wellness, digital services, and agri value-adding enterprises.

“Markets are more demanding because buyers are more value-conscious, compare options quickly, and expect speed, clear pricing, dependable delivery, and reliable after-sales support. In B2B, requirements are higher, with stronger focus on compliance, documentation, professionalism, stable supply relationships, and predictable timelines,” Timbol said.

In Central Luzon, especially the Clark-Pampanga corridor, Timbol said fast growth is expected in ICT, data centers, and the broader digital ecosystem as demand for connectivity, cloud, cybersecurity, and enterprise digital solutions rises.

“Agri-logistics, food hubs, and cold storage are also positioned to expand as supply chains modernize, with related gains for warehousing and transport services. Construction and allied services should benefit as large-scale projects move into active development, supporting a wider ecosystem of opportunities,” she added.

THE MANILA TIMES

Climate's unjust grip fuels inequality's deepening shadow globally
By: Ludwig Federigan

THE climate crisis, often framed as a universal challenge, is a profound amplifier of existing global inequalities.

The World Inequality Report 2026 reveals that the burdens of environmental degradation, economic disparity and social injustice are inextricably linked, creating a perilous feedback loop that threatens the stability of societies worldwide.

It underscores that our world is not just warming, but also becoming increasingly unequal, with devastating consequences for the most vulnerable. Economist Jayati Ghosh, who wrote the report's foreword, says: "We live in a system where resources extracted from labor and nature in low-income countries continue to sustain the prosperity and the unsustainable lifestyle of people in high-income economies and rich elites across countries.

These patterns are not accidents of markets. Rather, they reflect the legacy of history, but even more the functioning of institutions, regulations and policies, all of which are related to unequal power relations that have yet to be rebalanced." The global economic landscape remains disturbingly uneven. The report highlights that the wealthiest 10 percent of the global population captures a staggering 53 percent of total income and owns three-quarters of all personal wealth.

This concentration becomes more extreme at the very top, where the richest 0.001 percent, fewer than 60,000 individuals, command three times more wealth than the bottom half of humanity combined. This elite group has seen their wealth grow at nearly twice the rate of the bottom half of the population since the 1990s.

These disparities represent a fundamental imbalance where billions struggle for basic economic stability while a tiny minority accumulates unprecedented financial power. Regionally, this is evident in the contrast between high-income areas (North America, Oceania and Europe), and populous, lower-income regions (the South, Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa).

The climate crisis mirrors and exacerbates this unequal economic structure. The report introduces the concept of "triple climate inequality," illustrating that the poorest lose the most, contribute the least and possess the fewest resources to adapt. Emissions data reveals a shocking disparity: the richest 10 percent of individuals are responsible for 77 percent of global emissions linked to private capital ownership and 47 percent of consumption-related emissions, while the poorest half contributes just 3 percent. These figures dismantle the notion of shared responsibility, pointing instead to a concentrated "carbon footprint of capital."

Vulnerable nations

Those who emit the least are paradoxically the most exposed and vulnerable to climate shocks. Low-income countries bear the brunt of climate-driven income losses, with the bottom 50 percent experiencing about 75 percent of these losses relative to their income. Climate change impacts livelihoods and erodes private and public wealth through physical damages, asset repricing and increased fiscal pressures. Though planned new oil, gas and coal extraction alone could exhaust the 1.7 degrees Celsius carbon budget, investment in fossil fuel projects remains financially attractive due to short-term returns. This pursuit of profit at the expense of the planet further entrenches a system where the wealthy benefit from carbon-intensive activities while the poor suffer.

The Philippines serves as an example of a nation grappling with both high inequality and acute climate vulnerability. Its socioeconomic profile shows that inequality remains substantial. The top 10 percent of earners capture 45 percent of total income, while the bottom 50 percent receive only 16 percent. Wealth concentration is even starker: the richest 10 percent hold 60 percent of total wealth, and the top 1 percent alone account for 27 percent. The income gap between the top 10 percent and the bottom 50 percent stood at 28.0 in 2024, indicating persistent disparities.

The Philippines is on the front lines of climate change, enduring frequent and intense typhoons, rising sea levels and extreme weather events. These climate impacts disproportionately affect its vulnerable populations, who lack the resources to rebuild or relocate. The damage to agriculture, infrastructure and livelihoods from climate disasters exacerbates existing income and wealth gaps. It pushes more people into poverty and entrenches the power of those who are equipped to withstand such shocks. The country's inequalities make it less resilient to external pressures, including those imposed by a changing climate.

Addressing these interconnected crises requires a fundamental shift in policy and political will. The report asserts that inequality is a "political choice" rather than an inevitable outcome. Climate policy itself must be reframed as an inequality policy, focusing on ownership-based emissions and ensuring a just transition that does not exacerbate existing disparities.

The World Inequality Report 2026 serves as a powerful call to action. It provides the empirical foundation for understanding how economic, environmental and political inequalities intertwine. The choice before us is stark: continue down a path of extreme concentration and deepening crises or forge a new trajectory toward shared prosperity and a sustainable future through concerted political will and global cooperation.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

From waste to resilience: The choices that will define our 2026
By: Secretary Robert EA Borje

The new year is supposed to renew hope. Filipinos welcome it with family, faith and the belief that beginnings matter. Yet in the first hours of 2026, the country confronted an unwelcome truth: the climate does not honor holidays. Overnight rains triggered flooding in several areas — including in Metro Manila and Boracay — while many communities woke up to streets littered with post-celebration waste, plastics washed into strained drains, and air quality monitors detecting elevated particulate matter before midday.

These scenes appeared briefly in national headlines. But they should now shape our national awareness.

What we witnessed on 1 January was not catastrophe — it was something more unsettling: the normalization of climate stress. Vulnerability is no longer worsened during super typhoons; it now shows itself in the ordinary rhythm of our days. And the year's early warnings remind us of a difficult truth: our climate risks are shaped not only by storms, but by the choices we make long before any storm forms.

Filipinos do not intend to worsen floods or pollute waterways. Yet the waste that greeted communities on New Year's morning — scattered plastics, blocked drains, residual contamination — reflected the cumulative impact of millions of routine decisions. Behavior shapes risk. Waste patterns shape resilience. And in one of the world's most exposed archipelagos, ordinary choices carry extraordinary consequences.

Improperly managed waste clogs waterways, degrades watersheds, disrupts coastal ecosystems, and heightens flood impacts. Landfills generate methane — a greenhouse gas more than 80 times more potent than CO_2 in the short term. Poor air quality worsens heat stress and respiratory illness. These chains, documented by weather agency PAGASA, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environment Management Bureau, the Climate Change Commission and the IPCC, are no longer abstract science. They define everyday life in a warming world.

For the Philippines — consistently among the most climate-vulnerable nations — climate change is not distant. It is lived. And every flood teaches the same lesson: rebuilding is not resilience. Prevention is.

Understanding prevention requires recognizing how climate change and waste reinforce each other. The United Nations identifies three planetary crises — climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution — and waste, especially plastics, sits at their intersection. The "take, make,

dispose" model produces surges of single-use plastics and food waste that overwhelm local systems during periods of high consumption. Every discarded sachet, wrapper, and container carries an emissions footprint, from extraction to disposal.

This is why Zero Waste is not a lifestyle preference but a climate resilience strategy. Zero Waste month is commemorated in January but must be observed throughout the year. Waste management deals with trash after it exists; Zero Waste prevents unnecessary materials from entering circulation. A circular approach lowers emissions, restores waterways and ecosystems, strengthens local economies, and aligns with our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Resilience does not begin at landfills or during disasters — it begins with what we choose not to throw away.

The past year showed what works. Where local governments partnered with state universities and colleges, adaptation strategies became clearer, risk governance improved, and investments in land use, water systems, and infrastructure aligned with scientific data. Where waste governance strengthened, flood impacts weakened and waterways ran cleaner. Climate-vulnerable municipalities that completed updated assessments accessed more funding and prepared stronger project proposals.

Legislative leadership — led by champions like Senator Loren Legarda and Congressman Rufus Rodriguez — ensured policy coherence and more responsive climate budgeting. And under President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s direction, the rollout of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the NDC Implementation Plan (NDCIP) helped improve coordination, harmonized risk data, and clarified investment priorities for 2026 and beyond.

But the start of this year makes one message unmistakable: Our strategic and integrated development plans must match the new climate reality. Rainfall volumes are higher. Inundation is more frequent. Our assumptions about drainage capacity, land use, water systems, and infrastructure design must shift as well. Resilient cities cannot be built on outdated blueprints.

Beyond engineered solutions, we must scale nature-based solutions — from ridge to reef — that regulate floods, filter water, stabilize soil and protect coasts. Lasting resilience requires natural and built systems working together, not competing.

But ultimately, climate action returns to one constant: behavior. The NAP and NDCIP can provide structure, but outcomes rest on decisions — in homes, workplaces, councils, businesses and national leadership.

If we want fewer flooded streets, plastics must stay out of waterways. If we want cleaner air, emissions must be reduced at their source. If we want safer coasts, natural buffers must be restored. If we want long-term resilience, our systems must make sustainable behavior the easier choice — not the exceptional one.

The Philippines must not be defined by its disasters. We must be defined by the courage of our decisions. Every piece of waste prevented is an emission avoided. Every system strengthened is a safeguard for the next generation. It is high time for us to end the year right with the day-to-day decisions we make. Every choice we make in 2026 and beyond that is grounded in climate reality is a step toward a stronger nation.

PE2 makes case for efficiency

By: Maria Bernadette Romero

Energy efficiency can no longer sit in the background of the Philippines' climate strategy — and the Philippine Energy Efficiency Alliance (PE2) is pressing the government to act before the window to cut emissions at scale narrows further.

This urgency was reflected in a meeting earlier today between PE2 officials and the Climate Change Commission (CCC), where both groups explored closer collaboration to support the Department of Energy (DOE) in positioning energy efficiency as a central pillar of the country's climate change mitigation efforts.

"The Climate Change Commission has already reaffirmed the Philippines' dedication to climate action through green economic pathways," said CCC vice chairman and executive director Robert E.A. Borje, who led the CCC delegation. He pointed to a rapidly changing economic landscape and fast-moving technological innovations as forces that are intensifying the need for efficiency-driven reforms.

"[Energy efficiency] needs to be embedded in consumer behavior, which is why the Commission is playing an important role in ensuring that it becomes a priority of the Government," Borje said.

Borje warned that the country risks missing major emissions-cutting opportunities if energy efficiency continues to be undervalued. "We're underappreciating the contribution of energy efficiency. If we don't work on it, then we would not be optimizing opportunities to reduce the carbon impact of not just government and organizations but of the entire economy. We cannot merely rely on renewables to decarbonize the energy sector.

We need to go through the process of strengthening energy efficiency as an equally important pillar of the country's climate change mitigation strategy," he told PE2.

Response to global commitments

The PE2 delegation was led by President Alexander Ablaza and included Vice President for external affairs Theresa Acedillo-Lapuz, policy, advocacy, and external affairs advisor Archie Diaz, and secretariat manager Hazel Planco.

Ablaza anchored PE2's push on global commitments, noting that more than 200 countries supported a consensus at COP28 to double energy-efficiency progress by 2030. He cited the International Energy Agency's view that doubling reductions in energy intensity to four percent over the next five years would put the world on track to cut today's energy use by eight percent, while still powering an economy twice as large with two billion more people by 2050.

“In every clean energy roadmap, just energy transition, decarbonization, and net zero conversation, we need to deploy energy efficiency and conservation at a much larger scale compared to renewables and bridge a wider investment gap through 2030-2050,” Ablaza said.

He added that the shift must involve all sectors. “All energy end-users in the Philippines should be part of a societal transformation toward a decarbonized and less energy-intensive economy through 2050. We should support DOE in steadily improving the awareness and compliance of commercial, industrial, transport establishments, households, small businesses, and even Government entities with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act,” he said.

PE2 said mobilizing P12 trillion in energy efficiency investments through 2040 could slash energy use by 182 million tons of oil equivalent, generate more than P36 trillion in energy savings, avoid 1.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, defer over 45,900 megawatts in infrastructure upgrades, and create about 9.1 million green jobs.

Both CCC and PE2 agreed to pursue a follow-up meeting to discuss a proposed Memorandum of Understanding to formalize collaboration on energy efficiency.

PLDT, Smart, CCC unite for climate change action

By: Raffy Ayeng

The telecommunication arm of the Manuel V. Pangilinan Group, PLDT Inc. (PLDT), also the country's largest fully integrated telco company, and its wireless unit Smart Communications Inc. (Smart), have thrown their commitment to climate action by joining the symbolic signing of the Unity Board with the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

At the CCC's Climate Consciousness Week Solidarity Night recently, PLDT and Smart signed the Unity Board, a visual representation of a collective commitment to climate action, unity, cultural preservation, and shared responsibility in building a climate-resilient and climate-smart future.

As part of the ceremony, guests from national and local government, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector received traditional Philippine fabrics such as T'nalak, Inabel, Abaca, Straw Habi, and Ifugao Fabric.

Each piece, representing the rich stories of local communities, was pinned onto the Unity Board and sealed with signatures.

Started in 2024, Solidarity Night reaffirms the CCC's belief that climate leadership is a shared responsibility, strengthened by partnership, grounded in evidence, and driven by collective resolve.

"Building a climate-resilient Philippines requires a whole-of-nation approach, where every individual and sector contributes within their sphere of influence. As part of the private sector, PLDT and Smart play a critical role by continuing to build and operate a robust, reliable network that ensures connectivity across the country — even in the face of extreme weather conditions," said PLDT and Smart chief sustainability officer Melissa Vergel de Dios.

PLDT and Smart reaffirm their support for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 13: Climate Action and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals, as they continue to integrate sustainability in their operations.

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

PE2, CCC team up for local energy efficiency push

By: Jed Macapagal

The Philippine Energy Efficiency Alliance (PE2) recenly met with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) this month to explore ways to work together to support the Department of Energy (DOE) in enabling energy efficiency as a climate change mitigation strategy.

Alexander Ablaza, PE2 president, told reporters over the weekend that this move is crucial as over 200 countries have also supported a global consensus to double energy efficiency progress on the road to 2030.

He cited the International Energy Agency's projections that by doubling the reduction of energy intensities to 4 percent in the next five years, the world would be on the pathway toward reducing today's energy use by 8 percent and still energize a global economy twice as large and with two billion in population growth by 2050.

"In every clean energy roadmap, just energy transition, decarbonization and net zero conversation, we need to deploy energy efficiency and conservation at a much larger scale compared to renewables and bridge a wider investment gap through 2030 to 2050," Ablaza said.

"All energy end-users in the Philippines should be part of a societal transformation toward a decarbonized and a less energy-intensive economy through 2050," he explained. "We should support DOE in steadily improving the awareness and compliance of commercial, industrial, transport establishments, households, small businesses and even Government entities with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act."

PE2 also reiterated its projections that if the economy succeeds in mobilizing P12 trillion in energy efficiency investments through 2040, the country could expect to shave off 182 million tons of oil equivalent in energy consumption and in turn, save over P36 trillion in energy purchases. While doing so, it can avoid 1.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions, and defer over 45,900 megawatts in energy infrastructure upgrades.

Additionally, the local energy efficiency industry is also seen to be able to generate incremental gross domestic product, and create some 9.1 million green jobs through the next decade and a half.

In the meeting, Robert Borje, CCC vice chairman and executive director, said that they have already reaffirmed the Philippines' dedication to climate action through green economic pathways.

Borje explained that a rapidly changing economic landscape and technological innovations exert increasing pressure toward the adoption of energy efficiency as it needs to be embedded in consumer behavior.

“We’re underappreciating the contribution of energy efficiency,” Borje pointed out. “If we don’t work on it, then we would not be optimizing opportunities to reduce carbon impact of not just government and organizations but of the entire economy. We cannot merely rely on renewables to decarbonize the energy sector. We need to go through the process of strengthening energy efficiency as an equally important pillar of the country’s climate change mitigation strategy.”

MANILA BULLETIN

Is a mining magnate eyeing the DENR throne?

By: Myrna Velasco

As Christmas greetings made the rounds, so did quieter whispers of an unsettling rumor: that a major mining company shareholder is allegedly being groomed to take the helm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

This raises a troubling scenario: Is current Environment Secretary Raphael “Popo” Lotilla already on borrowed time—despite being barely a year into his post?

The mining magnate, who has parlayed business success into political clout, is reportedly being tapped for—or is eyeing—the DENR portfolio. This comes even as the individual's company allegedly faces contentious tax issues and royalty disputes with host communities. According to the grapevine, this DENR hopeful is stepping aside from a political role, seemingly to clear a path for a higher perch at the department.

Just this September, Republic Act No. 12253 introduced a seismic shift in large-scale metallic mining. The law enforces a tiered royalty regime, windfall profit taxes, and strict “ring-fencing” to rein in excess profits and plug long-standing revenue leaks in the extractive industry.

This statute stands at the heart of the DENR’s deliverables. It forces industry players to reckon with both their environmental responsibilities and their financial obligations to the state, while also compelling firms to account for regulatory breaches. But if a key industry player with sprawling operations is handed the DENR portfolio, where does public regulation end and private interest begin?

Beyond environmental oversight, the DENR is on the front lines of climate accountability. It is currently collaborating with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) to finalize the new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0), which will uphold the country’s carbon reduction pledges under the Paris Agreement.

As a central force in the nation’s decarbonization drive, the DENR is also spearheading multi-stakeholder efforts to launch a carbon market and is finalizing marine spatial planning for the Philippines’ fledgling offshore wind sector. Any abrupt shake-up at the department risks throwing these urgent policies off track, potentially stalling initiatives intended to attract fresh investment.

At stake here is more than leadership; it is the administration’s commitment to integrity and merit—especially if a widely respected Secretary faces displacement.

‘Open wounds’ of corruption deepen investor skepticism

Separately, the lingering multi-billion-peso flood control scandal continues to spook investors. Business leaders and economists warn of declining confidence, already mirrored by this year's slump in foreign investment commitments.

As former DPWH Secretary Rogelio "Babes" Singson and ex-SGV country managing partner Rossana Fajardo step down from the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI), fears mount that the body tasked with probing corruption is losing the credibility it desperately needs.
Global investors are keenly monitoring the fallout. They are questioning whether the true masterminds will face justice, or if accountability will be limited to contractors and lower-tier DPWH officials.

Despite the President's earlier vow to jail those involved before Christmas, high-profile figures remain untouched, fueling public frustration over a lackluster outcome.

What is the fate of the lawmakers once named as recipients of flood control kickbacks—or the resigned officials allegedly involved in illicitly approving funds for "ghost projects"?

Realistically, how can the Philippines attract foreign capital when large-scale corruption remains unresolved? Investors will think twice—if not thrice—when graft cases linger in limbo. Without real accountability, the Philippines risks being written off as a perilous market. These investigations cast a long shadow over the country's economic prospects for the remainder of the Marcos term.

2028 in focus: Political forecasts shaping decisions

Even this early, investors are scrutinizing the 2028 political battlefield, analyzing not only potential presidential candidates but the web of business interests orbiting them. For foreign capital, knowing who backs the likely winners is critical; in the Philippines, regulatory capture runs deep, and policy is often dictated by those nearest to power.

In a country notorious for incarcerating former presidents, the pressing question is whether the current administration and its allies will hedge their bets by switching loyalties, or risk the wrath of the next leadership.

By 2026, political realignments and behind-the-scenes maneuvering by major businesses will likely be in full swing—an unfolding drama the international community will be watching closely.
For local titans, claims of neutrality rarely hold. In every administration, "Presidential BFFs" emerge, often cornering policy favors and lucrative deals.
Such preferential treatment undermines confidence. Foreign capital hesitates when institutional co-optation allows a privileged few to control the rules of the game. This is precisely why investors demand a steep "risk premium" for the Philippines, where political entanglements make navigating the market far harder than in more business-savvy neighbors.

Without meaningful reforms to tame self-serving business backers, the Philippines will continue to lag in attracting foreign direct investment. When political loyalty outweighs expertise in government appointments, the nation's prospects for a sustainable future are dangerously compromised.

The harsh truth is undeniable: while leaders elevate "yes-men," truly talented Filipinos are building industries abroad—a painful reminder of misaligned priorities. We can only hope that one day, the Philippines sees the worth of its own brilliant minds before they make their mark elsewhere.

MANILA STANDARD

[Photo Release] Collective Action

Climate Change Commission vice chairperson and executive director Robert Borje, Commissioner Albert Dela Cruz, executive director Sustainability and Risk Management Unit of Ayala Corporation Ma. Victoria Tan, Tebtebba executive director Helen Biangalen-Magata, Mayor Alfredo Coro II of the Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao, PLDT and Smart chief sustainability officer Melissa Vergel de Dios, UN Women Philippines Project Coordinator – Women Peace Humanitarian Fund Vanessa Vianca Pallarco-Yu, UN Food and Agriculture Organization Philippines representative Lionel Dabbadie, Cong. Anna Veloso Tuazon of Leyte's third District, Cong. Jose Manuel Alba of Bukidnon's first District, and Mayor Jose Joel Doromal of Maramag, Bukidnon join the symbolic signing of the Unity Board during the CCC Climate Consciousness Week Solidarity Night.

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