



NEWS ROUNDUP

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BUSINESS MIRROR

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By: Roderick Abad

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PALAWAN NEWS

[26 million Filipino learners suffer the most from climate change](#)

Over 26 million enrolled students in the Philippines are confronted with the multifaceted impacts of climate change, including the possibility of El Nino bringing intolerable heat, more powerful typhoons, and limited access to water for basic needs. This happens to about half of the 75 million children around the world whose education is interrupted every year by natural disasters like floods and droughts.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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By: Nick Perry

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By: Caecent No-ot Magumbol

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

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“In the past four years, we have experienced changes in the school calendar and mode of delivery due to the pandemic and to adapt to the changing climate, on top of all the class suspensions due to frequent typhoons. We are yet facing another calendar shift due to El Niño,” said Rohj Olivo, a 17-year-old champion of the nongovernment organization’s Generation Hope campaign against climate change and inequality.

Several local government units in the past few days have canceled classes due to record-high temperatures lately.

During his recent trip to Thailand for the 11th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), the country’s youth representative spoke with Unescap Executive Secretary Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana and Surya Deva, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development, about children’s rights to a healthy environment.

“Our argument is clear: in the midst of climate change, government action should ensure that we have uninterrupted access to quality education, and to effectively solve this problem, leaders must not only listen to children and youth’s voices but also heed our wisdom, for it is our future that hangs in the balance,” Olivo shared.

In a sideline event of APFSD on Building a Greener Future: Education as a Climate Solution, Philippine Rep. Ma. Cynthia King Chan shared information about.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[26-M Filipino learners suffer from climate change — group](#)

By: Gabriela Baron

About 26 million Filipino learners are suffering most from climate change, according to the non-profit organization Save the Children Philippines (SCP).

"In the past four years, we have experienced changes in the school calendar and mode of delivery due to the pandemic and to adapt to the changing climate, on top of all the class suspensions due to frequent typhoons," 17-year-old climate campaigner Rohj Olivo said.

"We are yet facing another calendar shift due to El Nino," Olivo added.

The Department of Education (DepEd) recently announced that schools will shift back to the old school calendar of June to March from the current August to May calendar.

A survey among 11,000 teachers by the Alliance of Concerned Teachers in 2023 found that over 67 percent of teachers experienced "intolerable heat" in their classrooms during the peak of the dry season in March.

The soaring temperature also forced some local governments earlier this week to shorten class times and recommend distance learning for students.

Olivo urged the government to take action and ensure that students have uninterrupted access to quality education despite the changing climate.

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Phi-US diplomatic talks to proceed next week — Año

By: Tiziana Celine Piatos

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and US President Joe Biden's bilateral meeting will take place on 11 April in a move signaling a continuation of diplomatic dialogue between the Philippines and the United States, National Security Adviser Eduardo Año said on Thursday.

In an interview with Palace reporters, Año said their meeting is expected to delve into a range of issues, including regional security concerns, economic cooperation, and collaborative efforts in addressing climate change.

When asked about the agenda for the upcoming meeting, Año emphasized its continuity from their previous engagements.

"I think it is just a sequel of the state visit in May last year, the programs that were discussed with the different agencies and departments of the US and Philippine sides," Año said, underlining the ongoing dialogue and cooperation between the two nations across various sectors.

When asked about the inclusion of the South China Sea on the agenda, Año said yes.

The South China Sea has long been a contentious issue in the Asia-Pacific region, with overlapping territorial claims from multiple nations, including China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Taiwan.

Tensions have escalated in recent years due to China's assertive actions in the area, including the construction of artificial islands and military installations.

MANILA BULLETIN

[Papua New Guinea backs PH's call for respecting int'l law](#)

By: Joseph Pedrajas

Papua New Guinea on Thursday, April 4, joined other countries in calling for respect for international law as the Philippines informed the island nation of developments in the Indo-Pacific region and sought its support in ensuring peace and security.

This developed as Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Enrique Manalo and Papua New Guinea Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko met in Manila for policy consultations that included discussions on boosting ties on various areas.

Their meeting came amid more cases of aggression being experienced by the Philippines in the South China Sea.

“Both our countries share the same interests in upholding international law, particularly the UNCLOS, and I updated the Foreign Minister on challenges faced by the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea,” Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Enrique Manalo said in his remarks.

“PNG believes in the peaceful co-existence of nation-states consistent with international law and resolving disputes peacefully and respecting the sovereignty of other states,” Tkatchenko said.

Apart from maritime concerns, the two diplomats also tackled air services, tourism, labor, agriculture, fisheries, trade and other “common issues of concern,” according to Manalo.

“But as friends, as partners, and as members of the Pacific family, we must take advantage of the potential such as mitigating and adapting to climate change, and disaster risk reduction and management, that this partnership has to offer,” Manalo said.

Manalo and Tkatchenko also discussed economic cooperation to strengthen two-way trade in agriculture and fishery.

“Our respective agencies shall work towards the renewal and enhancement of the existing Memorandum of Understanding on Fisheries Cooperation,” Manalo said.

Tkatchenko said both countries have abundant natural resources, so they “can learn from each other’s experiences through mutual cooperation specifically in the fisheries, agriculture, tourism and downstream processing.”

"I am pleased that trade and economic relations between the two countries is steadily increasing and should continue to expand and diversify," he said.

"There are vast, untapped opportunities that can be further harnessed and developed by both countries through cooperation for mutual benefits," he added.

NIKKEI ASIA

[Japan, U.S., Philippines to cooperate in clean energy, chips: Kishida](#)

Japan, the U.S. and the Philippines will work together in areas such as semiconductors, digitalization, communication networks, clean energy and critical minerals, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told Nikkei ahead of a historic three-way summit in Washington next week.

Kishida said in an exclusive interview on Thursday that the world is entering a "new phase" and Japan needs to show a bigger presence and "take greater responsibility" to provide options for countries in Southeast Asia such as the Philippines.

His comments come after a recent survey by a Singapore-based think tank showed that over half of the people in Southeast Asia would prefer to align with China over the U.S. if the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was forced to choose between the rival superpowers.

"We need the U.S. to remain engaged in the Asia-Pacific region," Kishida said. "We also face the reality that China is increasing its presence in the region. Other countries expect Japan to increase its presence and provide an attractive alternative for Asian countries in areas in which Japan is strong so that they can make a choice that works best for them."

He is set to hold a trilateral meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in the U.S. capital on April 11. The first such summit by the three countries is designed to demonstrate their strong partnership in tackling regional challenges, including an increasingly assertive China. Kishida will hold separate talks with Biden the day before.

Kishida said that a dispute over Nippon Steel's proposed acquisition of U.S. Steel will not be on the agenda when he meets with Biden. "It is a matter for private companies," Kishida said. But he added: "Japan is the biggest investor in the United States and is responsible for a significant portion of U.S. employment."

Nippon Steel agreed to buy U.S. Steel for \$14 billion in December, but the outlook for the deal is now clouded by Biden's opposition. Donald Trump, who is running for the presidency again, has also promised to block the deal if elected.

Describing the bilateral economic partnership with the U.S. as a "win-win" arrangement, Kishida called on Washington to further strengthen the relationship. "It is important for

Japan and the U.S. ... to work toward maintaining and strengthening a free, open and rules-based economic order," he said.

Japan, the U.S. and the Philippines are also expected to consider collaboration in other areas, such as the development of semiconductor facilities by U.S. companies in the Philippines, with Japan helping to train Filipino engineers. Development of 5G networks in the Philippines by Japan and the U.S. is also under consideration.

Tokyo and Washington hope that such initiatives will enable the Philippines to develop its economy without becoming reliant on Chinese technologies.

Collaboration in cybersecurity to deal with growing threats from China, as well as the development of supply chains for nickel, a key metal used in electric vehicle batteries, is also likely to be discussed given the Philippines' role as a nickel producer. The trilateral partnership thus aims to strengthen the countries' respective economic and national security as well as deal with global challenges such as climate change.

In that regard, Kishida said Tokyo and Washington have a valuable role to play.

"Japan and the United States will work together to develop a sustainable supply chain in the clean energy field for the common goal of achieving economic growth and decarbonization," he said.

On the same day as the trilateral meeting, Kishida will give a speech to a joint session of Congress, the first such address by a Japanese leader since then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's in 2015.

The Kishida-Biden summit comes as Japan's economy emerges from three decades of stagnation, with the benchmark stock index hitting an all-time high, businesses promising their biggest pay raises in 33 years and the Bank of Japan raising interest rates for the first time in 17 years.

Kishida said Japan is finally seeing light at the end of the tunnel with businesses now shifting from cost-cutting to a virtuous cycle of increasing investment and growth.

"We are having the biggest opportunity in 30 years" to break free from slow growth and inflation. To seize this opportunity and get the economy right is "a very important mission for my government," Kishida said.

Kishida is visiting Washington at a time of growing geopolitical tensions -- Russia's invasion of Ukraine has entered its third year, the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza seems to be escalating while China and the Philippines are still locked in confrontation over the South China Sea.

Tokyo and Washington are strengthening their partnership as well as cooperation with other like-minded countries to maintain regional security and promote key global goals such as achieving net-zero emissions.

This year is also crucial for both Kishida and Biden. Kishida faces a leadership contest in his Liberal Democratic Party in September and is widely expected to call general elections this year. Biden is campaigning for re-election against Trump in November in what is expected to be a close race.

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[Philippines, United Kingdom Deepens Collaboration On Climate, Biodiversity Priorities](#)

The Philippines and the United Kingdom have agreed to deepen their collaboration across climate and biodiversity priorities.

In a joint statement issued on Wednesday, the British Embassy in Manila and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the two countries committed to strengthening their partnership during the fourth annual UK-Philippines Climate and Environment Dialogue held last March 25 in Makati City.

British Ambassador to the Philippines Laure Beaufile expressed pride in the strong partnership between the UK and the Philippines, especially in climate and biodiversity.

“Over the last year, we have delivered great things together – supporting people across the country to adapt to the unavoidable consequences of climate change, driving an uptick in renewable energy, investing in biodiversity through nature-based solutions including the conservation of mangroves and corals, and protecting wildlife ranging from Philippine pangolins to crocodiles. I’m absolutely delighted that, in this fourth Dialogue, we committed to do even more together,” she said.

On top of existing partnerships, Beaufile said the UK will also focus on growing the Blue Economy through the Blue Planet Fund by formulating a country-specific plan to support marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures, including the reduction of marine pollution, and managing sustainable fisheries.

The dialogue also set the direction for 2025, with the scaling of coordination platforms to share experience and technology, streamlining of priorities, and strengthening delivery.

Beaufile also assured that the UK will support the Energy Transition Council, Blue Carbon Action Plan, and National Plastics Action Plan in the coming year.

Meanwhile, DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, who also serves as the President’s Chair Designate of the Climate Change Commission, assured the country’s commitment towards a sustainable future, citing the pivotal step taken during the dialogue towards achieving its goal.

She said the Philippines will continue to explore avenues for mobilizing finance and investments into climate, energy, and environment interventions, as outlined in the

Philippines National Adaptation Plan (NAP), and Nationally Determined Contributions Implementation Plan (NDCIP).

“The Philippines’ efforts toward resilience and sustainable development have received strong financial, technical, and policy-related support from the UK government. We are fully committed to carrying out the UK-PH strategic cooperation. By working together with the UK, we can leverage priority areas of collaboration to create a comprehensive and effective approach to environment and climate action,” Loyzaga said.

Building on the successes of 2023, which saw UK support for the delivery of the Philippines NAP and Philippines Emission Pathway Calculator, Beaufile also expressed commitment to deliver programs and technical assistance to contribute to water security, urban resilience, ecosystems and biodiversity protection, and renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The dialogue also highlighted a strong track record of financial innovation with the UK-funded launch of the Animal Town application early this year, demonstrating an innovative way to get the public to participate in the conservation of Philippine wildlife and biodiversity.

To date, the UK has funded over twenty community-led initiatives, and in the coming months, four challenge funds will be opened to new community project proposals across the country to strengthen local capacity across adaptation and biodiversity.

At the end of the dialogue, both countries agreed to establish a clear engagement approach on critical issues, such as loss and damage, disaster risk financing, and the blue economy, while the UK reinforced its commitment to advancing its work in said areas moving forward and delivering tangible progress in the years ahead.

PALAWAN NEWS

26 million Filipino learners suffer the most from climate change

Over 26 million enrolled students in the Philippines are confronted with the multifaceted impacts of climate change, including the possibility of El Nino bringing intolerable heat, more powerful typhoons, and limited access to water for basic needs. This happens to about half of the 75 million children around the world whose education is interrupted every year by natural disasters like floods and droughts.

“In the past four years, we have experienced changes in the school calendar and mode of delivery due to the pandemic and to adapt to the changing climate, on top of all the class suspensions due to frequent typhoons. We are yet to face another calendar shift due to El Nino,” 17-year-old climate campaigner Rohj Olivo said.

Recently, Olivo was in Thailand as a youth representative for the 11th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD). He is a youth advocate for Save the Children Philippines’ Generation Hope campaign against climate change and inequality. During the APFSD, Olivo spoke with Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP, and Surya Deva, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development, about children’s rights to a healthy environment.

“Our argument is clear: in the midst of climate change, government action should ensure that we have uninterrupted access to quality education, and to effectively solve this problem, leaders must not only listen to children and youth’s voices but also heed our wisdom, for it is our future that hangs in the balance,” Olivo shared.

During APFSD’s event on Building a Greener Future: Education as a Climate Solution in Bangkok, Thailand, Philippine Congresswoman Ma. Cynthia King Chan proudly shared information about R.A. 10821, also known as the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act, that ensures the continuity of services, particularly education, for children who are displaced before, during, and after disasters.

Save the Children Philippines has been at the forefront of advocating for R.A. 10821, including its localization, so that all Filipino children are protected from emergencies at all times.

Congresswoman Cindi commended ongoing efforts such as integrating climate change modules and the Green School Program, a school-based adaptation program, as well as supporting research and enhancing teacher training. The program will help 47,000

public schools strengthen their climate mitigation adaptation strategies and enhance resilience, thus reducing learning interruptions.

“By imparting knowledge, and skills, and fostering critical thinking in our children, we empower them to become climate champions,” Congresswoman Chan said.

Save the Children Philippines also implements Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Ecosystems and Quality Assurance System (QAS) programs in over 21,000 schools and 12,000 barangays to ensure that children, schools, and communities are climate-literate, responsible, and resilient to the inevitable impacts of climate change.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Despite gains in Brazil, forest destruction still 'stubbornly' high — report](#)

By: Nick Perry

The world lost 10 football fields of old-growth tropical forest every minute in 2023 and despite uplifting progress in the Amazon, the picture elsewhere is less rosy, researchers said on Thursday.

Tropical forests absorb carbon and are a vital ally in the fight against climate change, but they are also the most ravaged by deforestation.

High rates of tropical forest loss remain "stubbornly consistent" despite nations pledging in recent years to protect these critical environments, said researchers from the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the University of Maryland.

Around 3.7 million hectares of primary tropical forest -- an area nearly the size of Bhutan -- was lost last year, they said.

"Impressive" declines in Brazil and Colombia were "largely counteracted by increases" in tropical forest lost elsewhere, said Mikaela Weisse from WRI, a nonprofit research organisation.

"The world took two steps forward, two steps back when it comes to this past year's forest loss," said Weisse, director of WRI's Global Forest Watch, which uses satellite imagery to aid its analysis.

They focused on tropical forests because of their particular vulnerability to deforestation and capacity to store carbon, and considered various causes of destruction including farming, logging and fires.

Amazon gains

The 2023 figures represent a nine percent decline in forest loss compared to 2022 but in general, rates have barely wavered from the highs of recent years, researchers said.

Aside from soaking up huge quantities of carbon, tropical forests protect soil, host the majority of the world's plant and animal species, and filter air and water.

But there was good news from Brazil, which lost 36 percent less primary forest than the year prior -- its lowest level since 2015.

This "dramatic" decline was most pronounced in the Amazon, a rainforest so vast that it stores the equivalent of around 20 years of emissions of carbon dioxide.

Researchers said this coincided with the first year of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who vowed to defend the Amazon and restore forest protections after former leader Jair Bolsonaro revoked environmental safeguards.

There were disparities across the country, however, with a very clear improvement in the Amazon but a deterioration in the Cerrado, the heartland of Brazil's agriculture industry.

In Colombia, where President Gustavo Petro has been trying to negotiate peace with armed groups, there was a roughly 50 percent decline in forest lost in a year.

Forest conservation was an "explicit goal" of these peace talks, Weisse said.

Off track

"The 2023 data shows that countries can cut rates of forest loss when they muster the political will to do so. But we also know that progress can be reversed when political winds change," said Rod Taylor, global director of forests at WRI.

By contrast, forest losses hit a record high for a third year running in Bolivia, in part due to the conversion of land for its growing soy industry.

Agriculture also played a major role in sharp increases in forest destruction in Laos -- where land is under pressure due to investments and demand from China -- and Nicaragua, researchers said.

The Democratic Republic of Congo -- home to the enormous Congo Basin, which absorbs more carbon than it releases -- lost more than half a million hectares of primary forest for another year in a row.

Outside the tropics, wildfires caused immense losses of tree cover, particularly in Canada which experienced record-breaking blazes.

Taylor said this was the second year of full annual data on forest loss since more than 140 countries agreed at the COP26 climate summit to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030.

But deforestation was almost 2 million hectares above the level needed to meet this target, said Taylor.

"Are we on track to halt deforestation by 2030? The short answer? No... we are far off track and trending in the wrong direction," he said.

To address extreme heat: Morning classes only

By: Caecent No-ot Magumbol

Instead of joining other local government units (LGUs) in suspending face-to-face classes due to the extreme heat, Cebu City is set to implement adjustments of class schedules, as per consensus reached by different stakeholders.

In his online program “Ingna’ng Mayor” over the City’s Sugboanon Channel, Mayor Michael Rama yesterday said there are national guidelines concerning calamities and disasters, although they need to be revisited especially on the matter on climate change.

He reminded everyone that he already issued Executive Order No. 1 in August 2022 that granted authority to school heads to decide if they want to suspend classes in any exigency, which was why he earlier said that unlike other LGUs, he would not declare suspension of classes and would leave the decision-making to the school heads, as they know more the specific situations of their respective schools.

However, since most schools end up waiting for him to make the announcement, he convened a multi-sectoral convergence meeting, with the Department of Education (DepEd) among the participants.

It has been his experience, especially during the Covid pandemic, that convergence meetings are very effective in coming up with measures in dealing with crisis situations.

He said that following that meeting, a paradigm shift has been agreed upon.

“Unsa man ni nga paradigm shift? Usbon namo ang oras sa pag-eskwela. Unya ni-agree ang DepEd,” Rama said.

He said it was initially proposed to start the daily school day at 5 a.m., but it was deemed too early so the decision was to have school start at 6 a.m. and end at 11 a.m., with no classes in the afternoon.

“I am now preparing an executive order (EO) to really bring...about changing the time in going to school,” Mayor Rama said.

Along with this, he instructed the City’s Department of General Services to immediately ensure good street lighting especially in the mountain barangays for the safety of students going to school early in the morning.

The Philippine National Police and the Liga ng mga Barangay-Cebu City are also expected to assist on this.

Mayor Rama said he would also consult private school administrators and get their feedback about the proposal before signing the EO.

He said the proposal is better compared to suspending face-to-face classes, where students end up just playing around and therefore unproductive.

“You have to be somehow with precision...calculated risk, calibrated move,” he said.

It was noted that schools were caught off guard by the sudden suspension of classes in several LGUs the students ended up just roaming around as no lesson modules were already at hand for them.

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