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Information and Knowledge Management Division

BUSINESS MIRROR

[PHL should find right technology to meet rising power demand, experts say](#)

By: Sheldeen Joy Talavera

Securing reliable and efficient power supply for the Philippines means finding the right technologies suited to the country's demand, energy experts said.

"I think we have enough supply. The thing is do we have the right technologies to provide that supply? Because when there's a tight supply then you start using expensive power plants," Emmanuel V. Rubio, president and chief executive officer of Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGen), said at the BusinessWorld Insights' "Energy Security: Powering the Philippines' Economic Growth" forum on Tuesday.

"And hopefully, we won't use diesel anymore. In fact, we have de-commissioned a number of our diesel plants because we believe that we won't be needing them," he added.

Mr. Rubio said that the "primary metric" in determining if the supply and demand ratio is healthy is through the prices at the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM).

He said that WESM prices have been "stable" for the past year. WESM is where energy companies can buy power when their long-term contracted power supply is insufficient for customer needs.

However, Mr. Rubio said that as the economy continues to grow, there is a need for more baseload capacity.

"Unfortunately, I think a combination of variable renewable energy... combined with energy storage... to supply baseload, I think, it's still not there. It's not going to be competitive," he said.

"But what we have proven in TerraSolar is that to supply mid merit... a combination of variable renewable energy, which is solar plants, and energy storage, which is lithium-ion battery, is already as competitive as your normal source of energy, which is before diesel and now LNG (liquefied natural gas)," he added.

MGen, the power generation arm of Manila Electric Co., holds a portfolio with a combined gross capacity of 2,602 megawatts (MW) from both traditional and renewable energy sources.

The company is currently developing a project, now known as MTerra Solar, which consists of a 3,500-MW solar power plant and a 4,500-megawatt-hour (MWh) battery energy storage system.

“By working closely with our partners and investors we combine capital, local expertise and operational excellence to deliver a project that responds directly to the country’s energy needs at scale and in alignment with our national targets,” Mr. Rubio said.

Alexander D. Ablaza, president of the Philippine Energy Efficiency Alliance, Inc., said that energy efficiency should be regarded as an “asset class” that should be ready for public private partnerships.

“Every time we talk about clean energy and sustainable energy, we should keep that balance of keeping energy efficiency in renewable energy because that will bring us to our 2050 pathway,” he said.

At the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change last year, a historic agreement was reached, which sets a target of net-zero emission by 2050.

Mr. Ablaza also cited COP28 call to double energy efficiency progress through 2030.

On the government side, state-run National Electrification Administration (NEA) has reaffirmed its commitment to deliver reliable electricity in rural areas, noting its partner electric cooperatives (ECs) are adapting to the changing energy landscape.

“We are not without solutions. These very challenges are driving us to explore new approaches, adopt emerging technologies, and strengthen our partnerships,” said Ernesto O. Silvano, Jr., NEA deputy administrator for technical services.

Mr. Silvano said that ECs are facing various challenges, including vulnerability to natural disasters, volatile WESM prices and aging infrastructure.

He said that the P200-million budget allocated for the Electric Cooperatives Emergency Resiliency Fund of this year “is no longer enough to support crisis response.”

As of March 13, 98% of the fund has already been dispersed, but there are 25 ECs “severely affected” by last year’s calamities still lack the financial support needed to fully restore their distribution systems.

“By allowing funds to be used for retrofitting infrastructure, enhancing resiliency, and investing in preparedness measures, we can better equip our electric cooperatives to withstand future disasters and minimize their impact,” he said.

The NEA is primarily responsible for rural electrification, bringing electricity to missionary or economically unviable parts of the countryside.

The government hopes to achieve total electrification by 2028.

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Sara urges climate action](#)

By: Neil Acober

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday urged Filipinos to take action in fighting climate change, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring a sustainable future.

“This Earth Day, we are reminded that the power to restore and protect our environment lies in our collective action,” Duterte said in a message for this year’s World Earth Day.

“The Philippines is blessed with breathtaking mountains, rich seas, and lush forests — gifts that come with a deep responsibility to protect,” she said.

Duterte encouraged people to participate in clean-up drives and organize community greening initiatives.

“Together, we can build a greener, stronger, and more resilient Philippines,” she stressed.

Duterte also highlighted the Office of the Vice President’s Pagbabago: A Million Trees and Learners Campaign, which aligns with the goals of The Canopy Project. This initiative aims to plant one million trees across the country by 2028.

“Every tree we plant is a living promise to contribute to global reforestation efforts,” she said.

GMA NEWS

Coral reefs pushed to brink as bleaching crisis worsens

An unprecedented coral bleaching episode has spread to 84 percent of the world's reefs in an unfolding human-caused crisis that could kill off swathes of the essential ecosystems, scientists warned Wednesday.

Since it began in early 2023, the global coral bleaching event has mushroomed into the biggest and most intense on record, with reefs across the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans affected.

Coral turns ghostly white under heat stress and the world's oceans have warmed over the last two years to historic highs, driven by humanity's release of planet-warming greenhouse gases.

Reefs can rebound from the trauma but scientists told AFP the window for recovery was getting shorter as ocean temperatures remained higher for longer.

Conditions in some regions were extreme enough to "lead to multi-species or near complete mortality on a coral reef", said the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

This latest episode was so severe and lasting that even more resilient coral was succumbing, said Melanie McField from the Healthy Reefs for Healthy People initiative, which specializes in the Caribbean.

"If you continue to have heatwave after heatwave, it's hard to see how that recovery is going to happen," the veteran reef scientist told AFP from Florida.

Bleaching occurs when coral expels algae that provides not just their characteristic color but food and nutrients, leaving them exposed to disease and possibly eventually death.

Live coral cover has halved since the 1950s due to climate change and environmental damage, the International Coral Reef Initiative, a global conservation partnership, said in a statement Wednesday.

Scientists forecast that at 1.5C of warming, some 70 to 90 percent of the world's coral reefs could disappear -- a disastrous prospect for people and the planet.

Coral reefs support not just marine life but hundreds of millions of people living in coastal communities around the world by providing food, protection from storms, and livelihoods through fishing and tourism.

Coral crisis

Mass coral bleaching was first observed in the early 1980s and is one of the best known and most visible consequences of steadily rising ocean temperatures caused by global warming.

The latest coral bleaching event is the fourth and largest yet, and the second in a decade, exceeding the record area affected during the last episode of 2014-2017.

"From 1 January 2023 to 20 April 2025, bleaching-level heat stress has impacted 83.7 percent of the world's coral reef area", NOAA said in its latest update on Monday.

Oceans store 90 percent of the excess heat caused by humanity's burning of fossil fuels, causing warmer sea temperatures, which are the leading cause of coral bleaching.

"The link between fossil fuel emissions and coral mortality is direct and undeniable," said Alex Sen Gupta, a climate scientist at the University of New South Wales in Australia.

To accurately accommodate the increased risk of mass coral death due to this event, NOAA was forced to add three new levels to a widely used bleaching alert scale.

"It's the coral reef equivalent of adding Category 6 and 7 to the tropical cyclone scale," said Sen Gupta.

'Mass mortalities'

McField said in September 2023, an iconic reef off Honduras was suffering bleaching but still boasted 46 percent average living coral coverage.

"By February 2024, all of that died, and it was down to five percent living coral... We never saw that before, these mass mortalities," McField said.

The planet has already warmed at least 1.36 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, says the EU's climate monitor Copernicus.

Scientists predict the 1.5C threshold could be crossed early in the next decade.

At 2C almost all corals would disappear.

If the current climate policies of all governments were implemented in full, the world could warm by up to 3.1C by 2100.

[VP Sara urges Filipinos to fight climate change](#)

By: Giselle Ombay

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday called on Filipinos to commit to combating climate change and participate in activities to help save Mother Earth.

In her Earth Day video message, Duterte emphasized that Filipinos have a deep responsibility to protect the bountiful nature that the Philippines has been blessed with.

“This Earth Day, we are reminded that the power to restore and protect our environment lies in our collective action. Guided by the theme ‘Our Power, Our Planet,’ let us commit to fighting climate change, safeguarding biodiversity, and securing a livable future,” she said.

The Vice President thus urged the people to join clean-up drives or organize community-led greening efforts which can help save the environment.

“Together, we can build a greener, stronger, and more resilient Philippines,” she added.

Duterte also pointed out that the Office of the Vice President (OVP) has a program which seeks to contribute to global reforestation efforts.

Under the “Pagbabago: A Million Learners and Trees Campaign,” the OVP aims to plant a million trees all over the country by 2028.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

[PH eyes stronger climate change response ties with Indonesia](#)

By: Priam Nepomuceno

The Philippines is looking to further expand its ties with Indonesia in terms of climate change response.

Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. made the remark after his meeting with Indonesian Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City on Wednesday.

"At pinaka-importante dahil halos pareho ang mga hamon na hinaharap natin sa climate change, joint climate change response and enhancement (and most important of all, as our nations are facing similar climate change, joint climate change, response and enhancement)," Teodoro said in an ambush interview.

The DND chief cited as an example Indonesia's deployment of helicopters that were utilized to help flood victims in Bicol last year.

"So napaka-importanteng (ang) bisita ng Defense Minister ng Indonesia sapagkat alam natin ang Indonesia ay isa sa pinakamalapit nating kaalyado sa ASEAN (So the Indonesian Defense Minister is an important visitor of ours as Indonesia is one of our closest allies in ASEAN)," Teodoro said.

The DND, in a separate statement, said this high-level engagement follows the meeting between President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto during a courtesy call at Malacañang Palace on Sept. 20, 2024.

The visit formed part of Sjamsoeddin's introductory engagements across Asia, which allowed him and Teodoro to exchange views on regional security, maritime cooperation, and bilateral defense initiatives.

The two defense chiefs also discussed security developments in the Indo-Pacific region and affirmed their shared interests as archipelagic nations.

They acknowledged that this fundamental similarity as neighbors can deepen defense and military cooperation through sustained interaction and engagements at multiple levels.

The meeting also highlighted ongoing and future cooperation under existing defense agreements, including logistics, defense industry collaboration, and personnel exchanges.

The areas of cooperation explored by the two defense chiefs include the enhancement of joint operations between armed forces in disaster response, training of AFP imams in Indonesia to counter self-radicalization and violent extremism, and the deployment of Filipino medical specialists for the development of military medicine.

Teodoro also expressed interest in learning from Indonesia's extensive experience in indigenous defense production, in line with the recently enacted Republic Act 12024 or the Self-Reliant Defense Posture Revitalization Act, designed to establish and bolster the Philippines' defense industry.

Both sides looked forward to exploring in-depth collaboration beyond bilateral frameworks, including trilateral mechanisms such as the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement, regional platforms under ASEAN, which the Philippines will chair in 2026, and the United Nations through possible co-deployment in peacekeeping missions.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[Earth Day: DENR pushes shift to renewable energy](#)

By: Christine Boton

As the country observed Earth Day, Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga underscored the urgency of a unified, multi-sectoral approach to combat climate change and accelerate the transition to renewable energy.

Stressing that sustainability must be rooted in shared responsibility, Loyzaga called for the responsible use of the country's abundant natural resources as the nation embraces clean energy.

"Earth Day offers a moment to reflect on the responsibilities we share – as Filipinos and as stewards of a fragile planet," she said. "The journey to clean energy must be grounded on collective action."

This year's Earth Day theme, "Our Power, Our Planet," highlights the crucial role of individuals and communities in shaping a low-carbon future.

Loyzaga acknowledged the complexities of transitioning to renewable sources, such as solar, hydro, wind and geothermal, and emphasized that this shift must be accompanied by social and environmental justice, including responsible management of critical minerals like nickel and cobalt.

"No one and no ecosystem should be left behind," Loyzaga said, adding that a just transition is essential to inclusive and sustainable development.

Engage children

Echoing the call for shared responsibility, environmental watchdog BAN Toxics encouraged families to take part in climate action by engaging children in eco-friendly practices during the summer break.

"Summer vacation offers the perfect opportunity to introduce children to meaningful, toxics-free and waste-free activities," said Thony Dizon, BAN Toxics Advocacy and Campaign Officer. "It's a great way to reduce screen time, too."

Among the suggested activities are gardening, which allows kids to connect with nature, understand where food comes from and learn the basics of organic growing while avoiding harmful chemicals.

Eco walks, whether around the neighborhood or in parks, provide light exercise and can be turned into mini clean-up drives that teach environmental responsibility.

Nature treks and bird watching give children opportunities to observe wildlife, understand ecosystems and develop a deeper appreciation for biodiversity.

Beach clean-ups is another practical way to combine recreation and learning, showing young participants the impact of plastic pollution on marine life.

DIY upcycled crafts, such as creating planters from plastic bottles or bird feeders from used cardboard, stimulate creativity while reinforcing the importance of reusing materials.

Lastly, community toy and book exchanges promote sharing and reduce waste by giving old items new life through trade.

“These are just a few examples of how families can make summer both enjoyable and environmentally meaningful,” Dizon said. “By choosing eco-friendly activities, parents not only create lasting memories with their children but also help instill values of responsibility, creativity and care for the planet – one small action at a time.”

‘Pass green deal’

In observance of Earth Day, the Kabataan party-list renewed its call for Congress to pass the People’s Green New Deal, filed as House Resolution No. 8.

The measure, introduced in 2022 by Rep. Raoul Manuel in collaboration with environmental groups, seeks to provide a framework for a green and just economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Renee Co, Kabataan national spokesperson and first nominee, criticized the government’s current climate efforts as insufficient, citing the slow shift away from fossil fuels and the Marcos administration’s modest target of 50 percent renewable energy by 2040.

She emphasized that implementing the resolution’s policy recommendations would be a timely response to this year’s Earth Day theme, which underscores the global push for a renewable energy transition.

“The promotion of windmills in Ilocos is not enough to show that the government is truly addressing the climate crisis. How many more disasters do we need before we look

beyond flood control projects? A nation can achieve progress if it takes care of its environment. If the government has the political will, then pass the People's Green New Deal," Co said.

In its 2021 submission to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Philippines committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent within the decade, targeting peak emissions by 2030 before transitioning to more sustainable development pathways.

Despite this ambitious pledge, the current administration's energy roadmap aims for only 50 percent reliance on renewable sources by 2040 – a target environmental groups say falls short of the urgency required.

Advocates argue that achieving full transition to clean energy by 2030 remains within reach if backed by strong political will.

"What we need are leaders who will stand up to corporations that exploit the environment for profit – not those with business interests or ties to the powerful. In this election, it's time for ordinary citizens – those who have felt the harsh consequences of disasters – to take seats in the Senate and Congress," Co concluded.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

[The Climate Change Commission joins the Commission on Higher Education in commemorating the International Mother Earth Day.](#)

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) emphasized the important role of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in shaping a more climate-conscious and action-driven student population during the commemoration of International Mother Earth Day.

Acknowledging the spike in enrollment in the past two years, Secretary Robert E.A. Borje, CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director, raised a crucial question: How many of them truly understand climate change?

“Many students and young people care deeply about the planet, yet they often lack a full understanding of climate change, its root causes, long-term impacts, and the urgency of action,” Borje stressed.

Data show that enrollment rose from 4.1 million in 2022 to 5.1 million in 2024. For Academic Year 2020-2021, the most pursued programs were Business Administration and related courses, followed by Education Science and Teacher Training, and Engineering and Technology.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported in 2023 that 90 percent of Filipinos, or over 94 million individuals, are considered literate based on the latest Census of Population.

Borje emphasized that while basic literacy and school enrollment remain high, the real challenge lies in fostering a deeper understanding of climate issues.

“CHED holds a unique position. You inform, inspire, and influence the next generation of leaders. By shaping young minds, you cultivate their role as stewards of our planet,” he added.

Borje urged CHED to continue championing research grounded in sustainability and to promote the integration of climate education across all academic disciplines and programs, explaining that a collective effort and climate education are key to achieving long-term climate resilience goals.

International Mother Earth Day, designated by the UN General Assembly in 2009, is a call to action against the worsening degradation of ecosystems, as the planet experiences intense heat, heavy flash floods, and polluted oceans. Such impacts affect millions of people that destroy their lives, livelihoods, and futures.

The event gathered the officials and staff of CHED, led by Chairperson J. Prospero E. De Vera III, alongside Commissioners Dr. Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, Dr. Shirley C. Agrupis, Dr. Marita A. Canapi, Dr. Dennis R. Apag III, and Atty. Cinderella Filipina S. Benitez-Jaro, Executive Director.

The CCC remains committed to elevating climate awareness and responsibility across the nation and to supporting programs that advocate for transformative climate action.

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