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By: Raul Fabella

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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Bernie Cahiles-Magkilat

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RAPPLER

[Health, environment concerns are raised as Philippine cement plants burn plastic wastes for fuel](#)

By: Elyssa Lopez

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[‘Investing in a better Future: Climate, Energy, Health’](#)

By: Prime Minister Narendra Modi

MOST of us generally believe that there is a fundamental collision between the developmental goals of the world and environmental protection. There is also another misconception that poor countries and poor people cause more damage to the environment. But, India’s history of over thousands of years completely refutes this view. Ancient India has seen a time of immense prosperity; then we have also been through centuries of slavery, and now independent India is the fastest-growing big economy in the whole world. But during this whole period, India did not let its commitment to the environment get diluted even a single bit. 17 percent of the world’s population resides in India. But, our contribution of global carbon emissions is only 5 percent. The main reason behind this is our lifestyle, which is based on the theory of co-existence with nature.

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By: Marit Stinus-Cabugon

IT struck me as somewhat odd that the United Nations General Assembly chose this time to declare the access to a clean and healthy environment a universal human right. Odd because the UN appears impotent in the face of Putin's ongoing military attack on Ukraine. The war has caused massive destruction to civilian infrastructure including homes, about 12 million people have been displaced, thousands have been killed, and the disruptions in international trade in fuel, fertilizer, grains and other foodstuffs have caused inflation to soar across the globe.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[DOE to make energy sector more attractive to investors](#)

By: Richmond Mercurio

Manila, Philippines — The Department of Energy (DOE) is preparing to make the country's power and energy environment more appealing and friendly to investors, in cooperation with its attached agencies and legislators.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DZXL RMN MANILA

[Ang Tinig Klima: Wikang Filipino para sa Klima at Kalikasan](#)

Ayon po kay Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje, ang pagsama o pag-integrate ng climate change sa basic education ay isa sa susi upang mapataas ang kamalayan ng mga bata at kabataan tungkol sa pabago-bagong klima. Isa itong hakbang upang ma-empower ang mamamayan at maghanda sa hamon ng pabago-bagong klima.

POLICE FILE TONITE

[‘STATE OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY’](#)

By: Gilbert Perdez

Hindi na bago sa ating pandinig ang malalakas na lindol, bagyo, at pabago-bagong klima na nararanasan sa Pilipinas.

Information and Knowledge Division

BUSINESS STANDARD

[Europe's rivers run dry as drought could be worst in over 500 years](#)

Across Europe, drought is reducing once-mighty rivers to trickles, with potentially dramatic consequences for industry, freight, energy and food production - just as supply shortages and price rises due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine bite, local media reported.

Driven by climate breakdown, an unusually dry winter and spring followed by record-breaking summer temperatures and repeated heatwaves have left Europe's essential waterways under-replenished and, increasingly, overheated, The Guardian reported.

With no significant rainfall recorded for almost two months across western, central and southern Europe and none forecast in the near future, meteorologists say the drought could become the continent's worst in more than 500 years, The Guardian reported.

"We haven't analysed fully this year's event because it is still ongoing," said Andrea Toreti of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre. "There were no other events in the past 500 [years] similar to the drought of 2018. But this year, I think, is worse."

Germany's Federal Institute of Hydrology (BfG) said the level of the Rhine, whose waters are used for freight transport, irrigation, manufacturing, power generation and drinking, will continue dropping until at least the beginning of next week, The Guardian reported.

A vital part of northwest Europe's economy for centuries, the 760 miles (1,233km) of the Rhine flow from Switzerland through Germany's industrial heartland before reaching the North Sea at the megaport of Rotterdam.

In Italy, the flow of the parched Po, Italy's longest river, has fallen to one-tenth of its usual rate, and water levels are 2 metres below normal. With no sustained rainfall in the region since November, corn and risotto rice production have been hard hit.

The Po valley accounts for between 30 per cent and 40 per cent of Italy's agricultural production, but rice growers in particular have warned that up to 60 per cent of their crop may be lost as paddy fields dry out and are spoiled by seawater sucked in by the low river level, The Guardian reported.

BUSINESS WORLD

[\[Opinion\] The Jagna Baywalk Mangrove Belt and Mayor Joseph Rañola](#)

By: Raul Fabella

Jagna is a port town located 63 kms east of Tagbilaran, Bohol, or 76.3 km from the newly constructed Panglao International Airport. It faces the Bohol Sea to the south, facing Mindanao, and is otherwise surrounded by mountains of lush green forest. A town in a great hurry in the last decade, it has attracted a McDonald's fastfood restaurant, a 7-Eleven 24-hour convenience store, a mall and supermarket of the Bohol Quality chain, a brand-new Jagna Food Court, newly concreted side-roads, and end-to-end solar street lighting. The latter means that the "grid down episodes" common in Bohol no longer mean night darkness for Jagna-anons.

More importantly, Jagna hosts the justifiably renowned Central Visayan Institute Foundation (CVIF), home of the Dynamic Learning Program (DLP) which has produced singular learning outcomes in secondary education, defying the landscape of learning poverty lately documented by the 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) performance league table. The DLP, which has attracted adoption by over a hundred private and public high schools, is the brainchild of the dynamic physicist duo and Magsaysay awardees in education, Drs. Christopher Bernido and Maria Victoria Carpio-Bernido (may she rest in peace).

The municipality has an ambitious and ongoing building program which includes the scenic Jagna Baywalk which is also designed to serve as a concrete storm surge protection.

Leading the charge in this journey to an aborning progressive rural Philippines is newly re-elected Mayor Joseph Rañola. That he won his second term by a mere hundred votes says something of his peculiar approach to politics — he has a dim view of the traditional politics of pressing flesh and endless individual patronage. Rather, his philosophy seems to go: "Ang buhat ang pasultion" ("Let accomplishments do the talking."). That is, provide public goods projects that serve all at once, like the solar street lighting, the new Sports Complex, newly concreted side roads, and the Jagna Baywalk. As we go into the Mandanas era of a higher local government share in central government tax revenues, this is the type of local governance that re-assures us that the new revenue flows will not be squandered. It is, however, rather rare and is not without its pitfalls.

The ongoing construction of the Jagna Baywalk threatens to block access to the sea of a beautiful patch of mangroves. Being blocked from seawater access means a death sentence to any mangrove patch. Our position is that the Jagna Baywalk itself would be more effective and in keeping with Bohol's green image if conjoined with a lush mangrove belt, the Jagna Baywalk Mangrove Belt. Mangrove forests have suffered massive degradation in the Philippines and elsewhere due primarily to land-use change such as fishponds, resorts, and infrastructure development. But mangroves are hugely useful to humanity and Boholanos: they serve as a buffer against storm surges, as a nursery for

fingerlings, as a home for crustaceans, and as a lush aviary. More apropos in this climate change era, they also sequester carbon that otherwise would aggravate global warming.

This Jagna Baywalk Mangrove Belt covers an area of 1,658 sq.m. of robust pagatpat and statuesque bakawan mangrove species. This tiny patch serves as a sink for about 22 tons of carbon stock or about 82 tons of carbon dioxide. The contribution is small by itself, but multiplied a million times it could mitigate the global climate imbalance. It served precisely as a shelter against the December 2021 storm Odette — exactly as Dr. Jurgenne Primavera's "Greenbelt Initiative" envisioned. This also serves as an advance guard of the "concrete action" extension of National Academy of Science and Technology's (NAST) Pagtanaw 2040. The nice thing is that mangrove greenbelts regenerate themselves quickly and beautifully, pushing back on the Second Law of Thermodynamics, while concrete walls do not. Resilience dictates that while we resort to concrete for quick results, surge protection is most effective and lasting when buttressed by nature itself, thus, mangroves.

To this effect, Dr. Christopher Bernido had written to Mayor Rañola about the fate of the Jagna Baywalk Mangrove Belt. The mayor in turn called an all-stakeholders meeting: himself presiding, ourselves, his development staff, the private contractor, and the local branch of the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) in a freewheeling discussion of the issue.

It turns out there was a strong generalized awareness about mangrove protection but especially from the mayor himself. Having grown up in these parts, the mayor revealed that this patch was originally planted by Chris' own parents, then Governor Esteban Bernido and Consuelo Bernido. It was agreed that a substantial canal be explicitly provided in the plan and maintained to permanently connect the mangrove patch with the sea. It is important that there is a continuing exchange of plant and fish life between the sea and the mangrove patch. Now adjacent to the mangrove patch is an open brackish water shore area perfect for the expansion of mangrove belt. The Jagna Mangrove Belt will best serve a better surge protection if extended unto this brackish shore space.

Upon ocular inspection, however, it appears that the dike being constructed suggests a creeping land reclamation project on top of the storm surge protection. The construction work, advertently or otherwise, now threatens to overrun the empty space ideal for mangrove reforestation. This open space has experienced reforestation efforts by private groups but which have not yet borne fruit and require local government reaffirmation.

In Panglao Island, Bohol, the provincial government under then Governor Edgar Chatto simply rejected the business community's proposal to reclaim a portion of the sea as it would annihilate a very important mangrove forest. This was then a signal victory for Green Bohol. We are confident that Jagna Mayor Joseph Rañola will ensure that the Jagna Baywalk Mangrove Belt will become yet another signal victory for Green Bohol. The battle for Mother Earth has to be fought and won one square meter at a time.

MANILA BULLETIN

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The Japanese government has offered to the Philippines its satellite services “Himawari” for digital infrastructure needs in the development of the mobility industry, such as the promotion of electric vehicles and self-driving cars in the country

In a speech at the launch of the Toyota Mobility Solutions, Japan Ambassador to the Philippines Kazuhiko Koshikawa mentioned of his initial discussions with some Secretaries of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s administration and political leaders for potential cooperation on digital infrastructure for the country’s mobility industry.

According to the ambassador, their discussion with government officials centered on the possibility of utilizing the High Precision Positioning Service by Japanese satellites, weather data from the meteorological satellite “Himawari”, and the High Altitude Platform Station being developed by a Japanese private company.

“I believe that such cooperation between the public and private sectors in the basic infrastructure for digital transformation will serve as a catalyst for the transition to a Mobility Industry, such as promotion of electric vehicles and self-driving cars in the Philippines,” said Ambassador Koshikawa.

Based on its website, Himawari 8 is a Japanese weather satellite operated by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA). The spacecraft was constructed by Mitsubishi Electric. JMA is responsible for contributing to the improvement of public welfare. Areas of focus include natural disaster prevention and mitigation, transportation safety, industrial prosperity, monitoring of climate change and international cooperation activities.

In addition to these responsibilities, the Meteorological Satellite Center (MSC) is tasked with observing meteorological and related phenomena from space using meteorological satellites, to processing observational data collected, and to disseminating this information and products derived from it.

As the Philippines has significantly relaxed its foreign investment restrictions, the ambassador expressed optimism about further increase in investments and trade from Japan, along with the implementation of Executive Order No. 182, providing for a Comprehensive Automotive Resurgence Strategy (CARS) Program. For instance, he noted that the Philippines is one of the countries with the largest market of Toyota in ASEAN. Toyota has sold about two million vehicles since 1988. In terms of employment, TMP directly supports the livelihood of approximately 3,700 people through the production of automobiles in the Philippines.

The ambassador further said that Toyota's move towards "creating the mobility service for better society, for better business, for better life and for better driving."

"Toyota advocates that it undergoes a once-in-a-century transformation to become a total mobility solutions provider. I firmly believe that such transformation from an automotive industry to a mobility industry that Toyota is aiming to achieve will prove to be a real game changer to the manufacturing and service sector nationwide," he said. He noted that the launch of Toyota's mobility solutions unit showed a great deal of the future-oriented bilateral cooperation between Japan and the Philippines in many fields, may it be in diplomacy, economy, technology, way of life and culture, among others.

Today, Japan is the top investor, top Official Development Assistance (ODA) partner, and one of the top traders of the Philippines. He added that Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has promised President Marcos to further deepen cooperation and relationship with the Philippines in a wide range of areas. .

He further noted of the latest public opinion poll, which revealed that almost 80 percent of Filipinos trust Japan. "Considering the bitter history of war nearly 80 years ago, I am deeply grateful that the supermajority of Filipinos now trusts Japan," he said.

RAPPLER

[Health, environment concerns are raised as Philippine cement plants burn plastic wastes for fuel](#)

By: Elyssa Lopez

The DENR has pushed cement plants to burn plastic municipal wastes as alternative fuel to help address the country's solid waste problem. But critics are raising health concerns.

Lea Alomia has started to strain her voice. At 47, the sari-sari store owner in Teresa town in Rizal province could not believe she could still be diagnosed with asthma. "When the doctor asked me, 'Do you get exposed to cigarettes?' I thought, no. No one is smoking at home."

Alomia believes the heavy dust that came from an enormous cement plant near her home in Barangay Prinza caused her asthma. Dust emitted from various processes in cement manufacturing is known to cause allergies and complications to the respiratory system.

Republic Cement, one of the country's biggest cement companies, is the town's major industry. It operates a 115-hectare plant in her town, spanning 2,326 basketball courts. "When the wind is so strong...you can really see white dust everywhere. Do you know that storm that happens in the desert? It's like there's a sandstorm here," she said.

It is hard to be certain what caused Alomia's asthma. Unknown to many residents, the plant is also burning plastic waste as alternative fuel for kilns that bake limestone into cement. Burning plastic also releases harmful emissions that could cause her condition.

The kilns, which need extreme heat of up to 1,400 to 1,500 degrees Celsius, are mainly powered by coal. In a method called "co-processing," more cement factories in the country have been using municipal waste as alternative fuel.

Refused-derived fuel (RDF), composed of flammable materials such as plastic and paper, is most commonly used. These are sorted and shredded into smaller sizes to fit the kilns.

It's a method supported by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which sees co-processing as a "sustainable" solution – and a better alternative to landfills – to address the country's solid waste problem.

Environmentalists have long raised the health hazards of cement dust. They have raised concerns about RDF, too. A March 2022 report of the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) said a typical use of the alternative fuel "releases dioxins, lead, cadmium, mercury, and fine particles into the atmosphere."

They have called for a temporary suspension of co-processing facilities, saying their impact on public health and environment should not be ignored.

They are wary that the Philippines may not be ready for wider use of co-processing because of the country's outdated air quality standards and poor capability to monitor air quality.

And even if the standards are up to date, critics said co-processing is a "token scheme" for solid waste management that does not encourage reduction of plastic production in the country. The manufacturers, they said, should be required to develop packaging materials that could be repurposed, which would be a better way to ensure that wastes did not end up in landfills or leaked into the environment by other means such as kilns.

DENR's push

Republic Cement is among the country's top cement makers that have marketed themselves as processors of municipal waste. The Teresa Plant, for example, can process 5,161 metric tons of waste a year, which is only equivalent to 0.1% of the solid waste collected (11,953 tons per day) from the National Capital Region in 2021, based on data from the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

Republic Cement has a pending application to increase the manufacturing capacity of the Teresa plant to almost threefold its annual record of 1.7 million metric tons to 5 million metric tons. The company said the expansion's general objective was for "energy and material recovery from waste resources," and to provide "technically and environmentally sound waste disposal services."

In a statement sent to the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), Republic Cement said it did not receive any complaint regarding asthma cases in relation to its operations in Teresa.

The company also reported installing a "Bag House" system inside the plant in 2018, a device that collects and separates dust and particulates from the air.

"We are in close coordination with our LGU and Barangay Health Offices to respond to any health concerns that our community may have with respect to our operations. Once we receive such a complaint, it is immediately investigated from an operational side while simultaneously providing medical resources and support to the concerned community member," Republic Cement said.

Ramil Paril, Barangay Prinza's environmental and health committee head, downplayed the health concerns. "You know, in our population of 8,000, maybe per 1,000 people, there are only one or two people who suffer from asthma," he claimed. "No one has also formally filed a complaint about it [in our office]."

A 2010 DENR administrative order – AO 2010-06 – allowed wastes for burning in cement kilns. Last year, the DENR also amended the AO to expand the allowable wastes for

burning to include “non-pathological healthcare wastes” like personal protective equipment (PPE), face masks, and face shields.

Cement companies previously relied on imported RDF, but EMB Director William Cuñado said he encouraged the cement companies in 2020 to buy RDF in the Philippines.

“I believe there will be a dramatic decrease in the waste to be dumped in [our] sanitary landfills [when co-processing plants start to use local RDFs] because we will use the garbage as a raw material,” he told PCIJ in an interview.

The pandemic saw a rapid increase in plastic waste in the country. “All industries are looking for cheaper raw materials, anyway. So if the garbage will be converted into raw material, there’s a big significant difference in the cost of fuel [for them],” he said.

But environmental lawyer and Ateneo de Manila School of Law professor Gregorio Bueta questioned the legal basis for the AO that allowed co-processing.

Co-processing is a form of incineration, Bueta said, which is prohibited under Republic Act No. 9749 or the Clean Air Act. The law aims to protect the country from the adverse effects of air pollution.

“The title of Section 20 of the law itself says ‘ban on incineration.’ Unless the law is changed, unless Sec. 20 of Clean Air Act is amended, industries which use incineration...[like] co-processing...run the risk of violating the law,” Bueta said.

Nine of the 29 cement plants in the Philippines already practice co-processing, according to EMB, as cement companies worldwide replace fossil fuels with alternative fuels such as RDF.

Three cement plants with co-processing activities are able to process 33,123 metric tons of waste per year, said Cuñado, citing industry data.

“If all cement plants [nationwide] engage in co-processing, we can have about 300,000 metric tons of garbage that can be used as raw materials,” he said.

Apart from Republic Cement, two other big cement companies in the country – Holcim Philippines and CEMEX Philippines – are also aggressively positioning themselves as processors of municipal waste.

As of 2021, the three companies have signed agreements with at least 46 local government units, and at least four fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) companies, to process their municipal and manufacturing wastes, respectively.

Many companies are still purchasing imported RDF, but Cuñado said the EMB was in the process of crafting a policy to “encourage” cement companies to put up co-processing

facilities in all of their plants. Most companies, he said, have “signified cooperation” if ever such a policy was formalized.

SUNSTAR

[Editorial: Solving the plastic problem](#)

There is a disconnection between theory and practice, principles and experiences of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management (CCA-DRRM).

The gaps are crucial as Filipinos, along with other citizens in the world, grapple with extreme weather on earth. “Extreme weather” refers to phenomena that is unusual or severe for a particular place or time.

However, the recent flash floods submerging many communities in Cebu after either heavy rains or successive days of constant rain show how inclement weather, whether severe or unusual or none of these, immediately pose threats on life and property.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) pointed out that in 2020, the number of extreme weather occurrences increased, making the resulting disasters an “increasingly habitual occurrence.” Whether the extreme weather takes the form of a heat wave, flooding or drought, the IPCC focused on people’s responsibilities for causing and preventing climate change. In its August 2021 report, the IPCC pointed out that people increase greenhouse gas emissions, which partly cause the rise of temperatures worldwide.

Yet, implementing CCA-DRRM strategies focusing on people as causes contributing to climate change, as well as solutions that can be tapped to prevent or mitigate the consequences of disasters resulting from extreme weather still leaves much to be desired.

A case study of the Philippines’s climate change governance framed by the Climate Change Act, which was uploaded on the website of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network, identifies the lead roles taken by local governments in CCA-DRRM, particularly in identifying “communities and areas most vulnerable to adverse impacts” and anticipating “differential impacts on women, children, and marginalized populations.”

The www.cdkn.org case study highlights the need for “more systematic and inclusive consultations that engage with local communities and grassroots organizations.”

Communities made most vulnerable by climate change are, unfortunately, the least consulted and involved in carrying out CCA-DRRM: “farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, the urban poor, women and young people.” Failure at stakeholder consultations limits the sustainability of measures for CCA-DRRM. For instance, how is Lapu-Lapu City faring in implementing zero-waste initiatives?

In May 2021, the Lapu-Lapu City Government partnered with the Environment Management Bureau in Region 7 to pilot the Refill Revolution, which aims to assist local

entrepreneurs to make the transition from being businesses generating considerable volumes of plastic waste to achieving zero waste.

A year after the piloting of the Refill Revolution in Lapu-Lapu City, many citizens have not yet heard of the initiative to encourage consumers to bring their own containers to be refilled in stores, doing away with plastic packaging that is seldom re-used.

Charisse, a Pajac resident, claimed that local authorities have not educated communities about zero waste, observing that plastic packaging continues to litter the sidewalks and roads, particularly surrounding the local market and vehicles-for-hire terminal areas. Nenita, a government employee, said that carrying refills adds to her packages during commuting. She claims she does not know where she can find stores that serve as refilling stations. She is also hesitant about buying refills because these may be adulterated or not reflecting the correct volume.

While people are quick to trace the cause of flash floods and sea pollution to single-use plastic that obstruct natural and man-made waterways, the fruits from building consensus and mobilizing citizens to solve the plastic problem remain elusive, with governments and the people, technocrats and entrepreneurs needing to listen to each other and learn more to make CCA-DRRM a reality.

THE MANILA TIMES

'Investing in a better Future: Climate, Energy, Health'

By: Prime Minister Narendra Modi

MOST of us generally believe that there is a fundamental collision between the developmental goals of the world and environmental protection. There is also another misconception that poor countries and poor people cause more damage to the environment. But, India's history of over thousands of years completely refutes this view. Ancient India has seen a time of immense prosperity; then we have also been through centuries of slavery, and now independent India is the fastest-growing big economy in the whole world. But during this whole period, India did not let its commitment to the environment get diluted even a single bit. 17 percent of the world's population resides in India. But, our contribution of global carbon emissions is only 5 percent. The main reason behind this is our lifestyle, which is based on the theory of co-existence with nature.

Energy access should not be the privilege of the rich only- a poor family also has the same rights on energy. And today when energy costs are sky-high due to geopolitical tensions, it is more important to remember this thing. By taking inspiration from this principle, we delivered LED bulbs and clean cooking gas door-to-door in India and showed that millions of tons of carbon emissions can be saved while ensuring energy for the poor.

Our dedication to our climate commitments is evident from our performance. We have achieved the target of 40 percent energy-capacity from non-fossil sources nine years before time. The target of 10 percent ethanol-blending in petrol has been achieved five months before time. India has the world's first fully solar power operated airport. India's huge railway system will become net zero in this decade.

When a large country like India shows such ambition, other developing countries also get inspiration. We hope that the rich countries of G-7 will support India's efforts. Today, a huge market for clean energy technologies is

emerging in India. G-7 countries can invest in research, innovation, and manufacturing in this field. The scale that India can provide for every new technology can make that technology affordable for the whole world. The core theories of the circular economy have been an integral part of Indian culture and lifestyle.

I called for a movement called LIFE — Lifestyle for Environment — in Glasgow last year. This year on World Environment Day, we launched the Global Initiative for LiFE campaign. The goal of this campaign is to encourage an eco-friendly lifestyle. We can call the followers of this movement Triple-P i.e. 'pro planet people', and we should all take the responsibility of increasing the number of Triple-P people in our own countries. This will be our greatest contribution to the coming generations.

Humans and the health of our planet are interconnected. Therefore, we have adopted the approach of one world, one health. During the pandemic, India found many creative ways to use digital technology in the health sector. G7 countries can help India to take these innovations to other developing countries. Recently we all celebrated the International Day of Yoga. In times of the Covid crisis, yoga has become a great tool for preventive health for people all over the world, this helped many people to maintain their physical and mental health.

Apart from yoga, there is a valuable asset of traditional medicine in many countries of the world including India, which can be used for holistic health. I am glad that recently WHO decided to set up its Global Center for Traditional Medicine in India. This center will not only become a repository of different traditional medicine systems all over the world but will also encourage more research in this area. It will benefit all the citizens of the world.

Thank You.

Excerpts of Prime Minister of India, H. E. Narendra Modi's remarks at the session on 'Investing in a better Future: Climate, Energy, Health' at G7 Summit in Germany on June 27, 2022

THE MANILA TIMES

[\[Opinion\] Facing humanitarian and ecological disasters, world's nations must be united](#)

By: Marit Stinus-Cabugon

IT struck me as somewhat odd that the United Nations General Assembly chose this time to declare the access to a clean and healthy environment a universal human right. Odd because the UN appears impotent in the face of Putin's ongoing military attack on Ukraine. The war has caused massive destruction to civilian infrastructure including homes, about 12 million people have been displaced, thousands have been killed, and the disruptions in international trade in fuel, fertilizer, grains and other foodstuffs have caused inflation to soar across the globe.

OK, the UN and the government of Turkey were able to broker a deal that allows Ukrainian cargo ships carrying wheat, corn and other vital commodities to finally leave the Black Sea. But will this suffice to prevent famine?

The World Food Program, a UN agency, estimates that some 47 million people will be added to the acutely hungry in the 82 countries where the organization is operating "due to the ripple effects of the war in Ukraine in all its dimensions," the UN Global Response Group reported in its August 2022 brief. In June, the group had reported that "Today, 60 percent of workers have lower real income than before the pandemic." We are going from worse to worse.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), also part of the UN system, is frantically calling on Ukraine and Russia to allow the agency to send inspectors to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Eastern Ukraine. The plant was seized by the Russian military in early March shortly after the invasion, and remains under Russian control. Rafael Grossi, IAEA's director-general, told Associated Press in an August 3 interview that the situation at the facility is "completely out of control" and that "Every principle of nuclear safety has been violated." Russia and Ukraine accuse each other of shelling the facility. Even UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' appeals to the two governments to immediately cease all military activities around the facility, have fallen on deaf ears. The situation, according to Grossi, is "extremely grave and dangerous."

Since World War 2 when the atomic bomb was used to force Japan to surrender, there has been an earnest effort to harness nuclear technology for peaceful use. But not only has Putin dangled the prospect of using nuclear weapons in the conflict, the case of the Zaporizhzhia plant reminds us that even a nuclear power plant, built and operated to provide a basic commodity to thousands of households and civilian establishments, can become a dangerous weapon in an armed conflict. As the world commemorated the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that killed and maimed thousands, Europe suddenly sees itself closer to nuclear disaster than ever.

Two years of Covid-19 pandemic with resulting swelling of the ranks of the poor and the continued worsening of climate change-induced extreme weather events are apparently not uniting the world. Western Europe showed its lack of solidarity with poorer nations when it hoarded the Covid-19 vaccines during the early part of the vaccine roll-out. Putin's war and its consequences for Europe — millions of refugees, the need to provide massive and sustained military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine, the energy crisis resulting from the difficult but necessary decision to cut dependence on Russian fuel — all mean that Europe has less to spare for poorer nations. This could be disastrous for some countries, especially in Africa, where drought — with its devastating impact on agricultural production — and local armed conflicts were already causing untold misery before Putin attacked Ukraine — a war that the world needs like a hole in the head.

Meanwhile, governments are preparing for the next round of climate change talks which will take place in Egypt in November. Experts have warned that emissions must be brought down significantly, across all sectors, now. While there have been tremendous advances in renewable energy and other technologies and processes that improve energy efficiency and reduce pollution, it simply isn't enough. We need to produce less and people who consume much must reduce their ecological footprint. Aside from emissions that cause climate change, we are facing depletion of the world's finite natural resources and degradation and pollution of soil, water and air. Plastics and other toxic wastes are choking the world to death. The Earth is on its way to becoming the way it is depicted in the animated movie "Wall-E": an abandoned wasteland of barely breathable air and mountains of garbage. This scenario was predicted by the report "Limits to Growth" which was published 50 years ago. We are still pushing limits without much thought for the decades, centuries and millennia to come. Of course, the millions who are starving, who are fleeing war and natural disasters, are concerned with simply staying alive. Unity and solidarity, expressed through action, among nations and peoples are needed now more than ever.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[DOE to make energy sector more attractive to investors](#)

By: Richmond Mercurio

Manila, Philippines — The Department of Energy (DOE) is preparing to make the country's power and energy environment more appealing and friendly to investors, in cooperation with its attached agencies and legislators.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the agency is looking forward to healthy relationship between the rest of the energy agencies and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

"I welcome the appointment of the new Energy Regulatory Commission chair because this is a follow through of the President in his desire to see a level playing field in the energy sector so that more investors and more investments can come in," he said.

Lotilla said the ERC plays a vital role in the regulation of the power markets and of power prices.

"The DOE lays down the policy. Under the EPIRA, the DOE possesses the power to issue rules and regulations to implement the Electric Power Industry Reform Act. On the other hand, the ERC is tasked among others with reinforcement of the provisions of the EPIRA," he said. "So there is a link between policy-making between the DOE and the functions of the ERC in relation to competition, to the setting of regulations for transmissions, for distribution utilities, and even for retail suppliers," Lotilla said.

According to the energy chief, a healthy relationship between the DOE and ERC is important because there have been unfortunate times in the past when both agencies were at loggerheads. "This did not have positive results. Both have to cooperate," he said.

Lotilla said the DOE, under his watch, would recognize the importance of not only respecting, but reinforcing the independence of the ERC when it comes to setting rates.

"In other words, when it comes to rate-setting, the independence of the regulator needs to be respected because that is what the market, that is what the investors are looking at. That the regulator has a full understanding of the factors that need to be taken into account in order to ensure that there will be a steady stream of investments," Lotilla said.

"It's not only the here and now, but also future investments have to come in. If rate-setting becomes arbitrary, then we are going to compromise the entry of new investments in the country. In other words, we are ruining our own future if we do so," he said.

Lotilla said the DOE also seeks to ensure that the policy environment for investors in the upstream sector is going to be certain, stable, and absolutely clear.

“Upon instructions of the President, the legal cluster has met and we in the DOE have joined them. So yes, we are addressing that desire of the President to make sure that the investment climate and the legal environment for investments in the upstream becomes absolutely clear,” he said.

Lotilla, however, said that it is not only in the upstream sector wherein the policies and laws would have to be clarified.

“We want to have a stable regulatory framework for the downstream natural gas as well,” he said.

“You see right now, there is a department circular, but the department circular can change with the next administration as well. But we want to provide certainty to the investments because these are long term investments. They are not going to be there only for one administration, but for several administrations and therefore it is best to have a law in place,” he said.

Lotilla earlier said the uncertainty over the interpretation of Presidential Decree 87 allowing the service contractor’s corporate taxes to form part of the government’s 60 percent net share has hindered investments and roll out in the upstream sector.

PD 87, or the Oil Exploration and Development Act of 1972, is the law governing the discovery and development of indigenous petroleum in the country.

He said the DOE would be submitting a clear articulation of the policy and would also seek legislative articulation of it in order to insure a stable investments regime across different administrations.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

[Ang Tinig Klima: Wikang Filipino para sa Klima at Kalikasan](#)

ANG TINIG KLIMA - 08/12/2022- 3:00 - 4:00 P.M

Topic: Ang Tinig Klima: Wikang Filipino para sa Klima at Kalikasan

Hosted by: Jenny Pahilanga and Director Elenida Basug

Ayon po kay Climate Change Commission Secretary Robert Borje, ang pagsama o pag-integrate ng climate change sa basic education ay isa sa susi upang mapataas ang kamalayan ng mga bata at kabataan tungkol sa pabago-bagong klima. Isa itong hakbang upang ma-empower ang mamamayan at maghanda sa hamon ng pabago-bagong klima.

POLICE FILE TONITE

[‘STATE OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY’](#)

By: Gilbert Perdez

Hindi na bago sa ating pandinig ang malalakas na lindol, bagyo, at pabago-bagong klima na nararanasan sa Pilipinas.

Ilan lamang iyan sa mga krisis pangkalikasan na nangangailangan ng agarang aksyon.

Kung matatandaan, noong Setyembre 2009, tumama sa bansa ang Bagyong Ondoy na sinundan ng Bagyong Yolanda (Haiyan) noong Nobyembre 2013. Binayo rin tayo ng Bagyong Rolly (Goni) noong Nobyembre 6, 2020 at ang pinakahuli ay ang Bagyong Odette noong Disyembre 2021 na nagresulta sa malawakang pagkawasak ng mga ari-arian at pagkitil ng mga buhay.

Noong Hulyo 27,2022 naman, niyanig ng magnitude 7 na lindol ang Hilagang Luzon.

Para sa mga eksperto, malinaw na epekto raw ito ng climate change na nararanasan sa malaking bahagi ng mundo.

Ang pagbabago ng klima o climate change ang pinakamalalang epektong dulot ng global warming.

Sa ating bansa, isa raw sa epekto ng climate pattern na ito ay ang malawakang EL Niño o ang siklo ng pagkakaroon ng mainit na temperatura ng tubig sa karagatang pasipiko.

Kung tawagin ito sa atin ay malawakang tagtuyot o panahon na kung saan walang ulan ang bumabagsak at patuloy na nag-iinit ang temperatura. Kung minsan naman, kahit panahon ng summer o tag-init ay bumubuhos ang malakas na ulan.

Ang pabago-bagong sistema ng dami ng ulan at patuloy na pagtaas ng temperatura ay nakakaapekto sa ecosystem ng mga kagubatan.

Nanganganib na masira ang mga kagubatang pangunahing pinagkukunan ng kabuhayan ng marami nating kababayan.

May magandang balita naman sapagkat dahil sa nararanasang pag-ulan at pagtaas ng mga tubig-baha bunga raw ng climate change, nagdeklara ng 'state of climate emergency' si Makati Mayor Abby Binay, bagay na pinuri ni Climate Change Commission (CCC) Vice Chairperson at Executive Director Robert Borje.

Nangako raw ang alkalde na gagawa ng aksyon para mabawasan ang greenhouse gas emissions sa lungsod.

Una nang naglabas ng katulad na deklarasyon ang apat pang local government units (LGUs) tulad ng Bacolod City, Cebu City, Quezon City, at Tolosa, Leyte.

Ayon kay Borje, ang climate emergency declarations ay indikasyon kung gaano kalawak ang epekto ng pagbabago ng klima sa mga lokal na komunidad.

Binalikan din ni Borje ang naging pahayag ni Pangulong Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. na ang mga plano ng gobyerno para sa ekonomiya at hinaharap ay mawawalan ng saysay kung wala itong gagawing hakbang laban sa climate change.

Kaya patuloy aniyang makikipag-ugnayan ang CCC sa lahat ng stakeholders upang mas mapalakas pa ang pinagsamang pagsisikap at hakbangin laban sa pagbabago ng klima at maabot ang target na "Climate Resilient and Climate Smart Philippines" sa taong 2050.

Ngunit marami pa ring nagtatanong kung dapat nga ba tayong magdeklara ng 'state of climate emergency' o krisis pangkalikasan?

Medyo mabigat na tanong ito lalo pa't patuloy pa rin tayong nakikipaglaban sa krisis pangkalusugan.

Gayunman, higit sa maraming agam-agam, kinakailangan pa rin ang konkretong aksyon at paghahanda para sa mga parating pang sakuna na maaaring maganap dulot ng kalikasan.

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