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28 September 2022 [08:00 am]

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BLOOMBERG

[Germany, Canada Call for More Cash to Fight Climate Change](#)

By: Petra Sorge

Germany and Canada are urging fellow developed nations to fulfill their commitments to help developing countries meet the bill for tackling climate change, German deputy minister for international climate politics, Jennifer Lee Morgan, said in Berlin.

BUSINESS MIRROR

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By: Cai Ordinario

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CNN PHILIPPINES

[Mayor says Bulacan town hit by worst flooding due to 'Karding'](#)

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 27) — San Miguel town in Bulacan suffered the worst flooding its residents have seen in recent decades when Typhoon Karding hit the area earlier this week, its mayor said Tuesday.

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By Jon Viktor Cabuenas

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MANILA BULLETIN

[DPWH completes P81.4-M flood-shield project in Nueva Ecija](#)

By: Jun Marcos Tadios

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has completed a flood mitigation project in Barangay Bugnan, Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija which will protect residents and farmlands from perennial flooding.

[\[Opinion\] PBBM in UN debut: No challenge is larger than a world in harmony](#)

By: Anna Mae Lamentillo

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[Yuchengco firm to invest in Bohol solar project](#)

By: Myrna Velasco

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MANILA STANDARD

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By: Alena Mae Flores

PetroGreen Energy Corp., the renewable arm of PetroEnergy Resources Corp. of the Yuchengco Group, started the development of the 27-megawatt Dagohoy Solar Power Project in Barangay San Vicente, Dagohoy, Bohol.

PHYS ORG

[Climate change is turning trees into gluttons](#)

By: Tatyana Woodall

Trees have long been known to buffer humans from the worst effects of climate change by pulling carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Now new research shows just how much forests have been bulking up on that excess carbon.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Explainer: How climate change is fueling hurricanes](#)

Both Florida and Cuba are preparing for Hurricane Ian to bring devastating winds and storm surges to their coasts this week.

RAPPLER

[Lack of national funding delays Cebu flood control projects](#)

By: John Sitchon

Cebu, Philippines – Lack of funding support from the national government delayed implementation of flood control projects for Metro Cebu, the author of a resolution “requesting the expeditious completion of flood control and drainage projects” said on Tuesday, September 27.

REUTERS

[Climate change means the Inuit do what they've always done: Adapt](#)

By: Melissa Renwick and Clare Baldwin

Nain, Newfoundland, Sept 27 (Reuters) - Rex Holwell has spent his life on the sea ice that forms each winter off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador in eastern Canada. Like other Inuit, he learned to hunt seals and fish from his father and other men. They would skim over the sea ice, first on dog sleds and then, by the time Holwell started accompanying them, on gasoline-powered skidoos. Holwell wants this life – and freedom – for his children.

THE MANILA TIMES

[PetroGreen launches Dagohoy solar project](#)

By: Tiziana Celine Piatos

PETROGREEN Energy Corp. (PGEC) on Tuesday held a ceremonial project launch for its planned 27 MWDC Dagohoy Solar Power Project (DSPP) in Barangay San Vicente, Dagohoy, Bohol.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[ADB boosts Asia-Pacific food security financing to \\$14 billion](#)

MANILA, Philippines — The Asian Development Bank will provide \$14 billion in loans over four years to help poor countries improve food security as prices soar and climate change bites, the Philippines-based lender said Tuesday.

The bank, which provides loans and grants for projects in the poorest countries in the Asia-Pacific region, said the financing would target among other things food production and distribution, and climate mitigation.

Surviving 'super' typhoons

By Marichu A. Villanueva

If we go by the history of calamities and disasters that have befallen upon the Philippines through these years, the phenomenon that we now call as “super typhoons” have been the primary causes of deaths and devastation. Internationally rated as “category 5” cyclone, “Haiyan” or “Yolanda” by its local name, was the most recent, single, strongest “super typhoon” that wrought so much destruction of lives and properties to millions of Filipinos. Thus, both “Haiyan” and “Yolanda” were erased, deleted forever from the international and local list of names for typhoons and other weather disturbances.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

Straight Talk

By: Gigi Arcilla and Pocholo Concepcion

Robert Borje, Commissioner and Vice Chair of the Philippine Climate Change Commission, live in person on 'Straight Talk' with hosts Gigi Arcilla and Pocholo Concepcion

Information Knowledge and Management Division

BLOOMBERG

[Germany, Canada Call for More Cash to Fight Climate Change](#)

By: Petra Sorge

Germany and Canada are urging fellow developed nations to fulfill their commitments to help developing countries meet the bill for tackling climate change, German deputy minister for international climate politics, Jennifer Lee Morgan, said in Berlin.

A common 10-point progress report drawn up in cooperation with Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault will be released at the end of October.

It's an evaluation of the so-called Delivery Plan, under which developed countries committed more than a decade ago to mobilize \$100 billion in public and private funds annually for climate adaptation and renewable energies in less developed countries. As the target was missed in 2020, at COP26 in Glasgow the nations reaffirmed their determination to reach it by 2025.

"We want to discuss and see what still has to happen," Morgan said at a World Energy Council conference in Berlin. "It is not acceptable that this 100-billion goal is not yet reached."

Germany will also reach out to the World Bank to make changes to the plan, Morgan said, adding that she hoped for a tangible contribution from Australia also. "We try to make our fair share as Germany and others also have to catch up." Berlin has so far committed to deliver \$6 billion annually to 2025.

The role of the financial system will be an important topic at the COP27 gathering in November, the deputy minister said.

The 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from Nov. 6-18.

BUSINESS MIRROR

[Experts urge LGUs to invest in disaster response, climate change adaptations](#)

By: Cai Ordinario

Local government units (LGUs) should invest more in efforts that make communities better equipped to face disasters and climate change, according to an urban planner.

In a recent webinar of the 8th Annual Public Policy Conference (APPC) organized by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners fellow Nathaniel von Einsiedel said LGUs lack investments in prevention and risk reduction.

Einsiedel said LGUs must abandon their reactive approach to managing disasters, which limit their response to post-disaster impacts. This means LGUs only prepare for repairing and rebuilding what has been damaged by disasters like typhoons.

“We do not find enough investments in planning tools among poorer LGUs. They do not even have enough permanent personnel to manage GIS [geographic information system] mapping functions. LGUs are at the forefront in their territories. Sadly, many of them do not have adequate personnel and equipment, making it very difficult [for them] to perform their functions,” Einsiedel said.

Einsiedel said mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and management and climate change adaptation in local development plans is a big part of building resilient people and cities.

He said governments must enable people to adopt productive and sustainable livelihoods that can survive and thrive even during difficult situations.

The urban planner also stressed that while policies are in place at the national level, various challenges impede their implementation at the LGU level.

“We must invest more in disaster prevention, risk reduction, and mitigation. We find that especially in poorer LGUs, there is a strong reactive post-disaster relief and rescue operation focus and not much on prevention and risk reduction,” he said.

Einsiedel also stressed that eradicating poverty and hunger are key to building resilient Philippine cities. The country’s long-term local economic development plan, he said, must include situation-based recovery measures that could be implemented based on the circumstances and characteristics of a disaster.

In the same virtual forum, United Nations Development Programme in the Philippines Climate Action Team Leader Floradema Eleazar highlighted the role of analytical work and stakeholder consultation in building inclusive resilience.

She noted that understanding and recognizing the context of risks and their interconnected dimensions could enable capacities for resilience “that leaves no one behind.”

“It is important to have a good understanding of context-specific and area-based situations and develop specific approaches for certain localities,” she said. “Community-level initiatives, participation, and people-centered approaches are essential in addressing risks and achieving resilience.”

The APPC is the highlight of the yearly Development Policy Research Month celebration led by PIDS every September. This year’s theme is #CloseTheGap: Accelerate Post-pandemic Recovery through Social Justice.

BUSINESS WORLD

[Budget monitor urges Congress to ensure GAA aligned with recovery, climate change goals](#)

By: Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza

A non-government organization that monitors budget spending said Congress needs to review the government's spending plans thoroughly to ensure they aid the economic recovery and help mitigate climate change, adding that legislators must not be rushed by the Palace's certification of the 2023 budget bill as urgent.

The proposed P5.268-trillion budget for next year must, first and foremost, be up to the task of helping the Philippines whether the foreseeable economic challenges and worsening effects of climate change, it said.

"Certifying it as urgent shouldn't mean preventing scrutiny of controversial budget items," I-Lead Executive Director Zyza Nadine M. Suzara said in a Messenger chat. "The 19th Congress should ensure that the national budget is responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens."

Citing the upcoming Congressional recess, Ms. Suzara acknowledged that "there is reason" to certify the 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA) as urgent.

"A delayed budget legislation process would be a worse scenario," she said. "It could mean having a reenacted budget which could negatively affect the achievement of the Development Budget Coordination Committee's (DBCC) macroeconomic targets."

An urgent certification allows bills to skip some steps in the legislative process. The urgent certification is designed to keep the budget timetable on track and avoid the months-long delays that accompanied the 2019 budget.

Budgets are re-enacted when the spending plan for the new year is not passed in time, forcing the government to operate on the basis of the previous year's spending plan.

Re-enacted budgets mean delays in the delivery of public services, according to Representative Stella Luz A. Quimbo, House appropriations committee vice-chair, said in a statement.

Citing the government's economic planning agency, she said the re-enacted budget in 2019 cost the country 1-1.2 percentage points of growth that year.

The 2019 budget was passed in April of that year, meaning that the public works spending that the previous government depended on for growth missed a large portion of the dry-season window deemed ideal for construction before the rainy season set in.

Ms. Quimbo said legislators are expected to wrap up plenary debate for the budget bill on Wednesday, Sept. 27.

“It is the second stage of the budget process where Congress members dedicate another pair of eyes to review the proposed budget,” she said. “So far, we have terminated debates for (the budgets of) 61 agencies and constitutional bodies, leaving us with 14 more to deliberate.”

Ms. Quimbo said the budget is expected to be passed in the House before Oct. 1 and be approved by both chambers of Congress by the end of the year.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and credit company S&P Global Ratings recently lowered their growth forecasts for the Philippines, citing tightening monetary policy aimed at tempering inflation and the economic slowdown in major economies such as China and the US.

The IMF lowered its Philippine growth forecast for this year to 6.5% from the 6.7% estimate issued in July. Economic managers expect growth of 6.5-7.5% this year.

S&P, which lowered its own growth forecast to 6.3% from 6.5% previously, said it expects elevated core inflation to “drive up policy rates materially further” in the Philippines, Australia, India, New Zealand, and South Korea.

Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles, in a briefing, said Philippine fundamentals remain “strong” and that the economy is experiencing “a resurgence.”

“Our economic managers forecast higher growth. They are in a much better position to make that determination,” she said when asked to comment on the IMF growth downgrade. “We will have to see in the end whether that forecast is going to be more accurate than the local forecast.”

Ms. Suzara said the 2023 proposed budget is not sufficient to generate new jobs.

“There is also no allocation for COVID-related expenditures like booster shots and the compensation and benefits of COVID-19 healthcare frontliners,” she added.

The Philippines has relaxed mobility restrictions and outdoor face mask rules in a bid to reopen the economy further, including to foreign travelers. On Monday, the Department of Health (DoH) reported more than 17,000 infections in the Sept. 19-23 period.

Ms. Suzara said Congress also needs to provide for the activities prescribed by the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and Disaster Risk Reduction Roadmap.

According to the Budget department, the climate change adaptation (CCA) budget increased to P453.1 billion in the proposed 2023 budget from P289.7 billion in the 2022 General Appropriations Act.

“These aggregate figures are meaningless if they do not talk about them vis-à-vis timebound plans and investment requirements for CCA,” Ms. Suzara said.

“The lack of significant growth in the agriculture budget outside of rice and corn is also troubling given that we have issues related to food security and sustainability,” said Philip Arnold P. Tuaño, dean of the Ateneo School of Government, in a Viber message.

“The decreases in the budget for the Departments of Health and Social Welfare and Development, given the ongoing pandemic, are worrisome,” he added.

Mr. Tuaño hopes the government expands its engagement with civil society and the academic community in preparing the budget.

[PetroGreen solar project in Bohol seen operational by 2024](#)

By: Ashley Erika Jose

PETROGREEN Energy Corp. said on Tuesday that its 27-megawatt direct current (MWdc) Dagohoy solar power project in Bohol is expected to start operations by 2024.

The solar plant, a renewable energy project between the Department of Energy and PetroGreen, is expected to generate about 36-gigawatt hours of electricity per year, which is enough to power around 15,000 households.

Maria Victoria M. Olivar, PetroGreen assistant vice-president for operations, said in a media release that the company is presently completing the necessary pre-development permits.

She thanked Bohol's provincial government "for the encouraging support to investors" such as PetroGreen.

The Dagohoy project is located on a 22-hectare site and will use 61,200 solar panels.

Bohol Governor Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado said the project is aligned with the province's vision of "Green Bohol."

"One of our priorities is a stable, reliable, and affordable power supply, which is key to making Bohol more attractive for investors, sustaining a lively tourism industry, and ensuring the [province's] continuous economic growth," he said.

PetroGreen is the renewable energy arm of Yuchengco-led PetroEnergy Resources Corp.

PetroGreen also holds interest in the 32-MW Maibarara geothermal power project in Batangas, the 36-MW Nabas-1 wind power plant in Aklan, and the 70-MWdc Tarlac solar power project in Tarlac.

On Tuesday, PetroEnergy shares closed 3.06% lower to finish at P4.75 apiece.

CNN PHILIPPINES

Mayor says Bulacan town hit by worst flooding due to 'Karding'

Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, September 27) — San Miguel town in Bulacan suffered the worst flooding its residents have seen in recent decades when Typhoon Karding hit the area earlier this week, its mayor said Tuesday.

Speaking to CNN Philippines' The Source, Mayor Roderick Tiongson said all 49 villages of the town were swamped with floodwater since early Monday.

"Itong karanasan ko po mula noong ako'y naging punongbayan noong 2006, sa kasalukuyan ito ang pinakamatindi, ang worst na nangyari sa bayan," Tiongson said.

[Translation: Based on what I had seen since I was first elected mayor in 2006, currently this is the worst that the town has encountered.]

Photos and footages, as well as reports from various media outlets showed San Miguel residents wading through up to chest-high murky water a day after Karding lashed parts of Central and Southern Luzon.

San Miguel also made headlines after five rescuers died in the area while conducting rescue operations at the height of Karding's fury. Authorities are still determining the cause of their deaths.

Tiongson attributed the intense flooding to quarrying operations along the vast Sierra Madre mountain range, which covers various provinces including Bulacan.

"Naririnig ko noong bata ako, sinisira ang kabundukan, lalo na ang pagmamarmol na nagiging sanhi ng baha. Ang nangyayari po hindi na sa ilog dumadaan ang tubig kundi sa kapatagan na," he said.

[Translation: When I was younger, I would often hear about people destroying the mountains especially due to marble quarrying which has been causing flooding. Water does not flow through the rivers anymore but through the land.]

Karding first made landfall as a supertyphoon in the vicinity of Burdeos, Quezon at 5:30 p.m., then weakened into a typhoon when it made its second landfall over Dingalan, Aurora three hours later. But satellite images on Sunday showed how Sierra Madre slightly weakened Karding's rainband when it reached the mountain range.

Netizens and environmental groups renewed their call to save Sierra Madre, which is believed to play an important role as a natural shield against typhoons coming from the Pacific Ocean. The hashtag #SaveSierraMadre also trended on Monday, in time for "Save Sierra Madre Day" as declared by Presidential Proclamation No. 413 issued in 2012.

"With Sierra Madre...it sequesters excess floodwaters. It also serves as a habitat for around 29 endemic species and around 290 birds, as well as livelihood for indigenous communities and surrounding towns," said former congressman and indigenous peoples' rights advocate Teddy Baguilat, who leads Angat Kalikasan Pilipinas.

"Marami siyang binibigay na blessings (it gives many blessings) for the Luzon area," he added.

Unfortunately, mining, quarrying, as well as real estate developments in various parts of Luzon are posing a threat that could eventually diminish Sierra Madre's capacity to protect people from flooding and erosion, he said.

The former senatorial candidate also expressed his opposition to the construction of the Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon, which he said would destroy around 300 hectares of forested area in the Sierra Madre.

Baguilat added that dredging efforts in rivers are useless if deforestation also continues.

In hopes of expanding awareness about Sierra Madre, Baguilat said a better information campaign is needed to let it stay among Filipinos' consciousness.

"Palagi naman ang mga environmental groups, we talk within our chambers, we are not able to bring the message outside of our own circles. Kaya ang importante we engage the youth, create more content," he said.

[Translation: Environmental groups usually talk within their own chambers, we are not able to bring the message outside of our own circles. That's why it is important that we engage the youth, create more content.]

GMA NEWS

Typhoon Karding's damage to agri surges to P1.29B

By Jon Viktor Cabuenas

Damage and losses to agriculture brought by Typhoon Karding (international name: Noru) have breached P1 billion given additional data from other regions, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported Tuesday.

The latest estimates released by the DA's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Center (DRRM) were hiked to P1.29 billion as of 1 p.m. on September 27, covering 141,312 hectares of agricultural areas across Luzon.

This includes areas in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), the Ilocos Region, the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, and the Bicol Region.

The latest figures compare with the P160.1 million damage in the previous estimate of the DA issued at 5 p.m. on Monday, which only covered 16,659 hectares of agricultural areas.

The updated figures translate to a volume of production loss of 72,231 metric tons (MT) of commodities affecting 82,158 farmers and fisherfolk.

"The increase in overall damage and losses is due to additional reports on rice, corn, high value crops, livestock, and fisheries in all affected regions," the DA said in an accompanying statement.

The biggest damage was recorded in rice, with 138,843 hectares affected. This translated to a volume loss of 63,115 metric tons equivalent to P959.8 million.

This was followed by high value crops which recorded P271.4 million in losses, fisheries with P17.0 million, corn with P40.5 million, and livestock and poultry with P0.56 million.

The agency said assistance is available to affected farmers and fisherfolk, including 133,240 bags of rice seeds; 5,729 bags of corn seeds; and 4,911 kilograms of assorted vegetable seeds.

It also has drugs and biologics for livestock and poultry, and fingerlings and assistance through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

The DA said it can also tap the Survival and Recovery (SURE) Program of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC), and P500-million worth of Quick Response Fund (QRF) for the rehabilitation of affected areas.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) also said it has allocated P1.1 billion for its disaster response and assistance to those hit by Typhoon Karding.

Typhoon Karding officially left the Philippine Area of Responsibility at 8 p.m. on Monday, affecting several areas in the Luzon region with at least eight reported dead.

MANILA BULLETIN

[DPWH completes P81.4-M flood-shield project in Nueva Ecija](#)

By: Jun Marcos Tadios

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has completed a flood mitigation project in Barangay Bugnan, Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija which will protect residents and farmlands from perennial flooding.

According to the DPWH-Nueva Ecija 2nd District Engineering Office (DEO), the 830-lineal meter flood mitigation structure which costs P81.4 million was funded under the General Appropriations Act of 2022.

District Engineer Elpidio Trinidad said the project aims to protect the lives and property of the residents from natural calamities such as typhoons and flooding of roads in adjacent low-lying areas.

Trinidad said the DPWH national office and the local government of Gabaldon have committed to build more infrastructures to ensure the safety of the residents and safeguard their source of livelihood.

“The successful implementation of this project was made possible through the collaboration of our office with the local government of Gabaldon and we intend to continue the construction of flood mitigation structures to protect the river-bank areas, including homes and agricultural communities,” said Trinidad.

[Opinion] PBBM in UN debut: No challenge is larger than a world in harmony

By: Anna Mae Lamentillo

The past few years have shown humankind once again that we are interconnected, the geographical and political boundaries set by every nation does not mean we only live within those boundaries.

It was evident during the Covid-19 pandemic which spared no nation; and it was also through the solidarity of the community of nations that we were able to control the virus.

Climate change, food security, the conflict in Ukraine, the fast-paced technological developments that is compounding the digital divide, and the lingering effects of the pandemic are just some of the issues that are affecting our world today.

These are concerns that President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. tackled during his participation in the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and working visit to New York from Sept. 18-24.

It was a busy week for the President as he met with the Filipino community in the United States; had bilateral talks with US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida; met with UN Secretary-General António Guterres; delivered keynote address at the New York Stock Exchange and at the Philippine Economic Briefing; had dialogues with American private companies, members of the Asia Society, as well as with key executives from the United States' digital infrastructure sector, among others.

In his meetings with business leaders, the President's main agenda is to communicate the developments in the country and the administration's priorities and plans for the next six years to encourage them to invest in the Philippines now.

But the highlight of the President's visit to New York is his participation in the 77th session of the UNGA. In the national statement during the High-Level General Debate, President Marcos underscored the role that the Philippines can play in addressing global concerns.

For instance, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, Filipino health workers in different parts of the world were at the frontlines caring for the infected and helping curb the spread of the virus.

The President also shared the Philippines' peace building efforts within the country, particularly the success in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, as well as within the region, stressing that the country's experience in building peace and forging cooperation can contribute to the work of the Security Council. In this regard, he appealed for the support of all UN Member States for the Philippines' candidature to the Security Council for the term of 2027-2028.

Another important highlight of the President's speech is his call for climate justice — for industrialized countries to immediately fulfill their obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, stressing that it is clear injustice for a country such as the Philippines to be the fourth most vulnerable nation to the effects of climate change even if it absorbs more carbon dioxide than it emits.

President Marcos emphasized that the Philippines accepts its share of responsibility in the global climate action, but it is a must that industrialized nations deliver their commitments to cut their greenhouse gas emissions, and to provide climate financing and technology transfer for adaptation for the most vulnerable and developing countries.

The President also touched on the issues of peaceful resolution of international disputes, the need to protect the vulnerable sectors of our society such as the marginalized, migrants and refugees, and ending all forms of prejudice.

In essence, President Marcos underscored that the challenges of today can be resolved through three tools already at our disposal — solidarity, sustainability, and science. But there should be a stronger commitment to fulfill our collective duty as part of the United Nations, because whatever action or non-action we commit today will affect and influence not only us, but also the generations next to us.

Perhaps it is best to recall what the 17th-century English author John Donne had said, “No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main...any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

Yuchengco firm to invest in Bohol solar project

By: Myrna Velasco

Yuchengco-led PetroGreen Energy Corporation (PGEC) is all set to start construction of its proposed 27-megawatt dc solar farm investment to be sited in Barangay San Vicente in the municipality of Dagohoy in Bohol.

The company said it is now gaining traction on its project implementation following the symbolic laying of a capsule containing the conceptual design of the facility, which was held at the project site on Tuesday, Sept. 27.

The company has not divulged the scale of capital outlay it will cough up for the solar farm installation, but the current investment rule of thumb for this technology is roughly \$700,000 to \$800,000 per megawatt.

PGEC emphasized that the Dagohoy solar power project (DSPP) will be developed in a 22-hectare site and will be equipped with 61,200 solar panels.

Maria Victoria M. Olivar, assistant vice president for Operations of PGEC, noted that once the facility reaches commercial operation, “we expect DSPP to produce approximately 36 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually, enough to serve around 15,000 households.”

She conveyed that the project sponsor-firm is currently “completing all the necessary pre-development permits...barring any delays, we expect to complete and commercially operate the solar power facility by fourth quarter of 2024, at the earliest.”

For the host local government unit in Dagohoy, Mayor Hermie Relampagos labeled the project as “a game-changer” that can help transform their town.

Citing Dagohoy’s present classification as 5th class municipality, the local leader asserted that “we know that projects such as DSPP, will bring socio-economic benefits that can help our people.”

On that sphere then, Relampagos stated that “we are ready and willing to extend all the help and support we can give to make this successful, because this is a project that the people of Dagohoy can be proud of.”

Additionally, Bohol Governor Aris Aumentado highlighted that “this project is very much aligned with our vision of Green Bohol,” given the fact that DSPP will not be having greenhouse gas emissions.

“One of our priorities is a stable, reliable, and affordable power supply, which is key to making Bohol more attractive for investors, sustaining a lively tourism industry, and ensuring the province’ continuous economic growth,” the governor stressed.

The Yuchenco firm has been giving sharp focus on renewable energy (RE) investments not just in the solar space, but also in geothermal as well as onshore and offshore wind farm developments.

MANILA STANDARD

PetroGreen building 27-MW solar project

By: Alena Mae Flores

PetroGreen Energy Corp., the renewable arm of PetroEnergy Resources Corp. of the Yuchengco Group, started the development of the 27-megawatt Dagohoy Solar Power Project in Barangay San Vicente, Dagohoy, Bohol.

The solar project will be built on a 22-hectare site and utilize 61,200 panels.

“Once operational, we expect DSPP to produce approximately 36 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually, enough to serve around 15,000 households,” PGEC assistant vice president for operations Maria Victoria Olivar said.

Olivar said PGEC was completing the necessary pre-development permits for the project.

“Barring any delays, we expect to complete and commercially operate the solar power facility by the fourth quarter of 2024, at the earliest,” said Olivar.

Bohol Governor Erico Aristotle Aumentado, together with key local government officials and senior executives of PGEC, attended the symbolic laying of the capsule containing the project’s conceptual design.

PHYS ORG

Climate change is turning trees into gluttons

By: Tatyana Woodall

Trees have long been known to buffer humans from the worst effects of climate change by pulling carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Now new research shows just how much forests have been bulking up on that excess carbon.

The study, recently published in the Journal Nature Communications, finds that elevated carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have increased wood volume—or the biomass—of forests in the United States.

Although other factors like climate and pests can somewhat affect a tree's volume, the study found that elevated carbon levels consistently led to an increase of wood volume in 10 different temperate forest groups across the country. This suggests that trees are helping to shield Earth's ecosystem from the impacts of global warming through their rapid growth.

"Forests are taking carbon out of the atmosphere at a rate of about 13% of our gross emissions," said Brent Sohngen, co-author of the study and professor of environmental and resource economics at The Ohio State University. "While we're putting billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, we're actually taking much of it out just by letting our forests grow."

This phenomenon is called carbon fertilization: An influx of carbon dioxide increases a plant's rate of photosynthesis, which combines energy from the sun, water, and nutrients from the ground and air to produce fuel for life and spurs plant growth.

"It's well known that when you put a ton of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, it doesn't stay up there forever," Sohngen said. "A massive amount of it falls into the oceans, while the rest of it is taken up by trees and wetlands and those kinds of areas."

Over the last two decades, forests in the United States have sequestered about 700-800 million tons of carbon dioxide per year, which, according to the study, accounts for roughly 10% to 11% of the country's total carbon dioxide emissions. While exposure to high levels of carbon dioxide can have ill effects on natural systems and infrastructure, trees have no issue gluttoning themselves on Earth's extra supply of the greenhouse gas.

To put it in perspective, if you imagine a tree as just a huge cylinder, the added volume the study finds essentially amounts to an extra tree ring, Sohngen said. Although such growth may not be noticeable to the average person, compared to the trees of 30 years ago, modern vegetation is about 20% to 30% bigger than it used to be. If applied to the Coast Redwood forests—home to some of the largest trees in the world—even a modest percentage increase means a lot of additional carbon storage in forests.

Researchers also found that even older large trees continue adding biomass as they age due to elevated carbon dioxide levels.

Unlike the effects of climate change, which varies over location and in time, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere mixes almost evenly, so every place on Earth has nearly the same amount, Sohngen said.

So to test whether the chemical compound was responsible for beefing up our biome, Sohngen's team used historical data from the U.S. Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (USFS-FIA) to compare how the wood volume of certain forest groups has changed over the past few decades. The study estimates that between 1970 and 2015, there was a significant increase in trees' wood volume, which correlates with a distinct rise in carbon emissions.

Researchers were also able to use this method to test whether there were differences in naturally occurring trees versus trees that were planted. Sohngen thought that planted trees would undergo a bigger fertilization effect, as they have an advantage in that planters often pick the best seeds to plant in only the best locations. On the contrary, he was surprised to find that planted trees respond to carbon dioxide levels in the same way natural ones do.

Overall, Sohngen said this work shows that the wood volume response to carbon dioxide in our ecosystem is even higher than his colleagues predicted with experimental studies.

The results should show policymakers and others the value of trees in mitigating climate change. Sohngen said that carbon fertilization could one day make tree-growing efforts more efficient. For instance, if it costs \$50 to plant one acre of trees today, with the help of carbon fertilization, that number could easily be decreased to \$40. As climate change costs the United States about \$2 trillion each year, that decrease could help drive down the cost of mitigating climate change, Sohngen said.

"Carbon fertilization certainly makes it cheaper to plant trees, avoid deforestation, or do other activities related to trying to enhance the carbon sink in forests," Sohngen said. "We should be planting more trees and preserving older ones, because at the end of the day they're probably our best bet for mitigating climate change."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Explainer: How climate change is fueling hurricanes](#)

Both Florida and Cuba are preparing for Hurricane Ian to bring devastating winds and storm surges to their coasts this week.

The storm is expected to make landfall in Cuba on Monday and then lash Florida with storm surges and downpours.

Ian follows Hurricane Fiona, a powerful Category 4 storm that carved a path of destruction last week through Puerto Rico, leaving most of the U.S. territory without power and potable water. Fiona then barreled through the Turks and Caicos Islands, skirted Bermuda and slammed into Canada's Atlantic coast, where critical infrastructure might take months to repair.

While scientists haven't yet determined whether climate change influenced Fiona or Ian, there's strong evidence that these devastating storms are getting worse.

Here's why.

Is climate change affecting hurricanes?

Yes, climate change is making hurricanes wetter, windier and altogether more intense. There is also evidence that it is causing storms to travel more slowly, meaning they can dump more water in one place.

If it weren't for the oceans, the planet would be much hotter due to climate change. But in the last 40 years, the ocean has absorbed about 90% of the warming caused by heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions. Much of this ocean heat is contained near the water's surface. This additional heat can fuel a storm's intensity and power stronger winds.

Climate change can also boost the amount of rainfall delivered by a storm. Because a warmer atmosphere can also hold more moisture, water vapor builds up until clouds break, sending down heavy rain.

During the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season — one of the most active on record — climate change boosted hourly rainfall rates in hurricane-force storms by 8%-11%, according to an April 2022 study in the journal *Nature Communications*.

The world has already warmed 1.1 degrees Celsius above the preindustrial average. Scientists at the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expect that, at 2C of warming, hurricane wind speeds could increase by up to 10%.

NOAA also projects the proportion of hurricanes that reach the most intense levels — Category 4 or 5 — could rise by about 10% this century. To date, less than a fifth of storms have reached this intensity since 1851.

How else is climate change affecting storms?

The typical “season” for hurricanes is shifting, as climate warming creates conditions conducive to storms in more months of the year. And hurricanes are also making landfall in regions far outside the historic norm.

In the United States, Florida sees the most hurricanes make landfall, with more than 120 direct hits since 1851, according to NOAA. But in recent years, some storms are reaching peak intensity and making landfall farther north than in the past – a poleward shift may be related to rising global air and ocean temperatures, scientists said.

This trend is worrying for mid-latitude cities such as New York, Boston, Beijing, and Tokyo, where “infrastructure is not prepared” for such storms, said atmospheric scientist Allison Wing at Florida State University.

Hurricane Sandy, though only a Category 1 storm, was the fourth costliest U.S. hurricane on record, causing \$81 billion in losses when it hit the Northeastern Seaboard in 2012.

As for timing, hurricane activity is common for North America from June through November, peaking in September – after a summertime buildup of warm water conditions.

However, the first named storms to make U.S. landfall now do so more than three weeks earlier than they did in 1900, nudging the start of the season into May, according to a study published in August in *Nature Communications*.

The same trend appears to be playing out across the world in Asia’s Bay of Bengal, where cyclones since 2013 have been forming earlier than usual – in April and May – ahead of the summer monsoon, according to a November 2021 study in *Scientific Reports*.

It’s unclear, however, if climate change is affecting the number of hurricanes that form each year. One team of scientists recently reported detecting a rise in frequency for North Atlantic hurricanes over the last 150 years, according to their study published in December in *Nature Communications*. But research is still ongoing.

How do hurricanes form?

Hurricanes need two main ingredients — warm ocean water and moist, humid air. When warm seawater evaporates, its heat energy is transferred to the atmosphere. This fuels the storm’s winds to strengthen. Without it, hurricanes can’t intensify and will fizzle out.

Cyclone, typhoon, hurricane — what’s the difference?

While technically the same phenomenon, these big storms get different names depending on where and how they were formed.

Storms that form over the Atlantic Ocean or central and eastern North Pacific are called “hurricanes” when their wind speeds reach at least 74 miles per hour (119 kilometers per hour). Up to that point, they’re known as “tropical storms.”

In East Asia, violent, swirling storms that form over the Northwest Pacific are called “typhoons”, while “cyclones” emerge over the Indian Ocean and South Pacific.

RAPPLER

Lack of national funding delays Cebu flood control projects

By: John Sitchon

Cebu, Philippines – Lack of funding support from the national government delayed implementation of flood control projects for Metro Cebu, the author of a resolution “requesting the expeditious completion of flood control and drainage projects” said on Tuesday, September 27.

Cebu 6th District Board Member Glenn Soco said in a media forum the province has asked the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to prioritize flood control projects that go way back to 2017.

The provincial board passed the resolution on September 20. This was soon after Mandaue City declared a state of calamity on September 12, following the overflow of the Butuanon River that flooded 20 barangays on September 9.

Then-DPWH Secretary Mark Villar met with local officials after a series of floods and drainage problems were experienced in multiple parts of Metro Cebu in 2016, according to Soco.

“We found out that there was already an ongoing master plan that was being conducted by JICA and we were all in agreement that we would pursue that plan,” the local legislator said.

The Metro Cebu Integrated Flood and Drainage System Master Plan Project includes Carcar and Danao, Soco added.

DPWH -VII (Central Visayas) Regional Director Ernesto Gregorio, Jr. on September 5 told the provincial board the project commenced in 2018 with a budget of P44 billion and an implementation period of 10 years.

Four years later, the DPWH has released only P1.8 billion of the needed funds, Soco pointed out.

“We asked what was the problem and they told us that there was a lack of funding from the national government,” he said.

The hope is that Marcos, who credited Governor Gwen Garcia and her One Cebu party for his historic win here in the May 2022 elections, will nudge faster disbursement of funds for urgent flood-control needs.

A few days after his city experienced floods, Mandaue Mayor Jonas Cortes called a roundtable to lay down the most urgent flood control requirements.

For the independent city, an estimated total of P2 billion has been downloaded out of P8 billion intended for its flood control and drainage projects.

Based on data from DENR, there's an ongoing river improvement project at the Subangdaku River and the Tipolo River, worth P898 million and P1.2 billion, respectively.

But other cities and towns, including Cebu City, also experience periodic flooding. In July 2022, 20 barangays of the premier city were underwater after days of heavy rains.

Metro Cebu and the province are in the best possible position to swiftly move into the integrated flood control program.

Aside from the President's gratitude, Garcia and Cebu City Mayor Mike Rama belong to the same block and vowed during the campaign period to push common policies.

One Cebu is the province's most influential party, present in all 50 cities and municipalities of Cebu province.

Garcia also enjoys a tremendous local mandate, demolishing rival Ace Durano in a landslide, with 1.4 million votes to his 341,455 votes

REUTERS

Climate change means the Inuit do what they've always done: Adapt

By: Melissa Renwick and Clare Baldwin

Nain, Newfoundland, Sept 27 (Reuters) - Rex Holwell has spent his life on the sea ice that forms each winter off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador in eastern Canada. Like other Inuit, he learned to hunt seals and fish from his father and other men. They would skim over the sea ice, first on dog sleds and then, by the time Holwell started accompanying them, on gasoline-powered skidoos. Holwell wants this life – and freedom – for his children.

Climate change is about to upend it all.

“It’s going to be a loss of culture,” says Holwell. “They’ll identify as Inuit and so will their children, but they won’t have the same experiences.”

As droughts last longer and heat waves, flooding and storms intensify in an ever-warmer world, the Inuit are doing what they have always done: adapt.

For the past three years, Holwell, 47, has helped run a sea ice monitoring program for the Inuit. Unlike other climate data efforts, this one is completely focused on the needs of the local community. The program is called SmartICE and pairs traditional Inuit knowledge with data collection buoys and electromagnetic sensors to give northern communities real-time measurements of sea ice thickness along their ice “highways” through a website, downloadable phone app or Facebook. It highlights areas with thicker ice and those with thinner ice.

SmartICE is used by more than 30 Inuit communities. The idea is to use the technology to fill in where climate change has made traditional knowledge less reliable or created conditions the Inuit have not faced before.

Holwell believes tools like SmartICE can extend the time the Inuit have left on the sea ice before it disappears. A new analysis published in Nature Communications Earth and Environment in August showed that the Arctic warmed nearly four times as fast as the global average between 1979 and 2021 – far faster than the two or three times the global average usually cited.

Separate modelling by experts in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States shows that as soon as 2035, Arctic sea ice might drop below 1 million square kilometres during the summer. Scientists recorded this year’s sea ice minimum on Sept. 18, which was tied for the tenth lowest on record.

The Inuit are practical when it comes to new technology. They use GPS but still teach their children how the prevailing winds cause the snowbanks to lean and point the way home if the device’s batteries die. Skidoos, also known as snowmobiles, have mostly

replaced dog sleds and have compressed week-long hunts into day trips. Rifles have replaced harpoons.

SmartICE is another tool. And so with a black-and-red skidoo, a rifle and an electromagnetic sensor, Holwell offers a vision of survival that joins the old and the new.

"We have to adapt to climate change," he says. "We're going to need more tools like SmartICE."

FOOD AND FREEDOM

If the weather is good, a 19-passenger Twin Otter plane flies to Holwell's hometown of Nain. No carry-ons are allowed. If a bag weighs more than 50 lbs (23 kg), it might be left behind for the next flight, or the flight after that if the planes are overweight. There is no de-icer in Nain - or in any of the coastal Inuit communities in Labrador - so the planes are often grounded. An elderly couple who was stuck in Goose Bay in mid-April say the longest they've waited for a flight was three weeks. The delays are especially bad in the spring, when the fog can be thick and unpredictable, they say.

In Nain, cars and trucks sit in front yards mounded with snow, while skidoos zoom along the slushy streets picking children up from school and bringing adults to work. There is only one hotel in town – the Atsanik Hotel – which is also the only restaurant in town. Toilet paper, which comes in bundles of 30 rolls, costs C\$40 (\$29).

More than Nain itself, it's the landscape around it that is home, says Jim Anderson.

"That's one thing people don't understand," says Anderson, 70. "We get culture shock as soon as we go out. We get lost. (We're) not used to when you can see all the houses – houses end-on-end with no open spaces."

For C\$60 in gas, a hunter can kill a seal and feed a family for three or four days, plus make mittens, boots and other clothing out of the animal's skin. Shipping in an equivalent amount of store-bought food costs C\$300 and clothing isn't included. The sea ice makes life more affordable.

The sea ice also means freedom. Most people can't afford a boat so in the summer their world literally shrinks and becomes hostile with bugs. But in winter and spring, when the sea ice is frozen, people can fish, hunt, get wood and visit their cabins.

Maria Merkuratsuk, who was raised in a cabin north of Nain, says she feels "tingly" when she is out on the ice. "I feel at peace, I can breathe ... if I have a lot on my mind, my body can take over ... I (can) just drive and drive and drive and think about things," she says.

Isaac Kohlmeister, one of the last two people in Nain to run a dog sled team, says being out on the ice has helped ground him.

"When the dogs are running, you can feel everything," he said. "You can feel the fish under the ice, even."

The Inuit communities Holwell is working with for SmartICE have started compiling their own lists of Inuktitut words for different types of sea ice. In Nain, they've come up with 37, which they plan to publish in a booklet next year.

BUOYS AND SLEDS

There are two parts to the SmartICE program. The first are 9-foot (2.75-metre) tall "SmartBUOYs" deployed in holes drilled through the sea ice at the beginning of the season and removed at the end of the season. The buoys are filled with thermistors, which can be used to measure temperature and record data at specific locations. The sea ice thickness is calculated from the difference in temperature between the atmosphere, snow, ice and saltwater.

The second part of the program are "SmartKAMUTIK" sleds pulled behind skidoos. The sled carries a plywood box with an electromagnetic sensor. As the skidoo pulls the sled, the sensor sends out electromagnetic pulses to induce a current and measure the thickness of the snow and ice. Holwell typically makes a SmartKAMUTIK run once a week to check the thickness of Nain's sea ice "highways."

The technology the Inuit are using is the same as what some climate scientists use, but the questions are different. The scientists are mostly asking system-level questions, like what happens next for the planet; the Inuit have more immediate concerns, like whether they will fall through the ice if they go hunting or to visit friends and relatives. The Inuit need more granular data, and sampling locations that might be different from where scientists would choose. But increasingly it's projects that address both scales of concern that are finding support.

Katie Winters, 54, who lives in Nain and helped translate the Inuit land claim agreement in Labrador, says even though the sea ice is thicker this year, it has been one of the worst years for people falling through the ice. She immediately names five people and two skidoos that have fallen through the ice this year but says there are more. Luckily no one died.

A community management committee tells Holwell where the SmartBUOYs should go, and as the temperatures warm in the spring, he uses the SmartKAMUTIK to carefully check locations that are known to be dangerous.

Holwell trains anyone who is interested in how to make the SmartKAMUTIK runs and teaches teenagers how to build SmartBUOYs during the summer off-season. The team posts every run on the program's SIKU website and app, and on Facebook. It's not clear how much people in the community rely on the data but they "like" and comment on the posts.

For people without an internet connection, Holwell prints off maps with ice thickness measurements, and, because everyone hunts, marks the maps with symbols where animals were spotted or harvested.

SmartICE got C\$400,000 (\$293,000) in seed funding from the Arctic Inspiration Prize, the biggest annual prize in Canada. It's won other prizes too, and has slowly been gaining international recognition.

Holwell's pride in the project is obvious. "We're a production facility in Inuit lands, with Inuit people building the technology for other Inuit," he says.

FLATLINE WARM

Ask anyone in Nain about the sea ice and they say they're seeing the effects of climate change first-hand. The sea ice used to be 5-7 feet (1.5 to 2.1 metres) thick, hard and covered with a thick layer of snow. Now it's 3-4 feet thick and soft, says Ron Webb, 65.

The snow is sugary with a glittery coating - "crappy snow," Webb calls it. The huge blue chunks of multi-year ice that used to float down from the north are gone and summer tides are stronger, he says.

Last year, Webb was driving his skidoo on 3 feet of sea ice. It felt good but he shoved a stick into it just to check and the stick went through to open water.

"Years ago you wouldn't have that. That's kind of scary because even though the thickness is there, the hardness is not," he says.

Webb laughs. The Inuit in Nain call themselves "Sikumiut" or "people of the sea ice" but he has started joking that they should make another adaptation – switch to using hovercraft – to navigate sea ice too dangerous for a skidoo.

Spring is the best time to be out on the sea ice. The days are longer but nights are still cold enough to freeze. In April, for example, temperatures usually drop to minus 10 and minus 15 Celsius (5 to 14 Fahrenheit) overnight – but this year temperatures hovered around zero.

"Usually, it's like a heart monitoring machine – up and down – but it's been flatline warm the whole month of April," says Joey Angnatok, a former program coordinator for SmartICE.

TEAM CANADA

Communities living on freshwater lakes and rivers in northern Canada have begun asking about SmartICE. Holwell says Sami caribou herders and others in Sweden, Finland, Iceland and England have also asked about the technology.

"We're needed, Team Canada, we're needed," says Holwell. Then, like a small town auctioneer or a politician on a stump speech, he delivers his pitch: "We want Joe in Tuktoyaktuk to be a SmartICE champion."

A little later he heads out on his skidoo, flying across the sea ice like a giant tundra bumblebee in the brief sub-Arctic spring – joyful, free, with no question of his place in the world.

Opening the throttle, he speeds toward the horizon where the geese and seals are, deeply certain that his tiny Inuit town on the edge of the sea ice matters, and that now the rest of the world knows it too.

THE MANILA TIMES

PetroGreen launches Dagohoy solar project

By: Tiziana Celine Piatos

PETROGREEN Energy Corp. (PGEC) on Tuesday held a ceremonial project launch for its planned 27 MWDC Dagohoy Solar Power Project (DSPP) in Barangay San Vicente, Dagohoy, Bohol.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, PGEC said the units were handed to Gov. Erico Aristotle Aumentado and other key local government officials.

The DSPP is a renewable energy project of the Department of Energy, which will be developed and operated by PGEC. The 61,200 solar panels that PGEC donated will be located in a 22-hectare site.

Maria Victoria Olivar, PGEC assistant vice president for operations, expects DSPP to produce approximately 36 gigawatt hours of electricity annually, enough to serve around 15,000 households in the area once operational.

"At present, PGEC is completing all the necessary pre-development permits, and we are very thankful to Bohol province for the encouraging support to investors such as PGEC," said Olivar.

"Barring any delays, we expect to complete and commercially operate the solar power facility by the fourth quarter of 2024, at the earliest," added Olivar.

Dagohoy Municipal Mayor Hermie Relampagos thanked PGEC for the donation and called it a game-changer that can help transform their town.

"We are ready and willing to extend all the help and support we can give to make this successful because this is a project that the people of Dagohoy can be proud of," Relampagos said.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

[ADB boosts Asia-Pacific food security financing to \\$14 billion](#)

MANILA, Philippines — The Asian Development Bank will provide \$14 billion in loans over four years to help poor countries improve food security as prices soar and climate change bites, the Philippines-based lender said Tuesday.

The bank, which provides loans and grants for projects in the poorest countries in the Asia-Pacific region, said the financing would target among other things food production and distribution, and climate mitigation.

"Food insecurity is threatening to reverse decades of development progress in Asia and the Pacific," ADB president Masatsugu Asakawa told reporters in a virtual news conference

Asakawa said there are many factors for the "worsening situation" including Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Covid-19 pandemic, which have disrupted supply chains and helped push food prices to "record highs".

"We also have to keep in mind that the current food security crisis will get even worse if we fail to address climate change," Asakawa said.

He added that the battle against a warming planet would be "won or lost in Asia and the Pacific".

The bank, which has 49 members stretching from the Cook Islands in the Pacific to Kazakhstan in Central Asia, usually allocates \$2 billion a year for food security loans. That is expected to reach \$3.3 billion this year, and \$10.7 billion from 2023 to 2025, ADB said.

It estimates nearly 1.1 billion people in the region "lack healthy diets due to poverty and food prices".

The announcement comes after the bank recently cut its 2022 growth forecast for the region, to 4.3% from its April projection of 5.2%.

ADB warned of significant risks for the region's outlook as central banks around the world struggle to rein in inflation and recurrent lockdowns in China hammer the world's second-largest economy.

The bank also raised its inflation forecast to 4.5% from 3.7%.

Surviving 'super' typhoons

By Marichu A. Villanueva

If we go by the history of calamities and disasters that have befallen upon the Philippines through these years, the phenomenon that we now call as “super typhoons” have been the primary causes of deaths and devastation. Internationally rated as “category 5” cyclone, “Haiyan” or “Yolanda” by its local name, was the most recent, single, strongest “super typhoon” that wrought so much destruction of lives and properties to millions of Filipinos. Thus, both “Haiyan” and “Yolanda” were erased, deleted forever from the international and local list of names for typhoons and other weather disturbances.

Fortunately, “Karding” (with international name “Noru”) turned out to be much less destructive kind of “super typhoon.” According to our own Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), our country has an established weather pattern. An average of 20 typhoons come and visit our country each year. And that most of the “super typhoons” occur towards the last few months of each year.

“Karding” was the latest “super typhoon” that entered the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR), using the language of our weather forecasters from the PAGASA.

From January this year, “Karding” was the 11th typhoon that came in. According to our weather forecasters, at least two to four more typhoons are projected to enter PAR next month. It's October already this Saturday.

As of the latest official report by the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC), there were eight confirmed typhoon-related deaths due to “Karding.” Sadly, five of the casualties were rescuers themselves from the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (PDRRMO) of Bulacan. The five victims were on their way to a rescue mission to safely evacuate people in San Miguel, Bulacan amid heavy rainfall and neck-deep flooding. On board a motorboat, concrete walls reportedly fell on them. They got trapped and drowned in the process. Describing them as “veteran rescuers,” Bulacan Governor Daniel Fernando honored them as “mga bayani ng kalamidad,” or heroes in calamity.

Such unexpected, freak accidents do happen. Other than the hazards faced by the people caught in the middle of a calamity or disaster, these also pose great risks to first responders on perilous rescue missions. It is so sad, however, that this tragedy took place. Certainly, we do not wish our first responders and disaster frontliners to die even before they could save people needing to be rescued.

As expected, there are renewed calls for the immediate passage into law of the proposed creation of a Department of Risk Reduction (DRR). Several DRR bills were

filed in the past but never got through the legislative mills. The ball has been thrown again to President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. (PBBM for short) and the present 19th Congress.

Two months into office at Malacanang Palace, PBBM got its first test in disaster mitigation by “Florita,” classified by PAGASA as Category 3 “severe tropical storm.” It crossed the PAR in August this year with the President’s home province Ilocos Norte, Abra and other Northern Luzon provinces hardest hit by heavy rains, floods and destroyed crops, cut off power supply, and other basic infrastructure.

At that time, PBBM along with Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez and presidential sister, Sen. Imee Marcos all agreed on the urgency of having a more permanent structure than relying on the present NDRRMC set up. Their idea was to organize a similar set up patterned from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the United States. More than a month passed, nothing moved towards this direction.

In his address at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York last week, PBBM underscored that climate change “is the greatest threat” to all countries and peoples. The Philippine President called upon industrialized countries to immediately fulfill their obligations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. He challenged them “to lead by example” in cutting down their “greenhouse” gas emissions, provide climate financing, and technology transfer for adaptation needed by the most vulnerable and developing countries.

“We accept our share of responsibility and will continue to do our part to avert this collective disaster,” PBBM declared. As one of the country-signatories to both international agreements on climate change, the Philippines “looks forward to concrete outcomes” at the Conference of Parties slated in Egypt later this year, PBBM added. “The time for talk about ‘if and when’ has long since passed – it is here. It is now,” PBBM avowed.

While the Chief Executive was making these big pronouncements at the UNGA, a parallel conference on Climate and Disaster Emergency Policy Forum was being held here in Metro Manila. The daylong Forum tackled the “2023-2028 PBBM Agenda” on climate change. However, such very serious matters on climate change did not merit much attention in media.

CCC IN THE NEWS:

DAILY TRIBUNE

[Straight Talk](#)

By: Gigi Arcilla

Robert Borje, Commissioner and Vice Chair of the Philippine Climate Change Commission, live in person on 'Straight Talk' with hosts Gigi Arcilla and Pocholo Concepcion

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