



NEWS ROUNDUP

03 OCTOBER 2024 [08:00 am]

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- Vietnamese firm to invest P10 billion in PH renewable energy
- Weakened 'Julian' to reenter PH — Pagasa
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DAILY GUARDIAN

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DENR

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MANILA STANDARD

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By: Rio N. Araja

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Lisbet K. Esmael

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THE MANILA TIMES

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UN NEWS

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Information and Knowledge Management Division

DAILY GUARDIAN

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GCash, the Philippines' leading financial app, secured two prestigious honors at the ESGBusiness Awards 2024 for its environmental and inclusivity initiatives.

The fintech giant was recognized with the Climate Advocacy and Education Award and the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Award for its groundbreaking GForest initiative and its commitment to workplace diversity.

GCash's GForest, launched in 2019, is a climate tech initiative designed to encourage users to engage in reforestation through digital transactions.

The project aims to combat the adverse effects of climate change in the Philippines, which faces increasingly severe weather events like supertyphoons.

"Our goal when we started GForest in 2019 was to make it easier for GCash app users to contribute to environmental efforts through tree planting," said CJ Alegre, GCash's Sustainability Head.

Using a gamified approach, GForest allows users to collect energy points from digital transactions, which are then used to plant virtual trees. In turn, GCash, along with international and local partners, plants actual trees across the country.

"At present, GForest has planted over 2.8 million trees, ranging from mangroves to fruit-bearing trees like coffee and coconuts," Alegre added.

The initiative also supports agroforestry, providing an additional livelihood for farmers who earn an extra PHP 25,000 annually from the trees' harvest.

By the end of 2025, GCash aims to plant a total of 10 million trees with the help of its 19 million registered users.

In addition to its environmental impact, GCash was lauded for its efforts in promoting gender equality.

The company prioritizes inclusivity, with women representing 47% of its workforce and 49% of leadership roles in 2024—well above industry averages.

"GCash is committed to gender equality and diversity through several key initiatives," said Robert Gonzales, GCash Chief People Officer.

These include the DEI Day x Day Training program, which has achieved 99% employee participation and 87% certification in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

GCash also implements initiatives like GTalks, connecting employees with women leaders to share career insights and leadership journeys.

GCash President and CEO Martha Sazon expressed pride in the company's recognition: "This recognition inspires us to strive for a better Philippines—where we can help enable more Filipinos to thrive every day, be prepared for a rainy day, and plan for one day."

DENR

[Sec. Loyzaga: Energy, transport sectors must prioritize workers, communities in shift to net-zero economy](#)

Joining the rest of the world to ensure that the shift to a net-zero economy is fair and inclusive for all, the Philippines kicked off yesterday the development of the Just Transition Program prioritizing the energy and transport sectors which account for 56% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga who is also the Official Representative of the President to the Climate Change

Commission (CCC), emphasized the importance of minimizing the adverse impacts on vulnerable sectors while the country implements its climate response and promotes sustainable development.

Secretary Loyzaga stressed the importance of reskilling and upskilling the workforce in the energy and transport sectors, both heavily reliant on the use of conventional energy. "The transition should focus not only on minimizing the negative impacts on affected sectors but also on equipping our workforce with the necessary skills for emerging opportunities in fields such as renewable and climate-friendly technologies," she emphasized.

The need to consider the potential for new industries that can emerge from the transition and provide support to conventional industries, Secretary Loyzaga added.

National government agencies, including the DENR, Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Department of Transportation (DOTr), have been identified as spearheading the development of the Just Transition Program.

With support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the agencies will also lead consultations across sectors and regions in the coming months. These consultations will inform the development of a National Just Transition Framework and Roadmap which will guide the Philippines in its shift to a low-carbon, sustainable and resilient economy.

MANILA STANDARD

[DENR leads gov't greenhouse transition](#)

By: Rio N. Araja

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday spearheaded the development of the Just Transition Program prioritizing the energy and transport sectors that account for 56 percent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions.

The Philippines wanted to join the rest of the world to ensure that the shift to a net-zero economy is fair and inclusive for all.

DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Loyzaga, the official representative of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to the Climate Change Commission, stressed the importance of minimizing the adverse impacts on vulnerable sectors while the country implements its climate response and promotes sustainable development.

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"The transition should focus not only on minimizing the negative impacts on affected sectors but also on equipping our workforce with the necessary skills for emerging opportunities in fields such as renewable and climate-friendly technologies," she said in a statement.

[DENR to analyze data from trash collected during coastal cleanup](#)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will review all the data gathered during the recent coastal cleanup program to better understand the types of waste affecting the country's waters.

The agency said the data will guide future conservation, waste recovery and resource utilization strategies, while the collected trash that can be recycled will be brought to the nearest local Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. earlier blamed climate change and common trash disposal practices as the culprits of extensive flooding in Metro Manila, following the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) report that Typhoon Carina in August had brought about 13 landslides, causing the evacuation of more than 600,000 people, and the deaths of 14 in the country.

The Philippines, meanwhile, surpassed its International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) records during the activity conducted by the DENR last week in 250 coastal sites across the country to raise awareness about the impact of plastic pollution on marine life and ecosystems.

From 35,000 volunteers last year, the DENR recorded 74,075 volunteers from 1,913 government, academe, and private sector organizations.

From the northernmost Pasuquin municipality in Ilocos Region to the southernmost Gian municipality in Socksargen Region, volunteers of all ages gathered at beaches, riverbanks and coastlines and meticulously collected a total of 352,479 kilograms trash and debris, ranging from plastics to other waste materials during last week's cleanup.

"This year marks a significant milestone as the Philippines affirms its commitment to coastal cleanliness and environmental conservation," DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga said. "With the ICC 2024 theme, 'Clean Seas for Blue Economy', this year's cleanup not only aimed to address immediate pollution but also sought to inspire long-term behavioral changes among communities, encouraging everyone to reduce waste and participate in ongoing clean-up initiatives."

"Today, we witnessed an incredible outpouring of support and dedication from Filipinos who care deeply about our environment," she added. "As we celebrate the 30th year of the International Coastal Cleanup in the Philippines, we reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding our coastal resources and promoting sustainable practices that protect our marine ecosystems."

The International Coastal Clean-up is one of the largest volunteer efforts in the world, with over 150 participating countries and millions of volunteers each year.

The Philippines started participating in the ICC around 1994 and, in 2003, the government institutionalized the event by issuing Presidential Proclamation 470 setting ICC in the Philippines every third Saturday of September.

“We are grateful for the collaboration of local governments, academic institutions, non-government organizations, and most importantly, the passionate volunteers who made this event a resounding success,” said Loyzaga.

“By becoming stewards of our ecosystems and natural resources, we can ensure a healthier environment for current and future generations. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in protecting our precious marine environments.”

[USAID, ICD forge alliance for environmental initiatives](#)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) partnered with the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) to promote climate action and inclusive development.

This collaboration is part of the INSPIRE Project, aimed at uniting corporate leaders and civil society organizations to combat environmental degradation.

On September 25, 2024, around 100 participants attended a forum in Manila entitled “Sustainability Nexus: Inspiring Ideas for a Sustainable Philippines.”

The event featured discussions on environmental governance and sustainability practices.

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Commissioner Javey Paul D. Francisco emphasized the importance of integrating environmental and social dimensions in sustainability efforts.

“True sustainability encompasses both environmental and social dimensions and only by addressing these together can we create resilient and inclusive societies,” he said, urging corporate leaders to lead by example in disclosing their environmental initiatives.

Meanwhile, USAID INSPIRE Chief of Party Rebecca Paz highlighted the urgency of addressing climate issues, calling for immediate action.

“We need to work harder, better, and faster. There are six years left until 2030 and only 17% of global development goals are on track... We are facing threats to our natural ecosystems, our businesses, our way of life. Let us use this opportunity to decide how we can work together and make a truly meaningful impact,” she stressed.

Participants pledged support for the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and national climate initiatives.

The INSPIRE Project aims to enhance natural resource resilience through collaboration among various stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

[Vietnamese firm to invest P10 billion in PH renewable energy](#)

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CN Green Roof Asia, a solar rooftop and battery provider in Vietnam, is expanding into the Philippine renewable energy space with a projected investment of P10 billion over the next two years.

The funds would be used in building its portfolio in the local market, particularly solar and battery projects, the company said Tuesday.

An initial investment of P600 million would be coughed up for a solar plant in Bataan province, it added.

The group is set to construct a ground-mounted solar farm in Hermosa, Bataan. The plant is designed to have a capacity of 20 megawatts (MW) peak.

By early next year, Green Roof targets to start construction, while commercial operations are eyed by the third quarter of 2025.

“Building on our extensive experience in solar rooftops, we are excited to enter the utility-scale market in the Philippines. We have developed a robust pipeline of high-impact projects,” Rob Santler, chief executive officer of Green Roof, said in a statement.

The group may inject more money into the local market as it plans to boost its capacity to 300 megawatts “within the next two years.”

“This is on the back of the equity investment of one of Green Roof’s shareholders, Climate Fund Managers, into the Philippines in clean water platform Tubig Pilipinas this year, and a planned development of a bioenergy project in northern Luzon,” it added.

Climate Fund Managers, a blended finance investment manager, and Norfund, the Norwegian government’s Investment fund for developing countries, established Green Roof as a joint venture company in 2021.

It also partnered with solar developer Solana Renewable Energy Holdings for its Philippine projects.

Green Roof said its entry into the Philippines would help the government hit its target of growing clean energy’s share in the power generation mix to 35 percent by 2030.

Earlier this month, the company opened its new office in Makati City.

THE MANILA TIMES

Weakened 'Julian' to reenter PH — Pagasa

By: Arlie O. Calalo

Super Typhoon "Julian" weakened into a typhoon as it was expected to re-enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) either Wednesday night or early Thursday morning, the state-run weather agency said.

Moving north-westward slowly, Julian was estimated over 280 kilometers (kms) west-northwest of Itbayat, Batanes while packing maximum sustained winds of 165 kilometers per hour (kph) near the center and gustiness of up to 205kph.

In its 5 a.m. bulletin, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said Signal No. 1 was still raised over Batanes, Babuyan Islands, the northern and western portions of Ilocos Norte (Pasuquin, Sarrat, Paoay, Bangui, Vintar, Burgos, Pagudpud, Bacarra, Currimao, Adams, Pinili, San Nicolas, Dumalneg, Laoag City, Badoc and City of Batac), and the northwestern portion of mainland Cagayan (Santa Praxedes, Sanchez-Mira and Claveria).

Weather specialist Grace Castaneda said Pagasa noticed a significant change in the track forecast of the typhoon.

She said the typhoon was still forecast to turn northeastward towards the southwestern coast of Taiwan, where it was expected to make landfall Wednesday night or early Thursday morning.

"After landfall, Julian may move erratically over the landmass and coastal waters of Taiwan before emerging over the Taiwan Strait on Friday evening or early Saturday morning," the Pagasa forecaster said.

At present, there is no dominant weather system influencing the general motion of Julian, the latest bulletin said.

As such, considerable shifts in the track forecast of succeeding bulletins are not ruled out, she stressed.

Likely to re-enter PAR either Wednesday night or early Thursday morning, Julian, however, will eventually exit the country either Friday or Saturday morning, the state weather bureau said.

Meanwhile, the easterlies -- wind coming from the east that pass through the Pacific Ocean and carry humid and warm weather - are affecting Davao Region, SOCCSKSARGEN (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos) and BARMM (Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao where overcast skies would be likely.

Metro Manila and the rest of the country will be experiencing isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the localized thunderstorms, Pagasa said.

UN NEWS

[Nepal's Prime Minister highlights climate crisis, global inequality at UNGA](#)

Prime Minister Oli warned of a looming climate catastrophe, resurgent geopolitical rivalries, and escalating military expenditures, which he said are driving the world toward instability.

“Both people and planet stand on the brink of climate catastrophe,” he cautioned, pointing to his country’s vulnerability as one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world.

The Prime Minister also highlighted persistent inequalities between the Global North and the Global South, criticizing the concentration of wealth in developed countries, while poverty and destitution remain entrenched in the least developed countries (LDCs), including Nepal.

Calling for stronger leadership and meaningful cooperation to overcome these disparities, Mr. Oli reiterated the theme of the Assembly’s seventy-ninth session, “Leaving no one behind: acting together for the advancement of peace, sustainable development, and human dignity.”

He also stressed that Nepal has long upheld the principle of inclusivity, enshrined in its Constitution, which guarantees human rights, proportional representation, and social protection for vulnerable communities.

On the international stage, Mr. Oli reaffirmed Nepal’s commitment to peace and non-interference, rooted in the principles of sovereign equality and mutual respect.

The Prime Minister noted Nepal’s unique position as a country that emerged from conflict, having made significant progress in its peace process since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006.

Citing Nepal’s role as a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, he called for greater representation in leadership positions at the Organization, reflect its contribution.

He also underscored the importance of Nepal’s fragile biome, especially the Himalayan region, which plays a critical role in regulating global ecosystems, describing it as a “natural climate stabilizer” vital to maintaining environmental balance.

“Given their significance, it is essential that the mountain agenda receives due attention in climate negotiations,” he urged, while reaffirming Nepal’s commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2045.

Mr. Oli also emphasized the need for global action, including adequate financing for climate adaptation and the establishment of a loss and damage fund for vulnerable nations.

While acknowledging the significant challenges the world faces, Mr. Oli expressed optimism about humanity's potential to overcome them.

"None of the global challenges we face today have been imposed by aliens – these are of our own making," he said, adding that through understanding, trust, and cooperation, "we can overcome."

In closing, the Prime Minister invoked the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam from the ancient text Maha Upanishad, the belief that "the world is one family."

"With this constant conviction, Nepal is committed to playing its role to secure our shared aspiration of enduring peace, progress, and prosperity, while leaving no one behind."

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