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Cardinal David: Climate change is also an issue of morality
By: Raphael Bosano

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AL JAZEERA

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By: Jillian Kestler-D'Amours

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BUSINESS WORLD

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By: Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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China believes the United States eventually will return to climate talks, the head of Beijing's delegation told Agence France-Presse on Wednesday at the COP30 climate summit, adding the world must show that the green transition "cannot be reversed."

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

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By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday commended former United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his continued advocacy and leadership in promoting climate resilience and sustainable development, particularly in countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as the Philippines.

CCC IN THE NEWS

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

DPWH gets P55.91B more cuts in Senate panel's 2026 budget version
By Raymond Africa

The Senate Committee on Finance yesterday endorsed for plenary approval its version of the proposed P6.793 trillion national budget for 2026, slashing further by P55.91 billion the appropriation of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in the 2026 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) passed by the House of Representatives.

ORANGE MAGAZINE

CCC highlights mandate, mainstreaming, and whole-of-society approach to climate action

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) detailed its mandate and initiatives to mainstream climate action across all sectors, emphasizing a whole-of-society approach grounded on science and data, during a press conference at the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) on October 16, 2025.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

ABS CBN

Cardinal David: Climate change is also an issue of morality
By: Raphael Bosano

The climate crisis is not just an issue of risk, disasters and loss, it is also an issue of morality, Kaloocan bishop Pablo Virgilio Cardinal David said on Tuesday evening (Brazil local time).

At a side event at COP30 in Belèm, David, along with other bishops and climate advocates from Africa, Asia and Latin America called for a historic North-South coalition. This, also while calling on developed and rich nations to pay for ecological debt and the phase out of fossil fuels.

Starting off with asking for prayers for the Philippines following the onslaught of life-threatening typhoons, David called climate change a “wound to human dignity.”

“For our people, facing droughts, cyclones, forest loss, ocean warming, displacement and hunger, climate change is not abstract. It is a daily survival,” he said.

For the cardinal, the climate crisis is something that requires more than just developing the right infrastructure or nature-based solution and leaving it alone to do its work.

“The climate crisis is rooted in broken relationships. Repair requires new imagination, new priorities and new forms of solidarity. This conversion must be personal, structural, cultural and systemic.”

This means really drilling down on energy transition, protecting indigenous territories, ensuring food sovereignty and allowing communities to govern their natural resources.

“It’s so unconscionable”

As the world tackles possible ways forward in minimizing the effects of a rapidly changing climate, David admits that taking solutions seriously will not be easy following what is perhaps the biggest controversy which breached public trust.

However, he does see something good come out of it in the the character of Filipinos.

“The strong reaction now of more and more Filipinos. I’m calling it the new expression of people power. People power is no longer just rallies and demonstrations, it’s about young people and ordinary citizens wanting to volunteer so that we can strengthen our democratic institution and make our systems of checks and balances work.”

AL JAZEERA

World's 'fossil fuel obsession' threatens billions of lives: Amnesty

By: Jillian Kestler-D'Amours

The expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure is threatening billions of lives around the globe, Amnesty International has said in a new report, urging world leaders to halt an "obsession" with energy sources that fuel the climate crisis.

Released on Wednesday, the report found that at least 2 billion people – about one-quarter of the world's population – live within 5km (3.1 miles) of more than 18,000 fossil fuel infrastructure sites currently in operation.

More than 3,500 new sites are also being developed that will affect 135 million more people, Amnesty International chief Agnes Callamard told reporters.

"This ever-expanding industry is endangering billions of lives, irreversibly altering the climate system and destroying critical natural ecosystem[s]," Callamard said at a news conference on the sidelines of the COP30 UN climate conference in Brazil, where the report's findings were unveiled.

Living near fossil fuel infrastructure – such as oil-and-gas extraction sites and coal mines and plants – has been associated with elevated risks of cancer, asthma, cardiovascular illnesses and other health problems, Amnesty said in its report.

The industry has also been linked to human rights abuses, including killings and enforced disappearances, particularly against environmental activists and Indigenous peoples defending their territories against fossil fuel projects.

Wednesday's report noted that "despite representing less than 5 percent of the global population, at least 16.1 percent of known global fossil fuel infrastructure is sited on Indigenous territories" around the world.

"We are presenting those findings here at COP to warn of the current harm, to warn of the immense damage that the fossil fuel obsession is doing to many peoples and to warn against what they are going to do to future generations," Callamard said.

"The age of fossil fuel must end now. It is a major source of human rights violations. It may be one of the main source[s] of human rights violations historically speaking."

World leaders, human rights activists, climate experts and others have been gathering in the Brazilian city of Belem for COP30, the UN's annual climate conference.

While countries have pledged to tackle the climate crisis, observers have questioned how they plan to meet their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while fossil fuel projects continue to expand.

Indigenous activists also stormed the summit this week to demand that their voices be heard in the discussions.

Kumi Naidoo, president of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty campaign, called on world leaders to leave COP30 with “a clear statement that you are going to support a roadmap for the phase-out of fossil fuels”.

“It’s high time that we recognise that, for 30 years … we’ve been mopping up the floor and treating the symptoms of the problem without turning off the tap,” Naidoo said during Wednesday’s news conference.

“Let’s be very clear and say it over and over again, that the primary cause of the climate emergency is our addiction and our dependency on fossil fuels.”

According to the UN, coal, oil and gas “are by far the largest contributor[s] to global climate change”, responsible for about 68 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions.

Meanwhile, more than 80 percent of people around the globe want their leaders to take stronger action to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis, according to a 2024 UN Development Programme survey.

Seventy-two percent of people also said they supported a rapid phase-out of fossil fuels, the same survey found.

BUSINESS WORLD

Climate response infrastructure-heavy, channeling funds to DPWH — report

By: Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) accessed a major portion of the climate mitigation budget over the past five years, channeling it to flood control and drainage projects, Aksyon Klima Pilipinas (AKP) said in a report.

AKP said between 2020 and 2025, physical infrastructure was a major spending item in the Philippines' climate-mitigation effort, with funding was channeled into flood mitigation systems, road rehabilitation, and re-silient-building construction works managed by the DPWH.

In 2025, 31.8% of the P1.15-trillion climate budget was allocated to address the "water sufficiency" goal of the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), with P354.1 billion earmarked specifically for flood control and drainage projects.

The Philippines tracks climate-related spending through Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET), a system that classifies government projects aligned with the NCCAP, the roadmap for climate adaptation and mitigation.

While the budget allocation for CCET-tagged projects surpassed P1 trillion for the first time in 2025, AKP National Coordinator John Leo Algo said in a briefing that the focus on infrastructure left other critical climate priorities underfunded.

"From the perspective of communities affected by the impacts of the climate crisis, at first glance, we might consider that the administration is fulfilling its promise to make the climate crisis a priority. But we need to look at the quality, not just quantity," Mr. Algo said.

The DPWH accounted for 75% of all climate-related expenditure between 2020 and 2023, with nearly all of the agency's projects tagged as climate adaptation measures.

The report said the heavy infrastructure focus sidelined other critical items such as agriculture, freshwater resources, and renewable energy.

"Only a small percentage of the climate budget goes to critical agencies for adaptation, like the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and an even smaller portion goes to na-ture-based solutions like ecosystem restoration and protection," Mattie Balagat, training and community services coordinator of the Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines, said.

In 2025, programs for "ecosystems and environmental stability" received just 1.8% of the budget given to flood control infrastructure. Projects for the rehabilitation of degraded watersheds and forests were allotted only P3.4 million.

Following the DPWH corruption scandal, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. canceled all new flood control projects in the proposed 2026 national budget. They were initially allocated P983.8 billion, about 15% lower than in 2025.

AKP said that the CCET system must be strengthened to guarantee that government-funded programs, projects, and activities genuinely support the NCCAP and the Philippines' climate commitments.

"More public funds should go towards environmental protection and conservation, and genuine climate actions, especially nature-based solutions. They are more cost-effective and even have co-benefits," Mr. Lago said.

The group is also calling on the government to improve climate risk assessment and proactively investigate greenwashing and corruption in physical infrastructure projects beyond flood control.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Climate crisis is a health crisis, WHO chief says at COP30

The WHO said Wednesday that it was time for formal negotiations on health at the COP climate summits, saying the climate crisis was also a health crisis.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, head of the World Health Organization, was at the United Nations' ongoing COP30 summit in Belem, Brazil, last week, where he advocated for health to be more prominent in climate change discussions.

"Health is the most compelling region for climate action, but for too long health has been a footnote in climate negotiations," Tedros said at a press conference in Geneva.

"It's much easier to convince people of the urgency of protecting their own health or that of their children than to protect glaciers or ecosystems. Both are important; one is a lot closer to home."

He said Thursday would be the dedicated health day at COP30, when its host, Brazil, will announce a climate change adaptation plan focused on health, with actions to help countries prepare their health systems and respond to health impacts.

"The climate crisis is a health crisis," Tedros said.

The WHO's environment and climate change chief, Rudiger Krech, added that "While we have seen a lot of health discussions at the COP, we have not yet seen a formal place for negotiations on health".

"It is high time that health becomes an issue for formal negotiations, and we hope to see this at COP31" next year, he said.

China hopes US will 'some day' return to climate fold

China believes the United States eventually will return to climate talks, the head of Beijing's delegation told Agence France-Presse on Wednesday at the COP30 climate summit, adding the world must show that the green transition "cannot be reversed."

Cooperation between China and the United States, the world's biggest economies and top polluters, has been key in the past to breaking deadlocks during negotiations at the annual UN climate talks.

But President Donald Trump, who has pulled the United States out of the Paris climate agreement, and his government have shunned this year's conference in Belem, a city in the Brazilian Amazon.

"Addressing climate change needs every country. We hope that some day, and we also believe that some day in the future, the US will come back," Li Gao, who is also a deputy environment minister, told Agence France-Presse.

While Trump promotes fossil fuels and rolls back the green tech policies of his predecessor Joe Biden, China is installing more renewable energy sources and putting more electric vehicles on its roads than any other country.

Li said China's priority at COP30 is to support the Brazilian presidency "together with others to send out a very strong political signal that the green low-carbon transition cannot be reversed" and that "international cooperation cannot be reduced."

"It is very important that parties here show political solidarity and commit to work together to address climate change and make sure this COP is an implementation COP," he added.

Li urged countries to "avoid the negative impact of, for example, geopolitical unilateralism or protectionism."

A major issue being discussed at the Conference of the Parties in Belem is how to provide money to help developing countries transition to green energy and adapt to climate change.

The COP29 gathering in Baku last year ended with developed nations agreeing to provide $300 billion annually in climate finance to poorer countries by 2035, a figure criticized as way below what is needed to meet the challenge.

They also set a much less specific target of helping raise $1.3 trillion annually from public and private sources.

A report released by the heads of COP29 and Brazil's COP30 presidency says the world has all the tools to reach the target.

“We welcome the report for the $1.3 trillion, but we think it is crucial that developed countries fulfil the commitment for $300 billion, because it’s their responsibility,” Li said.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

PBBM lauds ex-UN chief Ban Ki-Moon's advocacy for climate resilience

By: Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday commended former United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his continued advocacy and leadership in promoting climate resilience and sustainable development, particularly in countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as the Philippines.

During a courtesy call at Malacañan Palace in Manila, Marcos expressed appreciation for Ban's steadfast commitment to sustainability, stressing that such efforts are crucial to strengthening the country's resilience against natural disasters.

"I am glad that you continue this very important work…. What you are doing – sustainability – is key to the survival of my country, considering we are so vulnerable to the effects of climate change," he told the former UN chief.

Ban thanked Marcos for the warm reception and expressed hope that the Philippines would swiftly recover from the devastation caused by recent back-to-back typhoons.

His visit to Manila followed the onslaught of Super Typhoon Uwan and Typhoon Tino, which brought widespread damage to parts of the Visayas and Luzon.

Ban on Monday joined the Trans-Pacific Sustainability Dialogue (TPSD) in Makati City, where he urged the international community to support climate-vulnerable nations, such as the Philippines, in rebuilding from increasingly destructive natural disasters.

The TPSD is a joint initiative of the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center at Stanford University and the Ban Ki-moon Foundation for a Better Future, which aims to accelerate progress on the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

During their meeting in February 2024, Marcos welcomed the continued support of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), where Ban serves as president and chairperson of the council.

Ban reaffirmed the GGGI's commitment to assist the Philippine government in implementing sustainable and climate-resilient development programs.

Joining the President during Tuesday's meeting were Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, Presidential Communications Office acting Secretary Dave Gomez, and Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Maria Teresa Almojuela.

Ban was accompanied by Korean Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Sang-hwa, former Korean Ambassador to Australia and Jeju Peace Institute president Kim Bonghyun, and former Korean Permanent Representative to the UN Kim Sook.

CCC IN THE NEWS

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

DPWH gets P55.91B more cuts in Senate panel's 2026 budget version
By Raymond Africa

The Senate Committee on Finance yesterday endorsed for plenary approval its version of the proposed P6.793 trillion national budget for 2026, slashing further by P55.91 billion the appropriation of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in the 2026 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) passed by the House of Representatives.

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian, committee chairperson, said panel members agreed to decrease the DPWH's budget for 2026 to P568.56 billion after several red flags were discovered in its proposed infrastructure projects during the budget hearings.

In his sponsorship speech, Gatchalian said the red flags include roads with no station IDs, duplicate projects, projects in multiple phases, and reappearing projects from the previous year's budget.

"The President recently ordered the DPWH to lower material costs for infrastructure projects. And the goal of the (committee) reduction is not only to help comply with that directive, but also to ensure efficiency and more responsible spending," he said.

He added that as additional safeguard against corruption, "all DPWH projects will have station numbers, bridge IDs, and school IDs included in the committee report."

Gatchalian also said the committee decreased the unprogrammed appropriations from P243B in the House GAB to P174.5 billion, or a reduction of more than P68.5 billion.

"Of the 11 line items in the unprogrammed funds, the Senate version reduced them to seven, with only three cash items," he added.

Under the committee version of the budget bill, the allocation for the education sector stands at P1.38 trillion, which is 20 percent of the proposed national budget, or 4.5 percent of the gross domestic product, which Gatchalian said is "highest in our country's history."

He said it is the first time that the budget for the educations sector "meets the United Nations mandated benchmark of allotting at least four to six percent of GDP to the sector. This allows us to meaningfully pursue the goal of ensuring 'inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

The Department of Education (DepEd) was allotted P992.7 billion, the largest allocation in history; the Commission on Higher Education, P48.2 billion; the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, P25.3 billion; and State Universities and Colleges, P140.3 billion.

Gatchalian said the DepEd's budget was increased by P78.5 billion or 8.6 percent increase under the Senate version compared to the amount under the HGAB.

He said the committee allotted an additional P19.3 billion on top of the P48.7 billion in the HGAB for the construction of new classrooms, and an additional P18.08 billion for the procurement of textbooks on top of the HGAB of P11 billion, bringing the total budget to P29 billion. He said this will benefit almost 20 million learners.

Gatchalian said the Department of Health was allotted P376.5 billion, the bulk of which would go for the implementation of the Universal Healthcare law and the Zero Balance Billing (ZBB) program. He said specialty hospitals were also allotted P1 billion since they will are included in the ZBB program.

Gatchalian said the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will get a P230 billion, of which P101.8 billion is allotted for the 4Ps "enough to sustain the cash grants of around 3 million existing household-beneficiaries and to extend coverage to about 500,000 new near-poor households identified."

The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) has a P2.4 billion, from the P1.2 billion under the HGAB; while the Department of Agriculture (DA) and its attached agencies will get P184 billion, including a P500 million allocation for the implementation of the Sagip Saka Act, which will link fisherfolk and farmers directly to institutional buyers.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is allotted a budget of P9.7 billion; while the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) will get a P31.48 billion budget next year.

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) will receive a funding of P189.289 billion, which will be mainly used to improve the country's transportation system and the acquisition of 400 "floating assets" for the Philippine Coast Guard amounting to P4.9 billion.

Gatchalian said P385.97 billion was allotted for the defense sector, which represents 1.25 percent of the projected nominal GDP for 2026.

"This allocation is the highest defense spending of the country relative to its economic size and will surely strengthen our capabilities, address our defense-related needs," he said.

Through the recommendation of Sen. Loren Legarda, Gatchalian said the Climate Change Commission will receive an additional P58 million for the establishment of a roving Climate Change Academy in coordination with SUCs and DepEd schools, and local government units.

Gatchalian urged his colleagues to support the passage of proposed 2026 national budget under Senate Committee Report No. 18, stressing that the budget bill is the

“single-most important reflection of the nation’s priorities.”

He said the proposed 2026 spending program is 7.4 percent higher than the 2025 national by around P467 billion, which he said is aligned with the President’s Philippine Development Plan.

“We are determined to restore what has been lost – leadership, accountability, and transparency. The first step toward rebuilding the trust of our people is showing them through specific and concrete actions, that their hard-earned money will be used responsibly, and that they know exactly where it is going,” he said.

He also thanked his colleagues to helping the Committee on Finance in coming up with an equitable and transparent budget for 2026.

“The General Appropriations Act of 2026 stands as both the instrument of our national development and a pledge towards the restoration of government’s credibility in the eyes of its people. May it remind us that progress without integrity is hollow, and integrity without progress is unfulfilled promise. Genuine principled governance demands no less,” he said.

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian yesterday urged his colleagues to support the passage of the House Bill No. 4058 under Senate Committee Report No. 18 which will appropriate funds for the operations of the government for 2026.

In his sponsorship speech, Gatchalian said passage of the proposed P6.793 trillion budget is more than a “purse” as it is the “single-most important reflection of the nation’s priorities.”

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ORANGE MAGAZINE

CCC highlights mandate, mainstreaming, and whole-of-society approach to climate action

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) detailed its mandate and initiatives to mainstream climate action across all sectors, emphasizing a whole-of-society approach grounded on science and data, during a press conference at the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) on October 16, 2025.

CCC Vice Chairperson and Executive Director Robert E.A. Borje outlined the country's vulnerabilities and the robust policy framework now in place to address them. He stressed that addressing the climate crisis is a shared responsibility.

"Our mandate is clear: to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate government programs to ensure we are building a nation resilient to climate impacts. But this is not the work of the CCC alone. It requires the concerted effort of every sector of society," said Borje. "There is hope, but our hope should be firmly grounded on science-based and data-driven policy recommendations," he added.

A central focus of the discussion was the mainstreaming of climate action into national and local development planning. Borje presented the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), developed under the leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. as the country's foundational roadmap for building adaptive capacity. He also highlighted the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan (NDCIP), which charts the course for a 75% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. A key next step for both plans is localization, ensuring strategies are tailored to the specific needs of local government units (LGUs) and sectors.

The press conference revealed significant progress at the local level, with a 90.96% submission rate for Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs) from LGUs nationwide. "What we want is not just the submission of the LCCAP. What we need is for these LCCAPs to be implemented. The true measure of our success is the translation of these plans into more climate-resilient communities," Borje clarified.

Borje underscored that partnerships are crucial for effective climate action, highlighting several key initiatives.

He reported that the People's Survival Fund (PSF) has committed over PHP1.4 billion to support adaptation projects in 24 LGUs. For the first time in the fund's history, the initial PHP 1 billion allocation was fully committed and subsequently replenished in 2025. "The PSF Board is exploring ways to democratize access to the fund," Borje shared, noting the prioritization of the most climate-vulnerable areas.

Additionally, collaboration with the Department of Budget and Management on Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) ensures climate actions are prioritized in national budgets.

Borje also highlighted the Philippines' active role in global climate finance, including its historic selection to host the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage. "This will further strengthen the country's role in global climate finance," Borje said.

The press conference also served as a platform to invite the public and stakeholders to participate in the upcoming Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week on November 19-25, 2025 to reinforce climate awareness and collective action for climate resilience.

Borje also called for unity and disciplined action. "Every generation always has its challenges, and climate change is the governance challenge of our generation. We have to work together because we are the answer that our country needs."

The event aimed to strengthen engagement with media and the public, ensure clear communication of the nation's climate initiatives, and foster broader participation in building a climate-resilient future. The press conference was streamed live by PIA and attended by representatives from various government and private media outlets.

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