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MANILA BULLETIN

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By: Allysa Nievera

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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By: Benre J. Zenarosa

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By: Moises Cruz

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By: Dominique Nicole Flores

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NEWSLINE PH

PBBM urges stronger climate action for safer communities

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. called on Filipinos to support stronger climate action as the country faces rising threats from extreme weather. Speaking during Climate Change Consciousness Week 2025, he highlighted the importance of building a “climate-resilient and environmentally sound Philippines” for the safety and welfare of local communities.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

CCC champions nature-based, community-led climate action
By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is calling for a stronger nature-based and community-led climate action, as it kicks off the 18th Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week.

Information and Knowledge Management Division

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By: Allysa Nievera

The Quezon City government has been recognized as one of the 2025 Local Leaders Climate Awardees at the Bloomberg Philanthropies COP30 Local Leaders Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the local government announced on Thursday, Nov. 20.

The city earned the distinction for its Trash to Cashback program, an incentivized recycling initiative developed in partnership with Basic Environmental System Technologies Inc. (BEST). The program aims to ease waste management challenges while helping communities, especially marginalized sectors, meet their daily needs.

“We are grateful to Bloomberg Philanthropies and C40 Cities for recognizing Quezon City’s initiatives toward a circular economy. This award strengthens our resolve to implement inclusive and sustainable solutions that protect our residents from the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change,” Mayor Joy Belmonte said.

Launched in 2021, Trash to Cashback allows residents to exchange recyclables and single-use plastics for environmental points (EPs). These can be used to redeem basic goods or pay utility bills.

To date, the program has diverted over 719,000 kilograms of waste, equivalent to 2.36 million EPs, preventing them from ending up in landfills and waterways.

“This accomplishment reflects the strength of collective action between the government, stakeholders, and citizens. We will keep on working hand-in-hand to ensure a future that is safe, liveable, and inclusive for all,” Belmonte added.

Quezon City has previously been recognized for its sustainability efforts. In 2022, its Urban Farming Program was named a finalist in the C40 Cities Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards under the “United to Innovate” category.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Cebu, climate change, and the perils of corruption

By: Benre J. Zenarosa

More than a decade ago, my electrical engineering class of 2011 at the Technological University of the Philippines Taguig had our plant visit to Cebu as part of the curriculum. I still remember how thrilled I was at the idea of riding a plane for the first time, spending time with my classmates and friends, and savoring the province's beauty, grace, and mystery while integrating ourselves with the industry.

We stayed in the province for three days and two nights. The tour included a visit to an internationally recognized battery company, an environmental friendly property powered entirely with solar power and a day-long trip to a National Grid Corporation of the Philippines facility. I enjoyed Cebuano food, but the people? They were as vibrant as the sun.

But that stark picture of the Queen City of the South changed overnight with Typhoon "Tino's" recent onslaught.

As of this writing, the casualty count has surged to 114, while 127 people remain missing. Photos of the destruction fill social media: dirt-tainted piles of cars in the streets, dead bodies on the sidewalk, houses reduced to flash flood debris, and endless, delirious calls for help by my fellow Filipinos in the south. The whole situation has been disheartening.

One can always point to climate change why it happened. Based on the 2025 World Risk Index, the Philippines is the most vulnerable country to natural disasters, ranking as the most disaster-prone country in the world. Key factors include high exposure to natural disasters like typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, as well as vulnerability due to its fragmented geography and large coastal populations.

According to the weather bureau, the rainfall in Cebu surpassed a 20-year return period, which translates to a 5-percent chance of extreme rainfall or worse happening in any given year. But the impact could have been mitigated had the budget allotted for flood control projects been fully implemented with integrity?

Pamela Silagan Baricuatro, the governor of Cebu Province, indicated that there's corruption in the flood control projects amounting to billions of pesos. Meanwhile, former Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia indicated that the Department of Public Works and Highway's shortcomings in implementation contributed to the fiasco.

We have seen this movie before. Calamity happens. People die. Government officials blame each other. Isn't it tiring?

Our people must realize that corruption kills. When funds do not go to their proper destination to improve people's lives but to the elite, soulless pockets, someday, somehow, they will be affected and inflicted with a catastrophe unimaginable to the human condition. It's evident that during calamities, the most vulnerable sector is the poor. Our electorate must remember the names of officials who didn't push for what's best for them. We must push the government to do better and implement institutional changes to protect our forests, waterways, and observe a holistic technology and data-based approach for mitigation similar to what Singapore and Japan have.

It's inevitable, the Philippines will face another typhoon, calamity, or super typhoon. The time to wake up from the cloud of corruption is today—before it's too late.

RAPPLER

Fire disrupts COP30 climate talks as UN chief urges deal

Talks at the COP30 climate summit in Brazil were disrupted on Thursday, November 20, after a fire broke out in the venue, triggering an evacuation just as negotiators were hunkering down to try to land a deal to strengthen international climate efforts.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had appealed earlier in the day for a deal from the summit, welcoming calls from some for clarity on the hotly disputed subject of weaning the world off fossil fuels.

Security footage showed flames breaking out at an exhibition pavilion and spreading rapidly up an internal fabric shell that lined the walls and ceiling of the building, before being extinguished. Delegates ran from the area as it filled with smoke.

Thirteen people were treated for smoke inhalation at the venue, organizers said. The local fire service said it was probably caused by electrical equipment, likely a microwave, and was controlled within six minutes.

Thousands of delegates were evacuated as security staff formed a human barrier across the hallway. The UN summit organizers said they would issue an update at 8 pm (2300 GMT) following a safety evaluation. (COP30: UN Climate Change Conference agenda, latest news)

Negotiating deadlines missed already

The summit in the Amazon city of Belem, Brazil, had already missed a self-imposed November 19 deadline to secure agreement among the nearly 200 countries present on issues including how to increase climate finance and shift away from fossil fuels.

Brazil circulated a draft deal among governments on Thursday which did not include a roadmap on transitioning away from fossil fuels, two negotiators told Reuters, although the document is still being discussed.

Emissions from burning fossil fuels trap heat in the earth's atmosphere and are by far the biggest contributor to warming.

There are less than 48 hours until the scheduled end of the summit to find a consensus, which host nation Brazil has framed as a crucial step to ramping up international climate action and demonstrating that there is broad support to accelerate turning decades of promises and pledges from the COP summits into concrete action.

"One thing is clear, we are down to the wire, and the world is watching Belem," Guterres said.

Fossil fuel rift

The two-week negotiation has become hung up on two issues — the future of fossil fuels and the delivery of climate finance — that expose criss-crossing fault lines between negotiating blocs from rich Western countries, oil producers and smaller states most vulnerable to climate change.

Taking their cue from Brazil, dozens of countries including both developed and developing nations have mounted a push for a roadmap setting out how countries should transition away from fossil fuels.

Others, including some fossil fuel-producing nations, are resisting.

The COP28 climate summit in 2023 agreed, after protracted discussion, to a transition, but nations have not mapped out how — or when — it will happen.

“I am perfectly convinced that a compromise is possible,” Guterres added.

Adapting to change

Another major sticking point in the negotiations is a reluctance among some richer nations to guarantee financing to help poorer countries adapt to a changing climate, according to three sources involved in the talks.

Developing countries are already deeply mistrustful of a $300 billion climate finance pledge made last year at the COP29 conference in Baku, particularly as the United States withdraws from climate cooperation under President Donald Trump.

Some existing climate finance has been directed to strange projects, including some that are funneling billions of dollars back to rich nations, according to previous Reuters reporting.

“Right now, our people are losing their lives and livelihoods from storms of unprecedented strength which are being caused by warming seas,” said Steven Victor, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment for the Pacific island nation of Palau.

“If we leave Belem without a transformative outcome on adaptation for the world’s most vulnerable, it will be a failure,” he said.

European officials have said they agree adaptation financing is important, but that they were not authorized to agree to new targets.

THE MANILA TIMES

DSWD launches new project to build climate-resilient communities

By: Moises Cruz

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has launched the Panahon ng Pagkilos: Philippine Community Resilience Project to spur long-term development in remote and impoverished communities.

Social Welfare Secretary Rexlon Gatchalian said on Thursday the new initiative succeeds the Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services program.

“What may look like a small hanging bridge to you can change lives, and when children don’t have to cross running rivers just to get to school, that is development,” Gatchalian said.

He said the program introduces a community-driven development approach that focuses on building climate-resilient communities at the grassroots level.

“It empowers the communities because they choose the projects that suit their needs, employing a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down process,” Gatchalian said.

Under the program, communities can propose a wide range of subprojects under an open menu system, giving them the freedom to pursue what they deem most necessary.

Gatchalian said the project also aims to uplift geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas by ensuring they are not left behind in national development efforts.

It also integrates climate resilience into all project planning, with subprojects such as water systems, footbridges and community lighting now required to consider hazard exposure, climate impacts and local vulnerabilities.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Philippines slides to 19th in Climate Change Performance Index

By: Dominique Nicole Flores

The Philippines' performance in climate policy and mitigation has dropped sharply in the latest Climate Change Performance Index, falling 12 places to 19th.

The CCPI now ranks the country as a "medium" performer, down from last year's "high" rating, citing weaknesses in renewable energy policies, targets and overall climate policy implementation.

While the Philippines ranked lower in the 2026 CCPI Ranking, it is still a top performer in Southeast Asia, particularly compared to Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia.

The CCPI ranks countries across several indicators, giving the highest weight of 40% to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Philippines received a score of 29.97. Its emissions remain far below the global average, with an estimated climate footprint of 2.35 metric tonnes per person in 2024. However, carbon dioxide emissions per capita have been rising over the past five years.

Why the drop? CCPI's country experts for the Philippines attributed the drop in ranking to the absence of a net-zero target, intermediate goals and a long-term strategy, despite the push for the proposed Low Carbon Economy Investment Act, which aims to help reduce emissions.

"The effectiveness of policy measures against the backdrop of weak national targets raises particular concern among the experts about decarbonisation efforts' credibility," the report read, adding the absence of sufficient environmental and social safeguards.

Other indicators, each weighted at 20%, include renewable energy, energy use and climate policy. Renewable energy is assessed based on its current share in the total primary energy supply, past trends, and alignment with the global climate goal of limiting warming to below 2°C under the Paris Agreement.

It primarily reflects how effectively a country is transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy. The Philippines ranked second in the region in this indicator, with a score of 6.41.

Meanwhile, energy use is assessed based on the average amount of energy consumed per person, while climate policy is evaluated by experts who review a country's policy framework, goals, consistency and implementation, along with its participation in global climate efforts.

The Philippines scored 15.82 in energy use and 10.58 in climate policy.

The country experts include Aksyon Klima Pilipinas national coordinator John Leo Algo, and Manila Observatory's associate director for climate policy and international relations Tony La Viña, along with technical adviser Jameela Joy Reyes.

What experts noted

They, however, still praised several policies, including the Renewable Energy Act and the Green Energy Auction Program, saying the former has "finally started to fulfill its purpose" of ensuring consumers benefit from the cost advantages of the energy transition.

The experts also observed a decline in the country's use of coal and coal-fired power in 2025. But they stressed that the shift away from coal remains too slow, especially as growing energy demand is increasingly being met by imported liquefied natural gas — without any plan yet for phasing out gas use.

Human rights issues linked to some renewable energy projects also contributed to the drop in the country's climate ranking. The experts pointed to hydropower projects in the Cordillera that threaten indigenous communities' water sources, and floating solar farms in Laguna de Bay that disrupt the livelihoods of fisherfolk.

On the international front, the report also noted how the Philippines has been actively positioning itself in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), particularly as it hosts the Loss and Damage Fund Board, which finances climate mitigation and disaster risk reduction efforts for vulnerable nations.

Recommendation

Experts recommend the Philippine government follow a coordinated approach that includes protecting tropical forests, committing to net zero, fully phasing out fossil fuels and enforcing a coal moratorium.

Overall, the CCPI has continued to keep the top three spots in the ranking vacant, saying "no country is strong enough in all categories to achieve an overall very high rating." The top-ranked country is still Denmark, followed by the United Kingdom, Morocco and Chile.

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MANILA BULLETIN

Isko Moreno tells candidates of 2025 Miss Environment International: 'You are all winners in my eyes'
By: Robert Requintina

The 18 candidates of the 2025 Miss Environment International embarked on a mesmerizing tour of the vibrant City of Manila on Nov. 19. Their journey unfolded amidst the bustling streets, rich culture, and breathtaking landscapes, showcasing the beauty and spirit of the city as they explored its iconic landmarks and embraced the warmth of its people.

This year's delegates came from Belgium, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Spain, Tatarstan, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the USA, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

Mutya ng Pilipinas Environment International 2025 Arianna Charlize Pantaleon will represent the country in the competition.

They toured the Arroceros Park, Intramuros, Binondo, and the Pasig River Esplanade. The girls capped the day with a dinner at the Manila City Hall, where they were welcomed by Manila Mayor Isko "Yorme" Moreno, Vice Mayor Chi Atienza, and other local officials.

"Welcome to Manila. There can only be one winner, but all of you are winners in my eyes," said Isko during a welcome speech.

Isko also updated the girls about the recent developments in Manila. "You are safe in Manila. So I hope you enjoyed the city tour."

Vice Mayor Chi passionately urged the young girls to embrace their platform with wisdom and intention, encouraging them to harness their voices for positive change and influence.
"I know whoever wins will use the pageant platform wisely. But make sure that you also make a lasting legacy, especially in caring for the environment," the vice mayor added.

Miss Russia said she enjoyed the city tour. "We planted greenery in the city. And the weather is good. It's cold in Russia now."

The girls and guests relished a delightful feast, savoring a variety of exquisite dishes while being captivated by lively performances showcasing the region's rich culture.

Also joining the event was Rushikesh Mirajkar, President of Miss Environment International, who thanked the City of Manila for the welcome dinner.

Mache Torres-Ackerman, ambassador of the National Climate Change Commission, said, "We are very proud to be staging the Miss Environment International pageant in partnership with the Climate Change Commission (CCC), the United Nations, and other organizations."

She added, "This pageant is not just about beauty. It's advocacy in action. We are more for action. Since it's about the environment and climate change, we run on solar power. We are out there on the streets doing something for the environment. We are conducting awareness programs. We discuss the current events that we need to be aware of. For one week, the candidates will experience activities with the commission."

Cory Quirino, President and National Director of Mutya ng Pilipinas, believes there is hope for the Miss Environment International 2025 beauty pageant, as the CCC and other local groups have shown interest in it. She also admired the girls who were competing in pageants.

"The girls in pageants these days are vigilant and aware. They want to do something with their lives. It has to be something relevant and credible. They want to be real. You can see that pageants have become increasingly reality-based in recent years. This is the way to go. This is not a journey for the crown but also a journey towards one's individuality, position, and purpose in life," Cory added.

Cory urged each contestant to embrace their unique beauty and strength as they embark on this remarkable journey."Feel the love from the Philippines. Mabuhay to all of you! The world has made us neighbors. So let's keep that solidarity and teamwork going. Again, Mabuhay to all of us!" she said during an interview at the welcome dinner.

The grand coronation of the 2025 Miss Environment International beauty pageant will be held at the City of Dreams Grand Ballroom in Paranaque City on Nov. 24.

NEWSLINE PH

PBBM urges stronger climate action for safer communities

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. called on Filipinos to support stronger climate action as the country faces rising threats from extreme weather. Speaking during Climate Change Consciousness Week 2025, he highlighted the importance of building a “climate-resilient and environmentally sound Philippines” for the safety and welfare of local communities.

Marcos cited government initiatives, including the National Adaptation Plan, renewable energy programs, and climate-smart agriculture projects, as key tools to help provinces and municipalities prepare for floods, droughts, and other disasters. He stressed that protecting the environment is not only a responsibility but also a pathway to long-term prosperity.

Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson Robert Borje thanked the President for his leadership, noting that the administration has strengthened national climate policies, including submissions to the UNFCCC and updated greenhouse gas inventories, to secure a safer future for communities across the country.

PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY

CCC champions nature-based, community-led climate action

By: Marita Moaje

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) is calling for a stronger nature-based and community-led climate action, as it kicks off the 18th Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week.

In a news release Thursday, the agency said that in partnership with the National Power Corporation (NPC) and the Paete local government, the CCC spearheaded a tree-growing activity at the Caliraya-Lumot Watershed on Wednesday to strengthen nature-based solutions.

The event was part of the CCC's Net Zero Challenge (NZC), a reforestation initiative that aims to restore 25 hectares of watershed forest and plant over 15,000 seedlings by 2030 to boost carbon sequestration and support the country's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Volunteers planted 400 seedlings of banaba, langka, and acacia during the launch.

The NZC is the CCC's carbon neutrality program that aims to contribute to global efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C, as the reforestation of the 25 hectares at the Caliraya-Lumot Watershed is expected to sequester an estimated 75.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide.

In his message read by Deputy Executive Director Romell Cuenca, CCC Vice Chairperson Robert Borje underscored the significance of healthy forests.

"Sa harap ng ganitong mga trahedya, muling nakita ang napakahalagang papel ng ating mga kagubatan — ito ay bilang proteksyon laban sa pag baha at landslide, isa sa mabisang carbon sink na nagpapababa ng greenhouse gasses at nakatutulong magpababa ng temperatura ng ating atmospera (In the face of such tragedies, the crucial role of our forests has been once again seen — it serves as protection against floods and landslides, is an effective carbon sink that reduces greenhouse gases and helps lower the temperature of our atmosphere)," he said.

Borje said effective climate action must be community-rooted, involving government, private sector, and local stakeholders, anchoring it on the vision of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. for strengthened collaboration across all sectors.

NPC President Jericho Jonas Nograles, represented by Vincent Concio, added the event highlights shared responsibility in tackling climate change.

Participants from the national agencies, the private sector, academe, civil society, and media joined the event.

“We reaffirmed our strong commitment to this shared responsibility of being co-stewards of nature. Today’s tree growing activity under the Net Zero Challenge in celebration of the 18th Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week is more than a day’s gathering, it’s a call to action of a whole-of-society approach towards strengthening collaboration against the impacts of climate change,” he said.

The CCC said the community-driven reforestation effort is the best way to open the Climate Consciousness Week, as it reaffirms its push for nature-based strategies that strengthen ecosystems and build climate-resilient communities.

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