



MATTHEW HENRI/ANSO/ASA

Luzon grid placed on yellow alert after seven-plant outage

THE Luzon power grid was briefly placed on yellow alert on Saturday night, after seven facilities with a combined capacity of 2,011 megawatts (MW) suffered forced outages.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) said in a Viber message that the yellow alert was in force between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m.

It said that the operating requirement for Saturday was 9,998 MW, while available capacity on the grid was 10,487 MW.

Yellow alerts signify thinning power reserves and can worsen to red alerts if the supply-demand balance goes to the extent of requiring rotating brownouts.

The NGCP said the plants that experienced unplanned outages were Unit 1 of the GN Power Dingin plant, Unit 2 of South Luzon Thermal Energy, Units 2, 3, 4 of Southwest Luzon Power, Unit 2 of Calaca power plant, and Kalayaan power plant.

On top of that, four plants were operating under reduced capacity, removing a combined 823 MW from the grid, bringing the total unplanned unavailable energy to 2,834 MW.

The yellow alert was eventually lifted "due to receding demand."

The dry season officially started last week, the period when power demand tends to rise due to the increased need for cooling.

According to the NGCP, the 2022 forecast peak for demand of 12,387 MW for Luzon will take place in the last week of May, higher by 747 MW than the actual 2021 peak of 11,640 MW, which occurred on May 28, 2021.

The yellow alert was in force during the observance of Earth Hour. The Energy department had called on the public to switch off non-essential lights between 8:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

Energy Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi said participation in Earth Hour was "a significant contribution to our country's energy efficiency and conservation efforts."

Last week, the Department of Energy called on all government agencies to fully implement energy efficiency and conservation projects to help ensure adequate energy supply in the run-up to the May elections. — **Marielle C. Lucenio**

Gov't requested to approve price hikes for 33 grocery items

SOME 33 grocery items are currently the subject of requests for price increases, with manufacturers mainly citing the surge in fuel prices, according to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez said the DTI is currently reviewing applications, which cover a range of products that include canned food and milk.

"Actually, we have received requests for (price) adjustments and we are reviewing them. I think around 33 products. These include (canned) sardines, milk, and... canned meat loaf," Mr. Lopez said in a radio interview on Sunday.

Mr. Lopez said the latest suggested retail price (SRP) list is still in force for basic necessities and prime commodities (BNPC).

He added that the manufacturers of BNPC goods need to obtain the DTI's approval before increasing their prices.



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"They need to prove that the cost of these products has increased. Aside from oil, we are also computing the price of raw materials used for production," Mr. Lopez said.

On Jan. 27, the DTI released the latest SRP list which maintained prices for 66% of the 216 stock keeping units tracked under the scheme. Prices were raised

for the remainder due to higher production costs.

Last week, the prices of gasoline, diesel, and kerosene products fell P5.45, P11.45, and P8.55 per liter, respectively. The price reduction ended a run of 11 weeks of steadily increasing pump prices. Since the start of 2022, prices of products have risen by P14.9 per liter for gaso-

line, P19.2 for diesel and P16.3 for kerosene.

Separately Mr. Lopez said he saw no need to declare Alert Level 0, noting that the economy is effectively open.

He added that the wearing of face masks should remain to avoid a surge in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

"We do not need Alert Level 0 since the economy is totally open. In fact, we are already pushing face-to-face arrangements. We are encouraging employees to be physically present in their offices so that the establishments nearby will also benefit," Mr. Lopez said.

"I think Alert Level 1 will be implemented until the end of President Rodrigo R. Duterte's term," he added, referring to the quarantine setting currently in force which permits 100% capacity at most businesses, provided safety measures are observed. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

PPA awards multiple port dredging contracts

THE Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) recently awarded dredging projects at various ports, including those in Manila, Ilocos Norte, Negros Occidental, Misamis Oriental, and Camiguin.

The agency issued on March 21 the notice of award for the dredging of the Pasig River at South Harbor in Manila to Khan Kon Chi Construction and Development Corp., which is based in Davao City.

The project cost is P253.35 million, according to a copy of the document released by the agency.

The agency said a post-qualification assessment was conducted on March 9 and 10 to verify the eligibility, technical and financial requirements submitted by the company.

A notice of award was also issued on March 21 to the KXBG Construction & Development Corp. and Kenzai Builders Corp. Joint Venture, which is also based in Davao City, for the dredging of Currimao Port in Currimao, Ilocos Norte. The project cost is P114.88 million.

The post-qualification assessment was conducted on March 9, according to the agency.

Bemkar Construction, which is based in Camarines Norte, was issued the notice of award for the P252.98-million dredging of ports of Banago, San Carlos and Danao, Escalante in Negros Occidental.

The PPA said it conducted the post-qualification assessment on March 15 and 18.

The Goldridge Const. & Dev't. Corp. and J.C. Piñon Joint Venture, which is based in Bulacan, was awarded the P945.64-million dredging of the Manila International Container Terminal entrance channel, Port Area, Manila.

The agency said the joint venture was declared as the lowest calculated and responsive bidder on March 21. Post-qualification assessment was conducted on March 10 and 11.

Ormoc City-based JFAP Construction was awarded a P90.58-million dredging of the ports of Cagayan de Oro, Opol and Balingogan, in Misamis Oriental; and the ports of Benoni, Balbagon, and Guinsiliban, in Camiguin.

The agency said the post-qualification assessment was conducted on March 10 and 15. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

How do we better anticipate and respond to patients' unmet needs in a rapidly changing healthcare landscape?



ALEXANDER BEDENKOV — VP, Global Evidence, BioPharmaceuticals Medical & Global Health Innovation Hubs (A.Catalyst) Network Head

A call to action to keep ahead of a diversifying ecosystem

The Patient of the Future has arrived. Who are they? What do they want? How do they make decisions? What do they value, how they behave and what they choose to spend on is different to the patient of yesteryear.¹ This new type of patient emerges in a rapidly changing healthcare ecosystem.

Within this new and changing healthcare ecosystem, there are a number of changes taking place:

1. We are witnessing changes in disease burden, evident in the rise of non-communicable diseases. The World Health Organization states that the top three causes of all deaths are coronary heart disease, stroke and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Non-communicable diseases are responsible for approximately 71% of global deaths annually.²
2. At the same time, the threat of communicable diseases is increasing as seen with the recent COVID-19 pandemic.³
3. Another public health challenge is the global ageing population. The World Population Prospects 2019 state that "by 2050, 1 in 6 people in the world will be over the age of 65, up from 1 in 11 in 2019."⁴

The rise in diseases — communicable and non-communicable, in addition to an ageing population, are some of the challenges facing the new healthcare ecosystem.

At the same time, the healthcare sector has never been so innovative. We are seeing an increase in new technologies, especially personalized medicine. In addition, improved availability of data in the sector is enabling better prediction and tracking of healthcare outcomes. This leads to patients having greater control over their health and therefore, paving the way for a new type of healthcare ecosystem which puts patients at the center of everything — a **PATIENT-CENTRIC ecosystem**.

Stakeholders are adapting

Stakeholders of this new healthcare ecosystem are also adapting to keep up with the changes. How are these stakeholders changing? What industries are they from? Whilst we are seeing new players coming in from technology (e.g. Amazon) and the food industry (e.g. Danone), to name a few.

Traditionally, the healthcare ecosystem has often been fragmented and disjointed with stakeholders having their own agendas and priorities. But now, we see that many healthcare providers are working with government agencies, social services, faith-based organizations towards a common goal of population health.⁵ We should ensure that these organizations work towards common objectives together as partners to achieve a greater collective impact. Experts within healthcare forecast more tech investments and increased collaboration between home health and hospitals.⁶ There is also a need for enhanced cohesion and clearer alignment on stakeholders' priorities and efforts are required to address patients' current and future unmet needs in a holistic and sustainable way.

A.Catalyst Network

Given the current and future healthcare ecosystem, AstraZeneca aims to strengthen local healthcare ecosystems whilst ensuring they can thrive and develop to better meet patients' needs. One of the ways AstraZeneca is trying to do this is through the A.Catalyst Network.

"Through A.Catalyst Network, we are bringing together diverse stakeholders across industry and

geographical boundaries, facilitating collaborative action, and opening up new opportunities to enhance patient-enabled innovation." — **Joris Silon, US Country President, BioPharmaceuticals Business Unit at AstraZeneca**

What is the A.Catalyst Network?

The A.Catalyst Network is an interconnected and dynamic global network of more than 20 AstraZeneca health innovation hubs, made up of physical locations and virtual partnerships. It aims to address healthcare challenges, increase access to healthcare and scale and showcase patient-enabled innovation through partnerships within the local health ecosystems.

The network serves as a mechanism for country hubs to connect, collaborate and share their experiences in healthcare solutions. Through these joint efforts, hubs are focused on delivering these treatments according to patients' needs, thus providing them with tailor-made therapies.

What's the impact? The network has helped to reach over 559,000 patients through various projects — all aiming to improve patient's health outcomes and experiences. Through the network, over 223 start-ups across a range of therapy areas were able to flourish.

What does it look like?

- **INDIA** — **Project Heart Beat** carried out by the India Innovation Hub uses a digital platform to initially screen patients in remote areas with symptoms of heart disease, enabling specialists to detect whether patients require access to urgent medical care in remote areas.
- **GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL** — Launched in 2020, following the signing of an MoU with UK-based innovation partners, Gendius, the hub based

in GCC provides access to a wealth of resources and information from partners around the globe. The integration of the region into this comprehensive biomedical ecosystem will help to further local medical capabilities, improving the ability of HCPs and the lives of patients.

Key initiatives:

AZ EduGATE: a digital network of medical professionals (targeting 17,000 HCPs in GCC in 2021).

HealthGATE: an app developed and implemented in GCC to provide online consultation and e-prescriptions. It also provides diabetes education and remote support for diagnosis and treatment by connecting patients to a comprehensive network of HCPs and will support a lung cancer screening and diagnosis project with Qure.AI. In 2021, a new user interface was introduced, incorporating technologies that support HCP practice and enable the connection with the patients.

GCC Medical Digital Workshop: bootcamp for internal stakeholders, designed to leverage digital capabilities, generate new approaches for the AstraZeneca GCC digital platforms and share best practices across GCC markets.

- **SWEDEN** — Another of the partner's, OnDosis, is a collaboration project which works in conjunction with the Swedish government. OnDosis creates new projects based on existing ideas from companies and develops a platform aimed at maximizing the benefits received from prescribed therapies, through easier ways for patients to take medicines.

At the end of the day, patients' needs have to be at the center of everything the healthcare ecosystem does

The A.Catalyst network provides an example of how a collaborative

model can help meet current and future healthcare needs at country level with interconnectedness at the global level. This enables opportunities for further collaborations and sharing of learnings across countries and sectors. What drives the network is the need for hubs to continue to reevaluate their work, seek gaps in the market for innovative healthcare treatments, and create new ways for these to be carried out effectively and for the benefit of those who are at the center of their work — **PATIENTS**.

What more can be done?

Stakeholders within the healthcare ecosystem should focus on increasing collaboration through enhanced alignment of their priorities, and crucially — putting patients at the forefront of their work, vision and care. For the healthcare ecosystem to continue progressing, stakeholders could realize their potential for being part of innovative and advanced ways for meeting patients' needs. Increasing collaboration efforts coupled with an enhanced alignment of objectives, should serve as the catalyst in furthering the response to patients' changing needs.

¹ Janus, S (2021) How Patients are Changing the Healthcare Landscape. Available at: <https://knowledge-leader.colliers.com/shawn-janus/how-patients-are-changing-the-healthcare-landscape/> (Accessed March 2022)

² World Health Organization (2020) The top 10 causes of death. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death> (Accessed March 2022)

³ World Health Organization (2021) WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard. Available at: <https://covid19.who.int/> (Accessed March 2022)

⁴ United Nations (2019) World Population Ageing 2019 Report — Highlights. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WorldPopulationAgeing2019-Highlights.pdf> (Accessed March 2022)

⁵ Society For Health Care Strategy & Market Development (2021) Evolving Healthcare Landscape. Available at: <https://www.shsmid.org/resources/bridging-worlds2.0/evolving-healthcare-landscape> (Accessed March 2022)

⁶ Cerner (2019) 9 Concepts Shaping the Health Care Landscape in 2019. Available at: <https://www.cerner.com/perspectives/9-concepts-shaping-the-health-care-landscape-in-2019> (Accessed March 2022)



A.Catalyst Network
The home of patient-enabled innovation