

## Asia's young leaders "Flow as One" in Cebu for the Hitachi Young Leaders Initiative 2026

Young changemakers gather in Cebu to spark shared solutions

**Cebu, the Philippines, 10 June 2026** – The Hitachi Young Leaders Initiative (HYLI) 2026 brought together 32 student delegates from across Asia in Cebu for a week of dialogue, sustainability learning, community engagement, and cross-cultural exchange under the theme "Flow as One."

Now in its 18<sup>th</sup> run, HYLI continues to serve as Hitachi's flagship youth leadership platform, connecting promising university students with leaders from business, government, academia, civil society, and development sectors.

This year's theme reflected a timely call for collective action: the region's most urgent challenges, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), can only be addressed when countries, communities, sectors, and generations move together with shared purpose.



Seated (left to right): Philip Dy (Metrobank Foundation), Joseph Patrick Yap (FBSC One Tech), Kojin Nakakita (Hitachi Asia Ltd.), Yudai Ueno (Consulate-General of Japan in Cebu), Toshiaki Higashihara (Hitachi, Ltd.), Lourdes Josephine Gotianun-Yap (Filinvest Development Corporation), Lorena Dellagiovanna (Hitachi, Ltd.), Isabelle Therese Gotianun-Yap (East West Banking Corporation), Megumu Tsuda (Hitachi, Ltd.), Florence Chow (Hitachi Asia Ltd.)

## **HYLI 2026 Opens in Cebu**

HYLI 2026 formally opened at Crimson Mactan with ceremonies attended by delegates, mentors, senior Hitachi leaders, diplomatic and government representatives, private-sector leaders, sustainability advocates, partners, and guests from the University of San Carlos.

The opening ceremonies featured messages from Hitachi leaders and distinguished guests of honor, including Mr. Toshiaki Higashihara, Executive Chairman of Hitachi, Ltd.; Mr. Yudai Ueno, Consul-General of Japan in Cebu; Ms. Josephine Gotianun-Yap, Vice Chairperson of Filinvest Development Corporation; Ms. Lorena Dellagiovanna, Group Chief Sustainability Officer of Hitachi, Ltd.; and Honorable Nestor Archival, Mayor of Cebu City.

Their remarks framed HYLI 2026 around sustainability, shared responsibility, and the leadership values of ownership, engagement, and empathy.

These values were echoed by Mr. Philip Dy, President of the Metrobank Foundation and a HYLI alumnus from the 7<sup>th</sup> batch in 2005. In his keynote speech, Mr. Dy reflected on his experience at HYLI and how it shaped the leader he is today. He urged delegates to connect meaningfully with their peers and explore what truly drives them.

Since its inception in 1996, HYLI has inspired over 400 talented university students, including Mr. Dy, to broaden their perspectives and discuss key global issues.

“Guided by our mission of contributing back to the society, I’m heartened to see HYLI delegates from diverse cultures gathered to solve societal challenges. HYLI 2026 reminded us that young leaders are not only preparing for the future – they are already helping shape it. Through the theme ‘Flow as One,’ we saw how dialogue, empathy, and collaboration can connect diverse ideas into meaningful action for society. I am confident that HYLI will continue to create more opportunities for these young social innovators and build a more inclusive society,” said Mr. Kojin Nakakita, Chairman of Hitachi Asia Ltd.

### **Turning ideas into youth-led solutions**

Throughout the week, delegates worked closely with mentors and peers to explore sustainability challenges from regional, social, environmental, and economic perspectives. Topics included access to clean water across Asia, the region’s skills gap, sustainable bio-mining for a circular rare earth economy, and marine plastic pollution.

Delegates then translated these insights into their presentations, proposing solutions and receiving feedback from leaders, mentors, and fellow participants — reinforcing HYLI’s role as a platform for critical thinking, bold communication, and cross-border solutions.

### **Learning sustainability through real-world experiences**

HYLI 2026 also brought delegates beyond the conference room to explore sustainability across Cebu. At the Olango Marine Sanctuary, students took part in learning experiences that included fish feeding and mangrove viewing, deepening their understanding of marine biodiversity, coastal resilience, and the role communities play in protecting natural ecosystems.

Delegates also had immersions in two of Hitachi’s key project sites: Membrane Bio Reactor (MBR) System site and Seawater Desalination System (SWRO) site, showing how technology, infrastructure, and partnerships can contribute to more sustainable operations.

## **Leadership grounded in community impact**

The week also included a purposeful community activity where delegates assembled back-to-school kits for local beneficiaries.

By taking part in hands-on community work, delegates were able to translate the spirit of “Flow as One” into a shared act of support for children and communities in need.

## **Building understanding across borders**

Beyond sustainability and leadership sessions, HYLI 2026 showcased the diversity of its participating countries through a Cultural Night featuring performances from each delegation. The evening celebrated friendship and cross-cultural appreciation, reminding participants that collaboration begins with understanding one another.

As HYLI 2026 concluded, Cebu became a living classroom for sustainability, culture, innovation, and community in action — inspiring a generation of leaders to create positive change across Asia.

For more information and updates on the Hitachi Young Leaders Initiative, visit <https://www.hitachi.asia/hyli/2026/>.

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### **About Hitachi Asia Ltd.**

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