

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

7,239.28 ▼ 22.26 PTS. ▼ 0.30%

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BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P845.00 -P5.00 -0.59%	ACEN AC Energy Corp. P9.73 +P0.23 +2.42%	AEV Aboltiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P60.35 -P1.95 -3.13%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P12.50 -P0.30 -2.34%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P34.10 -P0.90 -2.57%	AP Aboltiz Power Corp. P33.80 +P0.25 +0.75%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P129.30 +P1.40 +1.09%	BLOOM Bloomberg Resorts Corp. P6.39 -P0.06 -0.93%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P95.00 +P0.70 +0.74%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P31.30 -P0.45 -1.42%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P3,360.00 ---	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P554.00 +P2.00 +0.36%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P200.20 -P4.20 -2.05%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P229.00 -P1.40 -0.61%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P60.10 +P2.10 +3.62%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P10.02 -P0.04 -0.40%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P58.20 +P0.20 +0.34%	MEG Megaworld Corp. P3.20 +P0.02 +0.63%	MER Manila Electric Co. P311.80 +P2.80 +0.91%	MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.88 ---
PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P37.45 +P0.70 +1.90%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P19.00 -P0.28 -1.45%	RRHI Robinsons Retail Holdings, Inc. P57.10 +P0.10 +0.18%	SECB Security Bank Corp. P111.00 +P4.00 +3.74%	SM SM Investments Corp. P958.00 -P1.00 -0.10%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P111.50 -P0.50 -0.45%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P33.80 -P0.55 -1.60%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,881.00 -P7.00 -0.37%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P126.90 -P0.10 -0.08%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P28.10 +P0.20 +0.72%

Philex eyes stock right offer for Silangan mine capex

PHILEX Mining Corp. said it plans to partially fund initial capital expenditure (capex) requirements of the first phase development of its Silangan copper-gold project in Surigao del Norte through stock rights offerings.

“The initial plan for a grander development would have required about P38 billion or about \$760 million but the outcome of the various discussions with potential foreign investors have forced Philex to prioritize and pursue the development on its own under the In-Phase Mine plan,” Philex Chief Fi-

nance Officer and Treasurer Romeo B. Bachoco in a media release.

Part of the funding requirement for the starter mine will be sourced from a stock rights offering in February, which is expected to raise P3.15 billion, the company said.

Philex will require about P11.2 billion or about \$224 million to develop the first phase and begin commercial production.

It said it appointed BDO Capital and Investment Corp. to raise the additional needed capital.

The move is part of the listed mining company’s efforts to introduce fresh capital infusion to Silangan Mindanao Exploration Co., Inc. (SMECI) and Silangan Mindanao Mining Corp., Inc. (SMMCI).

“This is a significant indication that Philex, as parent company of SMECI and SMMCI, is committed to get this project going,” said Mr. Bachoco.

“This would signal to qualified shareholders, and potential investors alike, who will participate in the stock rights offer as well as the lenders who will join

the loan syndication that Philex will infuse fresh capital because it strongly believes in the feasibility of the Silangan Project,” he added.

The Silangan project will begin development this year and is expected to be ready for commercial operation by early 2025.

It has an estimated 81 million tons in mineable reserves that contain around 993 million pounds of copper and 2.8 million ounces of gold.

Throughout its 28-year mine life, it is expected to produce an annual average of 35 million

pounds of copper and 100,000 ounces of gold, which is higher than the current output of Philex’s Padalcan mine in Tuba, Benguet.

The Silangan project’s development has been “delayed due to regulatory policies and funding for a bigger development,” according to the press release.

In the third quarter of 2021, net income grew to P721.32 million or 46.1% from P493.71 million in the same quarter the previous year.

From January to September, Philex registered a net income of P1.88 billion or a 104.7% increase

from P918.26 million the same period the year before.

Philex shares rose by 6% or 33 centavos to finish at P5.83 apiece at the stock exchange on Thursday.

Philex is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Metro Pacific Investments Corp. and PLDT, Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsnon**

OPMC seeks to explore in Zambales, Dinagat Islands

ORIENTAL Petroleum and Minerals Corp. (OPMC) has applied for permits to explore in Zambales and the Dinagat Islands for nickel and other associated metals, it said in stock market disclosure on Thursday.

It said applications were submitted to regional offices of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau for five areas in Zambales spanning around 13,816 hectares and two areas in Dinagat Islands covering around 863 hectares.

It said three out of the five areas in Zambales were already designated by

the mining bureau’s office in Central Luzon with separate exploration permit application numbers.

The mining company said it is “authorized to conduct exploration and production of petroleum, minerals and renewable energy.”

Another disclosure will be posted to the Philippine Stock Exchange once the applications are converted to exploration permits, according to OPMC.

The company’s move to apply for exploration permits comes after the

government lifted the four-year ban on open-pit mining on Dec. 23.

Incorporated in 1969, OPMC is a local exploration and production company engaged in upstream petroleum activities in the country.

Its petroleum operations are located mainly in Northwest Palawan. Most of its operational activities depend on its service contracts with the government.

OPMC has three wholly owned subsidiaries, namely: Oriental Mahogany Woodworks, Inc., Linapacan Oil Gas and Power Corp., and Oriental Land Corp.

In the third quarter of 2021, the company reported a net loss of \$845,403, turning around from a net income of \$1.29 million in the same quarter in 2020.

For the January-September period last year, however, the company posted a net income of \$529,086, although lower by 82.2% than the \$2.98 million recorded in the same three quarters a year earlier.

In the stock exchange on Thursday, OPMC shares went up by 20% or P0.002 to P0.012 each. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocsnon**

URC says Thai unit puts up 6-MW solar power in facilities

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. (URC)’s Thailand subsidiary has installed solar panels with a capacity of 6 megawatts (MW) solar panels on its factories and warehouses located southwest of Bangkok.

“Our Thailand subsidiary has finished installing solar panels on six factories and four warehouses at its compound in Samut Sakhon province, southwest of Bangkok. The solar panels can generate an estimate of 6 MW of power,” URC said in a statement released on Thursday.

This move is part of URC’s steps in pushing for environment-friendly business operations.

“We believe that the main core for businesses to carry on is to be responsible to the people, community, society, environment and our planet,” URC Thailand General Manager Tanant Suwanraks said, adding that the Thailand office’s effort will not stop on solar panels.

In the Philippines, URC has installed a 1-MW capacity solar panels on its manufacturing facilities in Canlubang, Laguna, while around 21-kilowatt solar panels were placed on its Vitasoy facility in San Fernando, Pampanga.

URC’s Vietnam subsidiary is currently working on the installation of its 3-MW solar rooftop system in its coffee plant located in Vietnam Singapore Industrial Park Binh Duong.

The solar rooftop project covers 18,500 square meters of roof area and can supply 21% of the power demand of the plant. It can also serve as thermal insulator of the roof, cooling temperature by 4 to 5 degrees Celsius.

The same project will also be installed in URC’s factories in Vietnam.

The food and beverage manufacturer has also committed to zero carbon emissions by 2050.

At the local bourse, URC lost 0.08% or 10 centavos on Thursday, closing at P126.90 apiece. — **Marielle C. Lucenio**

AC Energy set to switch on 60-MW wind farm in Vietnam’s Soc Trang

AC ENERGY Corp. (ACEN) plans to switch on its seventh renewable energy project in Vietnam the first quarter of this year, after it launched three jointly developed wind farms in the regional neighbor in 2021.

In a statement sent late on Wednesday, the listed energy platform of the Ayala group said that it is expecting the 60-megawatt (MW) Lac Hoa & Hoa Dong Wind in Soc Trang to be operating early this year.

“The wind project is a collaboration with partner UPC Renewables Co. Ltd. Vietnam and will feature the tallest wind turbines in the country to date at a record hub height of 162 meters,” the company said.

The company recently announced that it had powered on three new wind farms to add 380-MW power capacity to the Vietnam grid.

ACEN President and Chief Executive Eric T. Francia said: “Powering three energy plants in 2021 was a significant accomplishment that we could not have achieved without the collaboration with our partners and strong support from the government of Vietnam.”

The 88-MW Ninh Thuan wind farm in South Central Vietnam, the second partnership project of ACEN and the Hanoi-based BIM Group, began operating in October last year.

It is expected to produce 327 gigawatt-hours (GWh) in a year, enough to power around 136,000 homes with renewable energy and help avoid 298,551 tons of carbon dioxide annually.

In November, the 252-MW Quang Binh wind farm, a joint project of the company with AMI AC Renewables in the North Central Vietnam, was switched on. It is one of the largest wind farms in the country that can produce 648 GWh or renewable energy per hour annually.

In the same month, ACEN and The Blue Circle’s second phase 40-MW Mui Ne in Binh Thuan Province in South Vietnam was also turned on.

ACEN said that through its transformational partnerships, it has rapidly expanded its renewables footprint in Vietnam.

Vietnam is the ACEN’s largest market outside of the Philippines. The company has six renewable energy projects in the foreign country, three of which are solar plants that are all commercially operating since 2019.

ACEN aspires to be the biggest listed energy platform in Southeast Asia as it targets to put up 5,000 MW of renewable energy capacity by 2025.

Its shares on Thursday rose 2.42% or 23 centavos to close at P9.73 apiece. — **Marielle C. Lucenio**

Filipino-founded Nexplay eyeing NFT gaming

NEXPLAY, a new esports ecosystem and technology company founded by Filipinos, plans to enter high-growth areas, including non-fungible tokens (NFT) and blockchain gaming, its president said.

“The games industry in the region and in the Philippines is at an inflection point,” Nexplay President and Co-Founder Miguel C. Bernas said in a statement e-mailed to reporters on Jan. 18.

“Aside from further expanding our esports ecosystem, we also plan to venture into the high-growth area of Web3.0, NFTs and blockchain gaming,” he added.

Web3.0 is the third generation of online services, while NFTs are non-interchangeable digital tokens that contain data proving ownership of items, mostly related to art, audio, video, and the like.

Southeast Asian countries lead in terms of NFT ownership, with the Philippines topping the list at 32%, according to the findings of an online survey released in November last year by Australian independent information service Finder.

The popularity of NFTs in the Philippines is mainly from in-game assets gained in play-to-earn games like *Axie Infinity*.

“In the same way that games leaped from arcades to the home, from desktop devices to mobile handsets and from offline to online, blockchain technology will be the next revolution in gaming,” Mr. Bernas also said.

Mr. Bernas, a veteran business executive, was recently named president and co-founder of the technology company.

He will “lead strategy and corporate governance, as well as spearhead fund raising as the company moves towards its Series A investment round,” Nexplay said.

“Already operationally profitable with revenues growing at 150% year on year, the exciting gaming tech startup is looking to bolster its esports ecosystem and enhance its professional esports teams and content creator offerings to brands and advertisers, it added. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

Energy chief cites NGCP role in addressing power issue

ENERGY Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi said on Thursday that privately owned National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) should address the possible deficient power supply during summer, which coincides with the election season.

“As system and grid operators, they (NGCP) have a big role in assuring stable, efficient and reliable supply of electricity,” Mr. Cusi told *BusinessWorld* in a text message on Thursday.

His comment came after NGCP warned on Tuesday about the thinning power supply in all three grids in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao that might lead to “yellow alerts.”

Yellow alerts are placed over the grid when power supply fails to meet the transmission grid’s regulating and contingency reserve minimum. A red alert is issued when power

demand exceeds supply, resulting in power interruptions.

In a statement released to reporters on Thursday, Mr. Cusi asked what NGCP is going to do about its own warning.

“In addition to their public addresses, the Department of Energy (DoE) is very interested to hear from them about the steps they have taken, or are taking, to address the situation, particularly in preventing the occurrence of a power interruption,” he said.

He asked if NGCP has ensured the following: availability of all capacities at all power stations; the connectivity of all available capacities; if all the congestion issues are addressed; if the Grid Operating Maintenance Program (GOMP) was thoroughly planned; and if the reserves are contracted from a separate pool of capacity

for ancillary services which can be tapped in cases of emergency.

The grid operator earlier said that the GOMP was approved by the DoE on Jan. 10. The maintenance program consolidates the preventive maintenance schedules of power plants, indicating how much power will be rendered inaccessible on maintenance days.

“On paper, there appears to be sufficient supply to meet demand; but the plan on paper, the GOMP, is not always followed. It is when there are unscheduled shutdowns and derations, and extensions of maintenance duration, that grid operations may be disrupted enough to warrant the issuance of a grid alert status,” NGCP said.

It also said that as transmission service provider it cannot intervene on matters concerning power generation, but it can

provide an overview of the supply and demand situation, and try to dispatch available grid resources.

Mr. Cusi said that he had instructed the DoE’s power bureau to look into the matter.

The DoE has forecast peak demand at 12,387 megawatts (MW) for Luzon to take place in the last week of May, 747 MW higher than the actual 2021 peak of 11,640 MW, which occurred on May 28, 2021, the grid operator said.

Demand in the Luzon grid peaked at 11,344 MW on June 21, 2019 and 11,103 MW on March 1, 2020.

Demand in the Visayas grid is expected to peak this year at 2,528 MW, higher than the 2,252-MW peak recorded on Dec. 13, 2021. The Mindanao grid is expected to see peak demand at 2,223 MW, against the 2,144-MW peak on Aug. 4, 2021. — **Marielle C. Lucenio**