

SMIC records 65% profit surge as pandemic restrictions ease

SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) posted a 65% net income growth last year after seeing a surge in consumer spending as the country eased its pandemic restrictions amid the holiday season.

In a disclosure to the exchange on Monday, the company said it logged a P38.5-billion net income in 2021, up from the P23.4 billion it registered the previous year.

Meanwhile, SMIC's consolidated revenues inched up 9% to P428.1 billion from P394.2 billion year on year.

"We saw a rebound in consumer spending in the run-up to Christmas as restrictions across the country eased. This led to improved performance in our retail and mall units as our banks continued to deliver solid results," SMIC President and Chief Executive Officer Frederic C. DyBuncio said.

"It is our hope that the further easing of restrictions after the latest surge in COVID cases will lead

to sustained recovery of the economy and our businesses as the country adjusts to living with the virus. We are committed to continue our expansion plans," he added.

The company's banking segment reportedly accounted for 51% of its net income.

BDO Unibank, Inc. generated a P42.8-billion net income in 2021, a 51% increase from the P28.2 billion logged the previous year. The company said the growth was driven by an 11% climb in non-interest income and normalized provisions.

Meanwhile, China Banking Corp. reported a 25% net income growth to P15.1 billion. SMIC said the bank ended the year with "sustained core business growth and effective cost management."

SMIC's property segment made up for 25% of its net income last year. SM Prime Holdings, Inc. logged a 21% profit jump to P21.8 billion in 2021 from P18 billion a

year ago, while its 2021 revenues were at the "same level" as 2020 with P82.3 billion.

Meanwhile, SMIC's retail business contributed 17% to its profits in 2021.

SM Retail, Inc.'s net income in 2021 surged 133% to P9.6 billion from P4.1 billion, while its revenues inched up 2% to P303.9 billion from P296.8 billion. SMIC said the improved profitability of the segment was driven by the sustained growth in SM Stores and Specialty Stores sales.

SM launched 294 new stores in 2021, including new SM Stores in Caloocan and Camarines Norte. The food group, comprised of SM Markets (SM Supermarket, SM Hypermarket, and Savemore), Alfamart, and Waltermart, collectively launched 219 new stores.

SM Retail now has a portfolio of 3,215 outlets, including 1,539 specialty retail stores, 1,207 Alfamart stores, 214 Savemore branches,

73 Waltermart outlets, 68 The SM Stores, 62 SM Supermarkets, and 52 SM Hypermarkets.

Meanwhile, SMIC's portfolio investments contributed 7% to its net income. In 2021, the company increased its stake in Goldilocks Bakeshop, Inc. to 74% from 34.1% last year, as well as increased its ownership in the 2GO Group, Inc. to 52.85% from 30.53%.

"We believe our portfolio investments have strong assets, synergies with our core businesses, and enormous long-term growth potential," Mr. DyBuncio said.

SM's total assets went up 10% last year to P1.3 trillion. The company said it maintains a "healthy balance sheet" with a gearing ratio of 38% net debt to 62% total equity.

SM shares at the stock exchange improved 2.41% or P21 on Monday, closing at P892 apiece. — **Keren Concepcion G. Valmonte**



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SMPC income surges, hits record-high P16B

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) reported its consolidated net income jumped by 393% to P16.2 billion last year on the back of "larger than expected" coal demand, the coal supplier and power generator said on Monday.

In a disclosure to the exchange, SMPC said last year's income was the highest it has posted in its 41-year history. The increase translated to P3.81 per share earnings with a return on equity of 36%.

"The stellar earnings result was largely attributable to stronger-than-expected coal demand, which pushed index prices to record highs before settling at elevated levels because of the China price cap. The power segment further boosted [the company's] performance with improved sales and prices," SMPC said.

SMPC prides itself as the lone company in the country that mines its own fuel. Aside from supplying coal domestically, it also exports coal to neighboring countries, including the three top coal importers in the world: China, Japan, and South Korea.

The mining and power company said its coal production rose by 8%, coal shipments jumped

16%, and the average coal selling prices jumped 71%.

Its coal segment alone contributed to 70% of earnings with P11.4 billion, while SMPC subsidiaries SEM-Calaca Power Corp. (SCPC) and Southwest Luzon Power Generating Corp. (SLPGC) accounted for 35% and 5%, respectively.

SCPC contributed P3.3 billion to the parent company's income, while SLPGC shared P1.4 billion.

"Our results reflect the hard work of our people. They rose to the challenges of the pandemic and delivered exceptional value to our stakeholders," said SMPC President and Chief Operating Officer Maria Cristina C. Gontanin in a statement.

The parent company reported that SCPC's standalone revenues jumped by 144% to P3.73 billion from P1.31 billion, while it swung back to profitability with a net income of P529 million from a P142-million net loss in 2021.

SLPGC revenues also climbed 20% to P1.78 billion and its net income widened by 113% to P232 million.

SMPC shares at the local bourse rose P2.70 or 10.8% to close at P27.70 apiece on Monday. — **Marielle C. Lucenio**

JoyRide gets nod for 4-wheel transport service

MOTORCYCLE ride-hailing service JoyRide announced on Monday that it had received approval from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to operate as a transport network company (TNC).

"We are grateful that JoyRide Car is now one of the accredited 4-wheel TNC in the Philippines," JoyRide Senior Vice-President for Corporate Affairs Jose Emmanuel "Noli" M. Eala said in an e-mailed statement.

The company said it received its certificate of accreditation as TNC from the LTFRB on Feb. 24.

To recall, JoyRide launched its motorcycle ride-hailing services in 2019.

"We are very excited to have JoyRide Car as one of the newest services available in our superapp. As always, we remain committed to providing value-for-money quality service to the public through the use of a powerful and scalable technology platform," Mr. Eala said.

"We view this as a good development as commuters will now have another viable choice for safe, comfortable, and affordable car rides to their destination," he added.

JoyRide's app currently houses multiple mobility products, including JoyRide MC Taxi (motorcycle ride-hailing), JoyRide Delivery (express motorcycle deliveries), JoyRide Pabli (buy-for-me services),

JoyRide Taxicle (tricycle ride-hailing), and Happy Move (2-wheel and 4-wheel courier deliveries for business).

The app also has JR Mall (online marketplace for food, groceries, and other non-food items), Buy Load, and COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) Home Testing services.

The company offers its services in Metro Manila, Rizal, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Baguio, and Metro Cebu.

JoyRide said that since 2019, it has onboarded more than 20,000 Kasundo Driver-Partners with vehicles ranging from motorcycles, cars, vans, and trucks.

"JoyRide Car is now accepting transport network vehicle service, or TNVS, drivers and operators to register as partners," it added. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

First Atkins Holdings Corp. unveils largest cold storage facility in South Luzon



In photo (from left to right) are Deputy CEO Hillary Kay L. Ang, DTI Assistant Secretary Atty. Claire Cabochan, Hon. Mayor of Naic Junio Dualan, Deputy Director-General and PEZA Zone Administrator Atty. Norma Tañag, First Atkins Holdings Corp. Chairman & CEO Engr. Gabriel J. Ang, PNB Capital President Gerry B. Valencia, Ms. Lulu Chua, Rolando J. Ang, Management Trainee Gavin Christian L. Ang, Level & Details Devp. Corp. President Marissa Ducat, Atkins Group COO Jun DeAcosta, and Atkins Group CFO Myk Gamora.

Starting its expansion in strategic agricultural areas in the Philippines, First Atkins Holdings Corp. (FAHC) launched its newest cold storage facility in South Luzon that aims to help address food security.

Yesterday, Feb. 28, 2022, the company held a groundbreaking ceremony on its sixth cold storage facility, housed in a one-hectare property in Cavite Technopark in Naic, Cavite — an industrial zone owned and developed by listed company Ayala Logistics Holdings.

The said cold storage, costing about a billion pesos, has the capacity to store up to 14,000,000 kilograms (kgs) or 14,000 metric tonnes (MT), making the facility the largest in the South Luzon area. Also, the company partnered with the local Public Employment Service Office (PESO) to bring in more than 100 jobs, which is hoped to help propel the local economy in the area.

The new cold storage is part of FAHC's goal in the next 10 years to build additional five more cold storage strategically located in the rich producing agricultural areas



in the country. For FAHC, building more cold storages is their solution to food security, which has been regarded a long issue due to scarcity of cold storage facility that can house produced agricultural products.

FAHC, through subsidiary Atkins Import and Export Resources,

Inc., has been in the business of importation and distribution of meat product since 2006. Prior to the new facility in Cavite, the company operates five cold storage facilities in Meycauayan, Bulacan, which altogether have a total combined capacity of 13,000,000

kgs or 13,000 MT. The new facility in Cavite is projected to increase the total combined capacity to about 65,000,000 kgs or 65,000 MT.

In addition, FAHC is currently working on building a facility powered by a sustainable energy source like solar power through

another subsidiary, First Atkins Power Gen Corp. The proposed solar power facility is expected to generate at least one megawatt, which is about 50% of supply requirement. Once operational, the facility is expected to significantly reduce carbon footprint and lower cost of operation.