

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

7,112.19 ▼ 12.61 PTS. ▼ 0.17%

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BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P800.50 -P29.50 -3.55%	ACEN AC Energy Corp. P8.28 +P0.14 +1.72%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P61.00 +P1.55 +2.61%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P12.70 -P0.10 -0.78%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P36.85 +P0.15 +0.41%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P34.90 -P0.10 -0.29%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P127.00 +P0.10 +0.08%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P97.00 +P2.00 +2.11%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P24.35 +P0.35 +1.46%	EMP Emperador, Inc. P14.00 -P0.24 -1.69%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,518.00 -P54.00 -2.10%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P526.00 -P9.00 -1.68%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P226.00 -P7.00 -3.00%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P230.00 -P9.80 -4.09%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P58.10 +P1.20 +2.11%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P9.30 -P0.06 -0.64%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P55.50 +P0.45 +0.82%	MEG Megaworld Corp. P3.07 -P0.05 -1.60%	MER Manila Electric Co. P370.00 -P4.60 -1.23%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P14.70 +P0.40 +2.80%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.60 -P0.10 -2.70%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P33.00 -P0.65 -1.93%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P19.50 -P0.20 -1.02%	SECB Security Bank Corp. P111.00 +P2.10 +1.93%	SM SM Investments Corp. P909.00 +P1.00 +0.11%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P102.90 +P1.10 +1.08%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P38.00 +P0.50 +1.33%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,830.00 -P15.00 -0.81%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P107.70 -P3.20 -2.89%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P27.00 +P0.10 +0.37%

Gov't to foreign firms: Promote Filipino products

IRR of amended retail trade law sets up to P5-M fine for violators

THE Philippine government has called on foreign retailers to promote Filipino-made products in their shops under the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the amended Retail Trade Liberalization Act (RTLA).

The IRR of the amended law was signed on March 9 by Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez, Socio-economic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick T. Chua, and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Commissioner Emilio B. Aquino.

On Dec. 10 last year, President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed Republic Act No. 11595 that amended Republic Act No. 8762 or the RTLA.

Based on the amended law, the minimum paid-up capital of foreign retailers is reduced to P25 million from \$2.5 million, while the minimum investment requirement per store was lowered to P10 million in a bid to entice more foreign investors into the Philippines.

Under Rule 5, Section 6 of the IRR, foreign retailers are encouraged to provide a stock inventory of products manufactured in the Philippines by implementing any of the initiatives such as the designation of a store space as Filipino section; use of locally made packaging materials such as bags, boxes, and containers; use

of locally sourced raw materials in production; and other arrangements that will promote Filipino-made products.

Rule 9, Section 2 of the IRR also provided that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and SEC will review the required minimum paid-up capital every three years from the effectivity of the amended law.

"The DTI, SEC, and NEDA shall each report its recommendation to Congress," the IRR said.

The IRR also provides that the SEC or the DTI will be responsible

for monitoring the registered foreign retailers, while both agencies maintain a record of registered entities that are engaged in retail trade.

Meanwhile, Rule 8, Section 1 of the IRR also said that the new minimum investment per store as required by the amended law will not be applicable to "foreign investors and foreign retailers who are legitimately engaged in retail trade and were not required to comply with this requirement at the time of the effectivity of the act."

However, registered foreign retailers still need to maintain the minimum paid-up capital as provided under RA 8762.

The IRR provided that violators of the law will face imprisonment of four years to six years and a fine ranging from P1 million to P5 million.

Further, Rule 5, Section 3 of the IRR also requires that every registered foreign retail enterprise will submit to the DTI or SEC the following reports on the maintenance and actual use of the paid-up capital requirement: number and location of stores, investment per store, and status of each store; stock inventory of locally manufactured products; and other reports that may be required.

"It shall be the duty of the foreign retailers to keep their records, inventory, and books of accounts available at all times for inspection by the SEC or DTI, as applicable," the IRR said.

The amended RTLA is one of the economic liberalization measures of the government seen to help in the country's economic recovery from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The other measures include the signed amendments to the Foreign Investments Act and the pending amendments to the Public Service Act. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

SEC warns about AlgoSCALP's 'enticing' investment scheme

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has warned the public about AlgoSCALP, an automated trading system, which has been soliciting investments without license or approval from the regulator.

"AlgoSCALP, AlgoSCALP Trading, or AlgoSCALP Auto Trading claims that it is a fully automated trading system, and that the provider will place buy and sell orders for the investor, allowing the investor to trade the financial markets without needing to lift a finger," the SEC said in an advisory.

"Further, it claims that it is a crypto-currency of the Algorand Blockchain that aims to be simultaneously scalable, secure and decentralized," it added.

AlgoSCALP uses "scalping" or a trading style that specializes in profiting off of small price changes and making fast profit from reselling, the SEC said.

The corporate regulator said that the trading firm is enticing the public to invest with a minimum amount of P200, with an assurance of a daily profit range of 1% to 13% for 22 days. An investor can also earn through direct referral of "active trade." In every active trade, an investor earns a 12% commission.

The commission declared the claims were "too good to be true," with indications of a possible Ponzi scheme where returns to early investors are likely to be paid out from the investments of new investors and not out of the



company's profits similar to those already flagged as scams.

Based on the records of the SEC, AlgoSCALP is not registered and is not authorized to solicit, accept or take investments and placements from the public, nor to issue investment contracts and other forms of securities.

"Our database also shows that AlgoSCALP has no brokers, account managers, agents, and/or representatives that have appropriate registration and/or license to offer or sell such securities to the public," the SEC said.

The trading firm is also not registered as a virtual asset service provider with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and does not have a corresponding certification of authority as a money service business.

The SEC reminded the public that unregistered or unauthorized platforms such as AlgoSCALP are risky and should be avoided.

"Therefore, the public is advised to not invest or stop investing in AlgoSCALP or in any other scheme being offered by it no matter how enticing, trendy, or catchy its slogans, proposition, or scheme is," the SEC said. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Joeson**

Retailers optimistic, but wary of rising fuel cost

LOCAL retailers are optimistic about their recovery prospects as mobility restrictions ease, but the effects of the Russia-Ukraine conflict have brought uncertainty as rising fuel prices weigh down businesses.

"So far, [there is] greater mobility now in retail. Most of the members are optimistic now, though the conflict in Eastern Europe is another (thing) to watch out," said Rosemarie B. Ong, president of the Philippine Retailers Association via a mobile phone message.

Ms. Ong said there is still uncertainty since the country is still recovering from the effects of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and is now

facing new issues such as high fuel prices.

Meanwhile, retailers are keeping tabs on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"Everything is still uncertain, we are just recovering from COVID-19 and now, here comes the oil price hike and the conflict in Eastern Europe. But there are many people in malls already," she said.

In a mobile phone message, Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association President Steven T. Cua said that foot traffic has not significantly increased in groceries despite the implementation of Alert Level 1 in Metro Manila since March 1.

"Foot traffic has not significantly increased in supermarkets based on my personal visits to them this week. (They have the) same number of minimum check-out counters open. Membership shopping stores (are) not getting the desired numbers either," Mr. Cua said.

Meanwhile, Trade Secretary Ramon M. Lopez said in a mobile phone message that the relaxed mobility restrictions had helped in enticing more crowds during weekends.

"Generally, Alert Level 1 has helped bring back the crowds, especially weekends. But [it is] not yet at pre-pandemic levels. Possibly, people [are] used to the

convenience of staying at home and the deliveries. And some offices are not yet fully back or still on hybrid/work-from-home [arrangement] on weekdays," he said.

Mr. Lopez said it is still hard to predict the impact of the high fuel prices in terms of consumer traffic on retail shops.

"Hard to say yet about the impact of fuel increase. Let's observe the crowd and the traffic situation in the coming weeks," Mr. Lopez said.

Since the beginning of the year, the prices of gasoline, diesel, and kerosene have climbed by P13.25, P17.50, and P14.40 per liter, respectively. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Toyota exceeds 2 million mark in Philippine car sales since 1988

TOYOTA MOTOR Philippines Corp. (TMP) has sold more than two million vehicles since it began operations in 1988, it said over the weekend to announce a key milestone for the car manufacturer.

"Surpassing the two million mark would not be possible without the support of our loyal Toyota and Lexus customers, the commitment of our 73-strong Toyota dealer network, and of course the sense of ownership that every TMP team member has to our goal and responsibility of providing mobility for all. Thank you for making Philippines a Toyota country," TMP President Atsuhiko Okamoto said in a statement.

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code or by typing the link <bit.ly/Toyota031422>

According to TMP, it has rolled out more than 958,000 completely knocked-down (CKD) units from its manufacturing plant in Sta. Rosa City, Laguna since the start of its operations. Some of the units produced by the plant include the Crown, Corolla, Lite Ace, and Tamaraw. In 2021, the car manufacturer said it sold over 35,000 Vios units and 13,000 Innova units.

"More than just selling cars, TMP is all about addressing people's mobility needs. Through the years, we have been placing greater importance in improving customer service, value-chain offers, and overall Toyota ownership experience," Mr. Okamoto said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Investors buy then sell DMCI on record earnings

By Bernadette Therese M. Gadon Researcher

INVESTORS bought DMCI Holdings, Inc. last week then sold on stellar earnings report, but the market is turning bullish on the company amid surging commodity prices.

A total of 86.80 million DMCI shares worth P807.86 million were traded from March 7 to 11, data from the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) showed.

Shares went down by 2.8% week on week, finishing at P8.94 apiece on Friday from its P9.20 closing on March 4. For the year, the stock has gained 13%.

In an e-mail interview, PNB Securities, Inc. President Manuel Antonio G. Lisbona touted the stock's price movement last week as a move of "buy the rumor, sell the news," wherein investors bought on DMCI based on its stellar earnings.

"Based on the price charts, DMCI was consolidating between P8.10 and P8.70 before rallying to as high as P9.85 on March 8, the day [it] announced [its] results. Currently, the stock is trading below

P9.00, as investors sold on news," he said.

Regina Capital Development Corp. Equity Analyst Anna Corenne M. Agravio said in a separate e-mail that investors anticipated the upbeat earnings, buying on the stock, and reaping the reward as it followed through.

"While prices started to cool down toward the latter half of the week, it looks like the market is turning more bullish on DMCI given the continued spike in commodity prices — which will be beneficial

for SCC," she said, referring to the ticker symbol of its coal and power unit Semirara Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC).

In a disclosure on March 8, DMCI reported its net income surge more than three times to P18.396 billion last year amid stronger-than-expected coal, power, and nickel markets as well as higher construction accomplishments.

Its core net income last year grew almost threefold to record P17.365 billion.

In the fourth quarter alone, its bottom line more than doubled to P4.921 billion amid record high coal prices, strong demand for electricity and real estate.

OUTLIER

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code or by typing the link <bit.ly/Outlier031422>

New COO aims to deepen Potato Corner's presence in key markets



JOSE ARNOLD T. ALVERO

POTATO CORNER'S new chief operating officer (COO) has been tasked to further deepen the presence of the fries chain in key markets, restaurant operator Shakey's Pizza Asia Ventures, Inc. said.

In a media release, Shakey's Pizza said Jose Arnold T. Alvero, who was recently appointed to his COO post, will also be steering Potato Corner into "build-

ing on its strong equity among both consumers and franchisees, and delivering industry-leading margins for stakeholders."

Potato Corner is the latest addition to Shakey's Pizza's Wow! brands. It is the undisputed leader in the kiosk-based fries chain segment in the Philippines and a global brand with over 1,250 stores spread across 14 countries.

Before his appointment, Mr. Alvero was the vice-president for international operations and director of franchise and business development at Shakey's Pizza.

On March 7, Shakey's Pizza and its subsidiary Wow Brand Holdings, Inc. announced the acquisition of the assets and intellectual property of Potato Corner, including shares in an entity in Singapore.