

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

7,142.42

▲ 104.68 PTS.

▲ 1.48%

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2022

BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P778.00 +P9.00 +1.17%	ACEN AC Energy Corp. P8.60 +P0.19 +2.26%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P56.30 +P1.30 +2.36%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P12.10 ---	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P35.60 +P1.60 +4.71%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P35.00 ---	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P132.50 +P2.70 +2.08%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P99.80 ---	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P30.00 -P0.60 -1.96%	EMP Emperador, Inc. P17.20 +P0.18 +1.06%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,536.00 +P64.00 +2.59%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P533.00 +P18.00 +3.50%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P231.00 +P6.20 +2.76%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P229.60 +P1.60 +0.70%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P59.65 +P1.20 +2.05%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P8.80 +P0.04 +0.46%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P55.20 +P1.60 +2.99%	MEG Megaworld Corp. P2.98 +P0.03 +1.02%	MER Manila Electric Co. P355.60 -P1.40 -0.39%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P13.78 +P0.12 +0.88%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.88 ---	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P37.60 -P0.10 -0.27%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P19.90 ---	SECB Security Bank Corp. P108.00 +P1.10 +1.03%	SM SM Investments Corp. P877.00 +P5.50 +0.63%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P108.00 ---	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P38.20 +P0.95 +2.55%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,914.00 +P15.00 +0.79%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P116.90 -P0.50 -0.43%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P27.95 -P1.05 -3.62%

Fuel surcharge level to remain unchanged in May

By Arjay L. Balinbin
Senior Reporter

AIRFARES are not expected to increase further in May, according to the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), as it reviews guidelines for imposing passenger fuel surcharges.

“Pending the review and evaluation of the CAB Passenger Fuel Surcharge for Domestic and

International Flights pursuant to CAB Resolution No. 46..., please be advised that the current level of the passenger fuel surcharge provided in CAB advisory dated 15 Feb. 2022 shall be maintained,” the government agency said in an advisory.

This means the Level 4 passenger fuel surcharge imposed in March and April will remain in effect next month.

The CAB raised fuel surcharge for domestic and international

flights to Level 4 in March and April from Level 3 in January and February due to the increase in jet fuel prices.

Under Level 4, fuel surcharge rates per passenger range from P108 to P411 for domestic flights and from P543 to P5,026 for international flights originating from the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Philippine Airlines (PAL) said it is hoping a higher fuel surcharge level will be approved.

At a briefing on Tuesday, PAL President and Chief Operating Officer Capt. Stanley K. Ng said when asked for an update regarding the company’s negotiation with CAB on the fuel surcharge: “They have approved a certain level of fuel surcharge. However, the next level is still pending as of the moment.”

“We are okay with that right now. But of course, we’ll continue to work on that,” he added.

A Level 5 fuel surcharge ranges from P139 to P530 for domes-

tic flights and P745 to P7,115 for international flights from the Philippines.

Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade, who chairs the CAB, said in March that he was opposed to the airlines collecting higher fuel surcharges as this would drive up airfares at a time when the travel industry is still recovering from the pandemic crisis.

“As much as possible, let’s avoid the fuel surcharge... The cost will be passed on to passen-

gers. The cost of travel will go up. My position is that we maintain the cost of travel — no increase. Let’s study this carefully,” he said.

Instead of allowing airlines to impose higher fuel surcharge rates, Mr. Tugade said airport fees for airlines should be waived.

PAL’s Mr. Ng has said the fuel component is about 50% of the airline’s costs.

He noted that the company is trying to manage the impact of the rising fuel prices on its operations.

Twitter says steps in place to protect integrity of PHL election conversations

By Arjay L. Balinbin
Senior Reporter

MICROBLOGGING and social networking service Twitter said on Monday that it has measures in place to protect the integrity of public conversations on the platform during the Philippine elections this year.

The previous presidential and vice-presidential debates hosted by the Commission on Elections generated around 3.5 million tweets, according to Twitter. This illustrates that Filipinos use the

platform to get information about elections, learn about candidates and their agendas, and engage in civic discourse.

Monralee Ampolpittayanant, head of public policy, government and philanthropy for Twitter in Southeast Asia, said during a webinar on Monday that the platform is “committed to facilitating meaningful political debate, driving civic participation and protecting the integrity of the election conversation from interference and manipulation.”

Among the steps adopted by Twitter is labeling misleading

tweets. The objective, according to the company, is to provide additional context and help in reducing the visibility of misleading information.

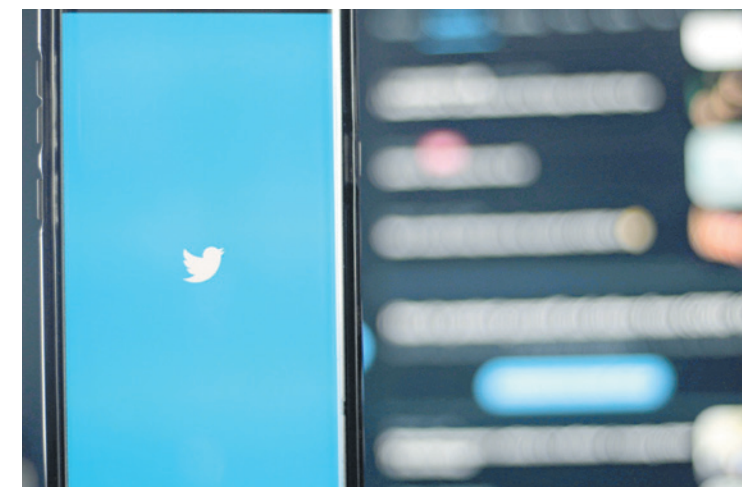
Three policies are critical to ensuring the integrity of election-related conversations on the platform, Twitter noted. These are its policies on civic integrity, platform manipulation and spam, and synthetic and manipulated media.

Twitter said it suspended in January over 300 accounts reportedly promoting presidential candidate Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos, Jr. for violating the

platform manipulation and spam policy.

The company noted that its team examines and responds to violation reports 24/7 in multiple languages, including Filipino.

Twitter also said that it has other features in place to make sure that conversations on its platform are based on credible information. These include election-focused search prompts that make it easier to find credible sources of information, customized emojis for election-related discussions, and the blue verified badge that lets users know if a source is trustworthy.



JOSHUA HOEHNE/UNSPLASH

‘Zero-day’ hacks hit record in 2021 — Google researchers

AFTER a year dominated by high-profile ransomware attacks and supply chain compromises, researchers from Alphabet, Inc.’s Google have identified another ignominious cyber milestone for 2021: a record number of “zero-day” exploits.

A zero-day exploit is a previously unknown bug which leaves software vendors exactly zero days to secure it. That makes the technology in question particularly valuable to hackers — and a nightmare for cybersecurity professionals.

Hackers exploited a total of 58 zero-day flaws impacting major software providers in 2021, according to a report published on Tuesday by Google’s Project Zero, a team of elite bug hunters. That compares to 25 flaws in 2020 and 21 in 2019.

It’s the highest number of zero-days ever recorded by Project Zero since tracking began in 2014. The trend could be due to an improvement in detection from the likes of Microsoft Corp., Apple, Inc. and Google, who now disclose their findings around zero-day issues, rather than a rise in hacks, Maddie Stone, a security researcher at Project zero, said in a blog post about the findings.

In recent years, hackers have used the attack technique to install advanced spyware on smartphones that was then used to spy on journalists, politicians, human rights activists and others. Suspected Chinese state-sponsored hackers, meanwhile, exploited such flaws last year to compromise Microsoft Exchange servers.

Google’s Ms. Stone said there were some surprises among the data. Despite the recent focus on spyware being misused, cybersecurity researchers are still struggling to find zero-days that allow hackers to take control of targets’ phones.

“We know that messaging applications like WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, etc., are targets of interest to attackers and yet there’s only one messaging app, in this case iMessage, zero-day found this past year,” she wrote. The team has uncovered two such flaws before that: one in WhatsApp in 2019 and another in iMessage in 2021.

Ms. Stone said the “majority of people on the planet” don’t have to fear being at risk of being targeted by a zero-day attack. Still, she said such attacks end up having a broad impact.

“These zero-days tend to have an outsized impact on society so we need to continue doing whatever we can to make it harder for attackers to be successful.”

— Bloomberg

Why digital adoption should be the top priority for SMEs

By Soham Chokshi

THE Southeast Asian region has always been a critical cog in the global economic engine. Even amid the global health crisis, the region’s economy has remained resilient and relatively composed, dropping only by 1.5% during the pandemic while the rest of the world dipped by 3.2%. However, unless the current logistical challenges within the region are addressed, this sterling resilience might be short-lived.

The region houses archipelagic countries, which makes building infrastructure for seamless operations of logistics and supply chains complicated. Infrastructural challenges limit logistics players in servicing the entire nation, increasing dependencies on multiple small and medium-sized logistics players. The absence of technological support further exacerbates the problem by elevating human dependencies. This drives up pricing wars and complicates supply chain and logistics management for stakeholders. Furthermore, limited delivery visibility, payment and collection inefficiencies, paper-based processes, poor logistics scalability, etc., continue to plague small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the region.

Digitization can simplify logistics management and bridge these gaps. AI-powered logistics management solutions empower businesses to automate, optimize, and gain end-to-end visibility over logistics operations to tide over the aforementioned challenges. Here’s how digital transformation can help SMEs:

ENSURES DELIVERY SCALABILITY

A smart logistics management solution automates core logistics operations such as task allocation, resource management, 3PL selection, route planning, roster building, capacity management, and others. To ensure peak hour availability, such a platform allows onboarding part-time or freelance drivers by considering historical data, cost, productivity, proximity from the store, and other factors.

EXTENDS DELIVERY VISIBILITY

The term delivery visibility encompasses numerous elements. For a brand, lack of visibility may mean poor visibility into the movement of parcels, opaque financial operations, inaccurate ETAs, and more. Logistics management solutions help businesses extend real-time updates to customers on the delivery progress. It also empowers them to get end-to-end insights into 3PL and their own fleet movement. Moreover, easy 3PL management allows businesses to track multiple logistics players through a single dashboard.

REDUCE LOGISTICS COST

Logistics involves multiple moving parts and stakeholders. Delivery reattempts, manual processes, poor communication, etc., brew an undesired recipe for rising logistics costs. Modern logistics management solutions automate delivery operations, optimize fuel consumption, reduce the distance traveled, minimize manual interventions, optimize capacity utilization, and eliminate empty miles. It also increases first-attempt deliveries by extending delivery visibility to the end-customer through ETAs and live tracking links. Overall, it can save

12% in the mid-mile and 23% in last-mile costs.

For enterprises involved in cross-border trade, having this end-to-end visibility over shipment movement enables stakeholders to reduce incidental costs by 34% as auto alerts notify stakeholders on shipment progress. Furthermore, digitization can save investments in manual processes by automating freight procurement, saving 6% in freight costs. Intelligent modules allow businesses to float RFQs for multiple shipments to several freight forwarders through a single click. References with deviation from market rates, historical data, and intuitive bidding enable enterprises to procure competitive rates every time.

MANAGE DELIVERY KPIS EFFECTIVELY

AI-powered logistics management tools allow delivery managers to effectively benchmark KPIs. The system considers various parameters such as the number of on-time deliveries, time taken to deliver, number of deliveries made within a specified time, driver availability during peak hours, and others. Such tools also allow assessing driver performance based on customer feedback. It triggers notifications to customers to verify non-delivery reasons. Moreover, it also dives deep to check if a driver followed a system-generated planned route or not, to investigate delayed deliveries.

IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

According to a report, 65% of consumers want greater delivery flexibility. Hence, on-time and flexible deliveries can significantly improve customer experience. Dynamic route planners chart out the most time and cost-efficient

route to the customer location to facilitate faster deliveries. It enables customers to change their delivery location and timeslot at their convenience. Extending this flexibility also reduces reattempts and delivery failures due to customer unavailability. It also enables timeslot-based deliveries and pickups, and flexible payment options.

DRIVE SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS OPERATIONS

Technology helps enterprises to capture and record transactional data electronically. This saves paper consumption by digitizing the documentation processes. Research says a majority (57%) of consumers are willing to change their purchasing habits to reduce negative environmental impact. Hence, in the future, consumers are more likely to engage with brands that are conscious of curbing CO₂ emissions. To do this, businesses must focus on reducing the distance traveled, increasing first-attempt success, eliminating empty miles, decreasing trip volumes, planning multi-pickup and drop delivery routes, lowering fuel consumption, and improving resource and capacity utilization. Intelligent logistics management solutions can help them attain all of this.

In the face of today’s changing e-commerce landscape and shifting customer expectations, leveraging a logistics management solution can help address delivery challenges. To compete in this new and ever evolving world, businesses need to adopt the available tools and technology to achieve resilience and flourish.

Soham Chokshi is the Shippy chief executive officer and co-founder.