

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,065.23 ▼ 102.77 PTS. ▼ 1.66%

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P601.00 -P28.00 -4.45%	ACEN AC Energy Corp. P07.32 -P0.06 -0.81%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P49.00 +P0.05 +0.10%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P9.03 -P0.17 -1.85%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P25.65 -P0.85 -3.21%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P28.85 ---	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P116.50 -P3.50 -2.92%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P86.50 -P4.50 -4.95%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P18.70 -P0.60 -3.11%	EMP Emperador, Inc. P19.40 +P0.50 +2.65%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,080.00 -P20.00 -0.95%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P468.00 -P10.00 -2.09%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P180.00 -P6.70 -3.59%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P193.00 -P2.00 -1.03%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P47.90 -P0.40 -0.83%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P8.09 -P0.01 -0.12%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P47.75 -P1.75 -3.54%	MEG Megaworld Corp. P2.17 -P0.08 -3.56%	MER Manila Electric Co. P370.00 -P1.20 -0.32%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P12.80 -P0.60 -4.48%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.54 -P0.06 -1.67%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P30.90 -P0.10 -0.32%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P16.50 +P0.16 +0.98%	SECB Security Bank Corp. P87.85 -P1.15 -1.29%	SM SM Investments Corp. P769.50 +P6.50 +0.85%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P101.80 +P0.80 +0.79%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P35.00 -P0.10 -0.28%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,697.00 -P63.00 -3.58%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P95.00 -P1.50 -1.55%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P23.85 +P0.80 +3.47%

Power users can band together for lower rates in Dec.

ENTITIES within a contiguous area whose electricity demand peaked at a total monthly average of at least 500 kilowatts (kW) for the past year can group together and enjoy lower power rates starting on Dec. 26, 2022, when retail aggregation rules take effect.

Agnes VST Devanadera, chairperson and chief executive officer of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), said in a statement on Thursday that the government's program for retail electricity aggregation is to have its pilot run on June 24.

As of April 2022, contestable customers — or those whose monthly average consumption reached the required threshold — benefited from a lower weighted average power generation rate of P4.05 per kilowatt-hour, which is lower than what residential customers in Metro Manila are set to pay this month. “[W]e hope that the electricity consumers will be more enlightened about the benefits of retail aggregation which ultimately is for the consumers to have the power to choose from among the electricity suppliers that offer better rates and better services,”

Ms. Devanadera said to announce the pilot implementation.

The initial run is a partnership between the University of the Philippines' Diliman campus and the country's largest electricity distributor Manila Electric Co. They are set to sign a memorandum of understanding for the initiative.

Their partnership is the latest development in advancing the rules on retail competition and open access (ROA), which aims to lower power rates as retail electric suppliers (RES) sign up contestable customers by offering competitive rates.

Rates offered by a RES to contestable customers are not subject to government regulation, thus the contracting parties can arrive at agreed terms.

The ERC said a total of 1,897 contestable customers with a total demand of 3,924.53 megawatts are now enjoying lower rates in the retail market.

The rules for retail aggregation seek to establish standardized procedures governing the collective electricity requirements of end users in a so-called competitive retail electricity market (CREM). They also prescribe and

clarify the requirements, conditions, eligibility, qualifications, and disqualifications of participants in the aggregation program.

Ms. Devanadera said the program is “another means of empowering consumers to exercise their freedom of choice.”

Under the aggregation program, two or more electricity end users or all end users within a contiguous area can join together and be treated as a single contestable customer.

The aggregation of end users may be allowed within the geographical boundaries of any of the following: subdivisions, vil-

lages, business districts, special economic zones, condominium buildings, commercial establishments such as malls, and mixed-used development complexes.

It is also applicable to other geographical areas, where similarly situated end users are located, in which the supply of electricity can be measured through metering devices.

Persons or entities engaged in consolidating the power requirements of end users for purchasing and reselling electricity on a group basis are required to secure a RES license. — **Victor V. Saulon**

Bain & Co. opens first physical office in Philippines

GLOBAL management consulting firm Bain & Co. announced the opening of its first physical office in the Philippines as part of its efforts to bring its services closer to clients.

“We have at the moment, about 20 people on the ground, and looking to add more to that. So, that's quite a number of people already. We are here in BGC (Bonifacio Global City),” said Patricia Buenaventura Nichol, Bain & Co. Philippines office head, said in a media briefing in Taguig City on Thursday.

She said that creating a presence in the country will help Bain & Co. improve its relationships with clients.

“Establishing a strong local presence with a senior Filipino leadership team will allow us to further increase the depth of our partnerships with our clients, attract and develop the best lo-

cal talent, and enhance the capabilities in our communities. It is our intent to bring in local, regional, and global experts in key sectors to drive change,” Ms. Nichol said.

She said the firm is looking forward “to collaborating and supporting our business leaders and changemakers.”

The Manila office of Bain & Co. is its fifth location in Southeast Asia. It will operate in combination with its offices in Bangkok, Thailand; Jakarta, Indonesia; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and Singapore.

Bain & Co. Philippines Chairman Jean-Pierre Felenbok said that the expansion was planned some time ago, but was just stifled by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

“We were actually ready to go just before the pandemic hit [but] it was not a good idea to start moving people around

the systems. We're very glad now that this is behind us, and that we can actually bring this plan forward,” Mr. Felenbok said.

Mr. Felenbok said that the Philippines offers great potential for the company, adding that the local team will work with the firm's global network to serve their clients.

He said the network will deploy “top international expertise to serve the increasing number of priority client relationships we have locally.”

“If we really want to give the type of service that we ambition to give to our clients, we need to have a combination of a local team close to the clients and to the community which understands how things work locally but coupled very tightly with our global experts. That is the best model to deliver the results,” he added.

Meanwhile, Bain & Co. Managing Partner for Southeast Asia Wade Cruse said that the Philippines is a significant market in the Southeast Asian region.

“On the back of our double-digit growth, Bain & Co. is excited to establish a physical footprint in the Philippines. The Philippines has emerged as a significant market in Southeast Asia, with high gross domestic product growth rates, a large and growing consumer market, and underpinned by a strong talent pool,” he said.

“Beyond the underlying fundamentals, we have also seen increased investment activity through the COVID-19 pandemic, attracted by the pace of consumer change, increased digitalization, and a dynamic entrepreneurial environment,” he added. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

MerryMart Grocery to launch eco-friendly supermarkets in Laguna, Tarlac

MERRYMART Consumer Corp. has signed a 15-year long-term lease contract with Ayala Land, Inc. to open stand-alone full-sized eco-friendly supermarkets in Nuvali in Sta. Rosa, Laguna and Cresendo in Tarlac.

In a disclosure on Thursday, MerryMart said that supermarkets will be equipped with roof solar panels, LED lighting fixtures, and will use power-efficient equipment with bicycle slots and electric car charging provisions.

A full line of grocery, pharmacy, personal care, and other basic essential products will also be offered.

MerryMart Chairman Edgar J. Sia II said the MerryMart group “is glad to have the opportunity to soon serve and delight consumers around the vast community developments” in the new locations.

The MerryMart groceries in Nuvali and Cresendo will have about 2,261.21 square meters (sq.m.) and 2,076.90 sq.m. of retail space, respectively.

The listed retail company said the full-size design of MerryMart Grocery will be the format for locations in sprawling horizontal communities.

MerryMart is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Injap Investments, Inc., which also owns 35% of DoubleDragon Properties Corp.

At present, its organic branch expansion and acquisitions total 105 branches nationwide.

MerryMart aims to have a total of 1,200 branches nationwide and to generate P120 billion in system-wide recurring consumer sales revenue by 2030.

On Thursday, shares in the company surged by 3.1% or four centavos to close at P1.33 apiece.

Maynilad studies treated used water for drinking

MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. is studying whether used water can be purified to make it potable, it said on Thursday, citing successful projects in Singapore, South Africa, Namibia, and the United States.

“Water is a scarce resource. Given the growing population's increasing demand for water plus the strain on existing sources due to climate change, we should consider using previously untapped sources — including used water — to augment supply. There are now reliable and effective treatment technologies that make it a viable option,” said Maynilad President and Chief Executive Officer Ramoncito S. Fernandez in a media release.

Instead of purifying raw water from rivers, Maynilad is planning to purify some of its treated used water, which is just discharged to rivers by its sewage treatment plants (STPs). The company will be using its new modular treatment plants, or ModTPs, for this purpose.

Roel S. Espiritu, Maynilad's quality, sustainability and resiliency head, said the treated used water discharged by STPs is a more reliable water source than raw river water. It is climate-independent and the quality is controlled and less variable, he added.

“If we use the river directly as source, trash and other pollutants thrown into it by surrounding communities could drastically change the river water's quality. This could affect the volume output of a ModTP, which has to adjust its purifying param-

eters with sudden shifts in the raw water quality,” he said.

Maynilad said it similarly treats raw water from Laguna Lake by using a sewage treatment method for initial purification. The lake water then passes through more treatment processes before conversion to drinking water.

Laguna Lake is the company's alternative raw water source since 2010, allowing it to reduce over-reliance on Angat Dam, to serve customers south of Metro Manila.

Maynilad's ModTPs use treatment technology from Israel, which leads in water innovation, through a multi-stage process that includes pressurized media filtration, ultrafiltration, reverse osmosis, and chlorine disinfection to convert used water to drinking water.

Mr. Fernandez said: “By including used water to our supply source options, we have enhanced capability to generate more water whenever existing supplies run short.”

Maynilad is coordinating with government agencies for the latest initiative.

Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which has a majority stake in Maynilad, is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT, Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has an interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls.

EEl Power builds solar carport system for hospital in Tarlac

LISTED construction firm EEl Corp. said on Thursday that its power unit has energized a 290.16-kilowatt-peak (kWp) solar carport system for a hospital in Tarlac City.

In a disclosure, the company said its power utility arm EEl Power Corp. completed the system for Tarlac Medical Center (TMC) in Fairlane Subdivision, in the city's Brgy. San Vicente.

The solar carport system is made up of 543 pieces of 535-watt-peak monocrystalline photovoltaic solar panels. It is expected to supply as much as 60% of the hospital's daytime load requirement and can generate an annual average energy yield of 333,319 kW-hours.

EEl said through the project, TMC's carbon footprint is expected to be reduced by as much as 130 metric tons per year, which is said to be equivalent to 30 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven in a year, and planting 3,900 trees.

Dr. Benedicto Benin, the hospital's president and chief executive officer, said the proj-

ect “is testament to TMC's support to environmental stewardship by raising awareness on the benefits of clean energy. We believe that using renewable, non-polluting energy sources is a key driver of sustainable development.”

Through its 25-year lifespan, the solar power system is expected to help TMC save up to P73 million in electricity costs. The carport covers a total area of 2,501 square meters and can accommodate 95 vehicles.

EEl claims that the installation “is the biggest of its kind ever installed in a local hospital by far.”

Roberto Jose L. Castillo, EEl Power's president and chief executive, said, “we are fully committed to making our solutions accessible and affordable to all customers while upholding the highest standards and quality to our clients. It is a privilege that we have become a part of this very meaningful undertaking of [TMC].”

Spectrum, Toyota switch on solar rooftop project in Laguna plant

MSPECTRUM, Inc. and Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. (TMP) have energized a 460-kilowatt-peak (kWp) solar rooftop installation at the car manufacturer's plant in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

In a statement on Thursday, solar power firm MSpectrum, also known as Spectrum, said the solar project is an expansion of TMP's 1-megawatt (MW) facility.

Spectrum, a wholly-owned subsidiary of electricity distributor Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), also installed the car maker's existing solar power source in December 2018.

“The expansion project is expected to generate approximately 625,700 kWh (kilowatt-hour) of clean energy per year,

translating to an estimated annual savings in energy costs amounting to P3.5 million,” the solar company said.

It is also seen to result in a reduction of about 446 metric tons of carbon emission, equivalent to more than 45,000 trees planted or 1,775,148 kilometers less in vehicle travel per year.

“I am extremely proud of the work that the TMP Solar Project Team, Meralco, and Spectrum have been doing for several months to complete this expansion project and achieve full operation. For TMP, I am confident to say that Plant Carbon Neutrality by 2035 is possible,” TMP President Atsuhiko Okamoto said.

The new solar facility further speeds up TMP's sustainability journey as it supplements its earlier solar project that has generated about 4,753,561.58 kWh of clean energy since its commercial operations.

Thus far, the company has saved around P31.6 million in energy costs and lessen its carbon footprint by 3,385 metric tons.

“Through stronger collaboration within the Toyota network, we will continue to work hand-in-hand with our stakeholders to achieve Plant Carbon Neutrality and our Toyota Environmental Challenge (TEC) 2050 targets. Our global vision may be ambitious, but we will continue to challenge ourselves to ‘move

our world’ by creating a net positive impact and a more sustainable society for future generations,” Mr. Okamoto said.

Patrick Henry T. Panlilio, Spectrum's chief operations officer, said: “We have been in partnership with Toyota since 2018 and now, we are celebrating a huge milestone with the expansion of their original solar array. With this, the clean energy that TMP will generate will increase by approximately 16% per annum.”

Renewable energy company Spectrum has been providing services and solutions to help its clients cut costs while doing good for the planet.

TMP is the largest automotive company in the country.