

Stock trading via GCash set for 2023

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) together with GCash and brokerage firm AB Capital Securities, Inc. on Tuesday launched a triad partnership that aims to allow stock market trading nationwide through the e-payment firm next year.

"We are targeting a soft launch by November and hopefully if things go well in the soft launch the nationwide launch will be in the beginning next year," PSE President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Monzon said in the partnership launch on Tuesday.

PSE has provided the technology for the trading, GCash will be hosting the trading in its application, and AB Capital will serve as the brokerage for the partnership.

Martha M. Sazon, GCash president and chief executive officer, said that the launch will be just like how the company previously launched its other services.

"The way we launch new services normally, we do beta launch or we do soft launch," she added.

She said that through the soft launch, GCash will identify the room for improvements as it studies how it performed with the beta-testers.

"We show it to the market, we see how they react and we adjust our products and services and then launch nationwide," Ms. Sazon said.

"Hopefully by early next year or by January we'll have our nationwide launch," Ms. Sazon added.

The partnership, which will be called GStocks, aims to democratize financial services for Filipinos.

"Ang tinatarget I guess dito ay 'yong mga hindi pa nag-i-invest sa stock kasi it's a mystery to them, mahirap magbukas ng account sa broker eh, ito ngayon may 'GCash ako subukan ko nga mag-invest sa stocks,'" Mr. Monzon said on the sidelines of the partnership launch.

"The target market of this partnership are GCash subscribers who haven't invested in stocks yet for it is still a mystery to them since it is hard to open an account with a broker but now they can invest by just having a GCash account.

Mr. Monzon said that the PSE is hoping that this endeavor "will really give Filipino[s] access to the capital markets."

"At GCash we pursue a vision of 'finance for all.' We work for a Philippines where everyone has access to financial services," Ms. Sazon said.

"Democratization of financial services is very important to us and we think that this is one step closer to that," she added.

She said that for GCash, democratization comes through affordability and accessibility.

"With this partnership what we are providing is access," Ms. Sazon added.

"We truly believe that this initiative is going to promote inclusive growth," AB Capital Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Antonio Jose U. Periquet said.

He added that the wealth gap between those who have access to financial services and those who have not tends to widen.

"The aggregate growth in assets is not inclusive, so to speak," Mr. Periquet said. "Ownership is not widespread and the growth of aggregate wealth in the nation's companies is not inclusive."

"[This initiative] is going to widen share ownership hopefully beyond what we would've imagined is possible," he added.

Aside from the partnership, the PSE official also talked about the firm's project in the fourth quarter, which is the release of its "data analytics factory" as well as its preparations for the said initiative.

"Our data analytics factory... we will be launching that in the fourth quarter. Tamang tama eh dahil kailangan ng mga GCash subscribers to learn about stocks (The timing is perfect since GCash subscribers need to learn about stocks)," Mr. Monzon said on the sidelines. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

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DTI chief seeks investors to establish franchises

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry (DTI) is expecting more franchises in the Philippines on the back of surging demand for popular brands and establishments.

"Investors are encouraged to set up franchises in the Philippines because of its healthy business climate. The Philippines is the 7th largest franchise market in the world, contributing 7.8% to our country's gross domestic product (GDP) and creating two million direct and indirect jobs," Trade Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual said in a speech during the Franchise Asia Philippines 2022 virtual conference on Tuesday.

"With a growing middle class, our country is considered one of the largest franchise markets in the Southeast Asian region. Eating at a popular establishment or owning branded items signals societal status in one of Asia's most social media savvy populations," he added.

According to Mr. Pascual, the food service sector accounts for almost half of the franchise categories in the country.

"Of the two basic franchise categories, food expectedly takes precedence over non-food. Food makes up almost half (43%) of the estimated 1,800 franchise brands in the Philippines. According to Philippine Franchise Association data, food franchises have an aggregate value of P538 billion or \$10.8 billion," Mr. Pascual said.

He added that aspiring entrepreneurs should start a business via franchising since it has a higher success rate.

"Unlike starting a business on your own, franchisees build on tried-and-tested business models. A team of experts guides franchise owners to achieve management and operational efficiencies, as well as excellent quality control systems," Mr. Pascual said.

"Market-wise, franchisees have an advantage in terms of brand recognition. Name recall makes franchise brands popular, making sales easier. Building up new brands requires substantial expenditures to generate brand awareness, and new brands also need to develop a steady clientele," he added.

Meanwhile, Mr. Pascual said that the DTI has been providing financial assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) since many franchisees come from the said sector.

"Through SB Corp., the DTI has been extending financial assistance to MSMEs to provide them access to capital. We assist them in their debt obligation payment, repurposing existing business capital, and acquiring new technologies and systems. We help them adjust their business processes to adapt to the new normal," Mr. Pascual said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Denso's P60-million hydroponic farm seen to boost food security

DENSO PHILIPPINES Corp. recently launched a P60-million hydroponic farm in Ibaan, Batangas in a bid to support the development of the country's agriculture sector.

The project, introduced on Aug. 25, involves the commercial production of high-value crops such as microgreens, kale, arugula, herbs, and melons with the use of hydroponics.

Earlier, the Board of Investments (BoI) approved the registration application of Denso Philippines for the hydroponic farm project under the 2022 Strategic Investment Priority Plan.

The target markets of the hydroponic farm include hotels, restaurants, online market, culinary schools, and other food-related businesses in central business district areas across the Philippines.

"The farm involves the commercial production of vegetables using hydroponic growing technology with plans to use IoT (Internet of Things) for nutrient dosing and monitoring through sensors," the BoI said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Hydroponics is a soil-less farming system that includes the

process of growing plants with the use of mineral nutrient solution through an inert medium such as perlite, gravel, mineral wool, expanded clay, or coconut husk. Through hydroponics, water remains in the system and is reused, which, in turn, can decrease carbon footprint," it added.

According to the BoI, the hydroponic project was endorsed by the Department of Agriculture (DA), and is seen to help achieve food security in urban areas across the country.

"Through hydroponics, water remains in the system and is reused, which, in turn, can decrease carbon footprint. In 2027, the global hydroponics market is projected to reach \$13.4 billion," the BoI said, adding that a 19.2% compound annual growth rate is forecast from 2021 to 2027.

"Denso's high-value crops will be essential in supporting urban areas in the Philippines, as well as address the low local self-sufficiency of highland vegetables (22%) and the DA-forecasted deficit of 51,116 metric tons in Calabarzon, where the project will be located," it added. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

ACEN solar farm in Australia set to start operating next year

ACEN CORP. announced on Tuesday that its New England solar farm project in Australia is expected to commence operation by 2023, making it the Ayala-led firm's first running project in that country.

In a disclosure, the Ayala-led listed energy company said that the projects of ACEN Australia are currently under development. These include solar, wind, battery, pumped hydro and energy storage.

ACEN Australia is the platform representing ACEN's renewable energy assets in Australia.

"The New England Solar farm, the first of these projects, is expected to be in operation by 2023," ACEN said.

Once fully constructed, the solar farm project is said to produce enough energy to power approximately 250,000 households annually.


On its website, ACEN said that the project is a combined

720-megawatt (MW) solar and 400-MW-hour battery.

In the company's disclosure on Sept. 15, ACEN said that as a guarantor to ACEN Australia, it executed a common provision and a facility agreement between ACEN Australia and MUFG Bank, Ltd. in Sydney for a long-term revolving green loan facility amounting to 140 million Australian dollars.

The disclosure quoted Manoj S. Bhatia, MUFG Bank's global head of subsidiary banking, as saying: "MUFG has been steadfast in leveraging its unrivaled global network and its expertise in financing the renewable energy sector. ACEN's aspiration towards becoming a leading renewable energy provider in Asia is aligned with MUFG's sustainability mission."

On Tuesday, shares in the company closed 0.45% lower at P6.67 apiece. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**



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Vice Mayor	HON. MONIQUE YAZMIN MARIA Q. LAGDAMEO – Vacation Leave
Councilor	HON. RENE ANDREI Q. SAGUISAG, JR. – Vacation Leave

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Secretary to the Sanggunian	ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES
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Upon motion of Hon. C.C. Ortega, duly seconded, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati, by a unanimous vote, approved City Ordinance No. 2022-A-076 on third and final reading.

CITY ORDINANCE NO. 2022-A-076

Authors: Hon. A.P. Padilla, Hon. R.A.Q. Saguisag, Jr., Hon. D.B. Almario, Hon. B.B. Baniqued, Hon. V.V. Hilario, Jr., Hon. M.F. Vitales, Hon. R.C. San Pedro, Jr., Hon. J.M. Ariones, Hon. A.J. Cruz and Hon. C.C. Ortega

Co-Authors: Hon. M.D.M. Arayon, Hon. M.J.P.Q. Arenas, Hon. L.S. Javier, Jr., Hon. E.M. Marquez, Hon. K.T. Sarosa, Hon. J.C. Villena, IV and Hon. A.A.M. Yabut

AN ORDINANCE DECLARING THE BARANGAY DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM (BDIP) FOR C.Y. 2023-2025 OF BARANGAY BANGKAL TO BE IN CONFORMITY WITH EXISTING LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS.

WHEREAS, R.A. No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, provides that the barangay development council shall prepare the barangay development plans based on local requirements;

WHEREAS, Section 114 (a) of the same Code states that the policies, programs, and projects proposed by local development councils shall be submitted to the sanggunian concerned for appropriate action;

WHEREAS, the pertinent provisions of the abovementioned law likewise imply that the that the Sangguniang Panlungsod shall have the power to review/approve the public investment programs of the component barangays;

WHEREAS, the Sangguniang Barangay of Bangkal, by virtue of Barangay Resolution No. MVM-366-061322, approved its Barangay Development Investment Program (BDIP) for C.Y. 2023-2025, a copy of such barangay resolution, including its supporting documents, is hereto attached and made an integral part hereof as **Annex "A"**;

WHEREAS, the Honorable Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati extensively reviewed the subject BDIP;

WHEREAS, after careful perusal of available documents, it was ruled upon by the Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Makati that the proposed BDIP for C.Y. 2023-2025 of Barangay Bangkal is compliant with the minimum requirements as prescribed by existing laws, rules and regulations; hence, this Ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED, AS IT IS HEREBY ENACTED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA, BY VIRTUE OF THE POWERS VESTED IN IT BY LAW, IN SESSION ASSEMBLED, that:

Section 1. The BDIP for C.Y. 2023-2025 of Barangay Bangkal is hereby declared to be in conformity with existing laws, rules and regulations.

Section 2. The *Endorsement* dated 10 August 2022 by the Barangay Budget Review Committee (BBRC), which attests that the BDIP for C.Y. 2023-2025 of Barangay Bangkal substantially complies with the requirements of such Committee, is hereby adopted *in toto*, a copy of the said *Endorsement* is hereto attached and made an integral part hereof as **Annex "B"**;

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby deemed separable. If any provision hereof should be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

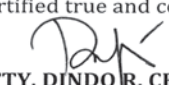
Section 4. All ordinances, resolutions and executive orders which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 5. Let copies of this Ordinance be furnished to the Office of the Mayor, Office of the City Administrator, Law Department, Budget Department, Accounting Department, Urban Development Department, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)-Makati City, Liga ng mga Barangay, Sangguniang Barangay of Bangkal and other departments, offices, and agencies concerned for their information, guidance and reference.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its approval.


ENACTED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF MAKATI, METRO MANILA, in its Regular Session held on 14 September 2022.

Certified true and correct by:



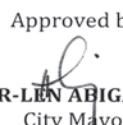
ATTY. DINDO R. CERVANTES
Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlungsod

Attested by:



HON. VIRGILIO V. HILARIO, JR.
Temporary Presiding Officer
Member, Sangguniang Panlungsod

Approved by:



HON. MAR-LEN ABIGAIL S. BINAY
City Mayor