

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) 6,121.53 ▲ 48.12 PTS. ▲ 0.79%

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2022 BusinessWorld

PSEI MEMBER STOCKS

Table listing PSEI member stocks including AC (Ayala Corp.), ACEN (ACEN Corp.), AEV (Aboltiz Equity Ventures, Inc.), AGI (Alliance Global Group, Inc.), ALI (Ayala Land, Inc.), AP (Aboltiz Power Corp.), BDO (BDO Unibank, Inc.), BPI (Bank of the Philippine Islands), CNVRG (Converge ICT Solutions, Inc.), EMI (Emperador, Inc.), GLO (Globe Telecom, Inc.), GTCAP (GT Capital Holdings, Inc.), ICT (International Container Terminal Services, Inc.), JFC (Jollibee Foods Corp.), JGS (JG Summit Holdings, Inc.), LTG (LT Group, Inc.), MBT (Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.), MEG (Megaworld Corp.), MER (Manila Electric Co.), MONDE (Monde Nissin Corp.), MPI (Metro Pacific Investments Corp.), PGOLD (Puregold Price Club, Inc.), RLC (Robinsons Land Corp.), SCC (Semirara Mining and Power Corp.), SM (SM Investments Corp.), SMC (San Miguel Corp.), SMPH (SM Prime Holdings, Inc.), TEL (PLDT, Inc.), URC (Universal Robina Corp.), and WLCON (Wilcon Depot, Inc.).

POGO exit's impact on office vacancy 'not sizable'

THE exit of Philippine offshore gaming operators (POGOs) will contribute to the rise of vacancy rates, especially in offices outside economic zones, but not in a sizable amount, Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) said.

"We might see some further elevation of vacancy in the market... Definitely the non-PEZA (Philippine Economic Zone Authority) vacancy will continue to rise, but I don't think it's going to be significant as much as what others are saying," JLL Philippines Head of Research and

Consultancy Janlo de los Reyes told reporters after a briefing on Wednesday.

"I think the impact will be there, but not as sizable. The reason being is that we have already seen the exit of different POGOs over the past two to three years," he said.

According to Mr. De los Reyes, what remains of the POGOs are around 34 operators as of Oct. 6.

"So definitely there might be some impact still but not as sizable as I would like to think," he added.

Mr. De los Reyes said POGOs could contribute to the property market if they remain, but this carries some risks for developers.

"There is merit in terms of them staying. I believe that they are there to support the office market," he said. "And definitely there are risks attached to it also."

"We've seen that risk in terms of property developers now or buildings that have been fully vacated but I think that is the risk some developers are will-

ing to face again or willing to take again," Mr. De los Reyes said.

In the third quarter, office vacancies were still at an elevated level of 17.3% but lower than the 17.5% vacancy in the same period last year.

Meanwhile, quarter on quarter, office vacancy also went down by 45.9 basis points from 17.8% by the end of June.

Mr. De los Reyes said that if POGOs will be allowed to remain in the country, the move "will pull down vacancy levels in the future." — Justine Irish D. Tabile

Robinsons Land, Meralco tie up for green initiatives

PROPERTY developer Robinsons Land Corp. (RLC) and Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) have committed to reducing carbon emissions by partnering in putting up charging stations for electric vehicles (EVs).

"Our partnership with Meralco allows us to strengthen our commitment to our sustainability strategy and introduce innovations that will have a lasting impact for our stakeholders including our customers," RLC Executive Vice-President Faraday D. Go said during the launching event on Wednesday.

RLC launched its first EV charging hub at Robinsons Galleria which was supplied and installed by Meralco subsidiary eSakay, Inc.

The charging hub installed by the EV solutions provider can cater to various EVs including cars, bikes, scooters, and trikes at zero cost.

Three vehicles at a time may occupy the charging hub with one port allotted for four-wheeled EVs and two ports allotted for two- and three-wheeled EVs.

RLC and Meralco are set to open two more EV charging stations before the year ends at Robinsons Magnolia and Robinsons Tagaytay, with the Tagaytay hub as the first mall EV charging station outside Metro Manila.

"They are being built right now. Magnolia should be [up] in a couple of weeks and then Tagaytay will follow soon after," Mr. Go said on the sidelines of the event.

For the port to work, customers will need to put in a peso coin to start it up, which will be good for 30 minutes of charging.

As part of its green initiatives, RLC has invested P1.6 billion in installing solar photovoltaic technology across its malls through the solar subsidiary of Meralco, MSpectrum, Inc. or Spectrum.

"Today we have 24 malls all across the country with solar power installations and we continue to do more," RLC Senior Vice-President and General Manager Arlene G. Magtibay said.

At present, RLC has 24 malls in its portfolio that are solar powered and with five malls having Spectrum as the handler of operations and maintenance.

These malls are Robinsons Novaliches, Robinsons Angeles, Robinsons Cybergate Bacolod, Robinsons Galleria Cebu, and Robinsons Palawan Expansion.

"Solar power is both clean and renewable and we have successfully reduced our carbon footprint by going through this route," Ms. Magtibay said.

RLC is among the country's largest property developers. Its business segments include residences, hotels and resorts, commercial centers, industrial and integrated developments, and office buildings.

In a press release, Meralco is said to have been proactively supporting RLC such as through contract rightsizing that allowed the property developer to save as much as P2.1 million in energy costs since November last year. — Justine Irish D. Tabile

PLDT adds more subsea cable in Palawan

PLDT, Inc. said on Wednesday that it is adding more than 500 kilometers of submarine fiber cable links in Palawan.

This will boost the company's "efforts to bridge the digital divide by making its services more accessible and fostering digital inclusion, particularly for underserved communities," PLDT said in an e-mailed statement.

The project is seen to deliver "fast and reliable" fiber-powered services to both residential and enterprise customers in the province, especially in El Nido.

"This will also allow Smart Communications, Inc. to level up its mobile services, particularly for LTE and 5G, in the area," PLDT added.

A cable landing ceremony was held recently at Sibaltan village in El Nido, Palawan.

"The latest cable landing at Sibaltan connects El Nido to Salvacion in Roxas, Palawan. This is the latest of recently laid cable links in the province," PLDT said.

According to the company, the other segments connect New Agutaya in San Vicente to Napsan in Puerto Princesa and Tenequiban in El Nido.

"This continuous expansion of PLDT's nationwide fiber infrastructure also includes recent submarine cable landings in Bantayan and Camotes Islands in the Visayas and in Siargao, Socorro, Dinagat, and Dimpolog in Mindanao earlier this year," the company said.

"With reinforced fiber links in El Nido and the rest of Palawan, we are able to boost the province's tourism programs as travel returns and the economy reopens in the post-pandemic next normal," it added.

The company's fiber infrastructure was at 837,900 kilometers as of end-June 2022. The infrastructure supports PLDT's wireless arm Smart's network, which provides 3G, 4G/LTE and 5G to customers from Batanes to Tawi-Tawi.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has a majority stake in BusinessWorld through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — Arjay L. Balinbin

Meralco targets its fleet to be 25% EVs by 2030

MANILA Electric Co. (Meralco) is targeting to transition at least 25% of its fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) by the end of 2030 to comply with the government's mandate.

"[Our goal] before the end of this decade is at least 25%, by the end of 2030, at least 25% of our fleet," Meralco First Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer Raymond B. Ravelo said on the sidelines of the launch of an EV charging station in Robinsons Galleria.

To make this happen, Meralco has partnered with car companies through its end-to-end EV solutions subsidiary, eSakay, Inc.

"eSakay is an integrator. So as an integrator, we work with suppliers of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure. Basically, we work closely with all of them," Mr. Ravelo said.

According to the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act (EVIDA), the government and private companies are required to meet a 5% quota on their vehicle fleets.

In addition to this, buildings constructed from the passage of the law must dedicate 5% of their parking slots to EVs with installed charging stations in parking lots and gasoline stations.

EVIDA also requires the creation of green routes in cities and municipalities and has pushed forward fiscal

and non-fiscal incentives for EV manufacturing, importation of charging stations, and the use of EVs.

According to Mr. Ravelo, the law could mandate higher requirements to push the government's sustainability initiative forward.

"For me, I hope it was [as high as] possible. But obviously, it has to also work not only economically [through securing the affordability of the] vehicles, but at the same time operationally," Mr. Ravelo said.

"We need to understand the operational requirements of different institutions and if it fits their operations which I think it will, then they can deploy more [EVs]," he added.

At present, the company has reached its 2022 target of 7% to 8% of its fleet transitioning to EVs.

Power distributor Meralco has subsidiaries in engineering and consulting, construction, bills payment, and other electricity-related services.

Its controlling stakeholder, Beacon Electric Asset Holdings, Inc., is partly owned by 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. — Justine Irish D. Tabile

PXP Q3 loss narrows on Galoc profit

PXP Energy Corp. reported a net loss of P18.88 million in the third quarter, significantly lower than the P1.66-billion loss recorded in the same period last year, due to higher profit from its Galoc oil field operations and reduction of administrative expenses.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange on Wednesday, PXP said that from January to September, it managed to reduce its consolidated net loss attributable to parent firm equity holders to P25.29 million from P1.68 billion a year ago after the impairment of its Peru Block Z-38 in 2021.

The upstream oil and gas company's Galoc operations are covered by Service Contract (SC) 14C-1 located in the offshore northwest Palawan basin.

In the third quarter, PXP's petroleum revenues went down by 81.8% to P4.17 million from P22.97 million in the same period last year.

Still, its nine-month revenues went up by 15.7% to P49.28 million from P42.59 million, which the company attributed to a higher average crude price at \$97.13 per barrel in 2022 from \$66.97 per barrel in 2021.

In the third quarter, PXP recorded a 55.8% reduction in consolidated costs and expenses to P18.35 million from P41.56 million in the same period last year.

From January to September, PXP's consolidated costs and expenses declined 31.7% to P65.62 million from P95.99 million last year.

Last week, PXP said that the Department of Energy granted the declaration of force majeure for two service contracts — SC 75 and SC 72 — separately operated by the company and its subsidiary in northwest Palawan.

PXP holds a 50% interest in SC 75 located in northwest Palawan. Its subsidiary Forum Energy Ltd., in which PXP holds a direct and indirect interest of 79.13%, has a 70% participating interest in SC 72, also in northwest Palawan, through its wholly owned subsidiary Forum (GSEC 101).

On Wednesday, PXP shares closed 1.23% higher to finish at P5.75 apiece. — Ashley Erika O. Jose

Manulife

Table showing Single Pricing Investment Funds of Variable Life Insurance Contracts with columns for Fund, Current Week, October 25, 2022, Previous Week, and October 18, 2022. Funds listed include Pese Secure Fund, Pese Diversified Value Fund, Pese Growth Fund, etc.

Manulife

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