

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,442.13 ▼ 47.52 PTS. ▼ 0.73%

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022

BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P676.00 -P18.00 -2.59%	ACEN ACEN Corp. P7.63 +P0.27 +3.67%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P54.30 -P0.80 -1.45%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P9.95 —	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P29.30 +P0.30 +1.03%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P33.70 +P0.15 +0.45%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P127.00 -P1.20 -0.94%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P98.00 -P1.00 -1.01%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P15.94 +P0.64 +4.18%	EMI Emperador, Inc. P20.15 -P0.25 -1.23%
GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,190.00 -P90.00 -3.95%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P443.00 +P5.00 +1.14%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P184.30 -P9.20 -4.75%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P236.40 -P0.60 -0.25%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P43.75 -P1.30 -2.89%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P8.90 -P0.01 -0.11%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P53.80 -P0.20 -0.37%	MEG Megaworld Corp. P2.28 +P0.04 +1.79%	MER Manila Electric Co. P281.20 -P3.80 -1.33%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P12.00 +P0.10 +0.84%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P3.51 +P0.02 +0.57%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P32.90 -P0.10 -0.30%	RLC Robinsons Land Corp. P16.50 +P0.50 +3.13%	SCC Semirara Mining and Power Corp. P32.20 -P0.65 -1.98%	SM SM Investments Corp. P894.00 -P7.50 -0.83%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P95.00 —	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P34.00 -P0.05 -0.15%	TEL PLDT, Inc. P1,602.00 -P18.00 -1.11%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P132.50 +P1.80 +1.38%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P31.40 +P1.30 +4.32%

Semirara sees steady coal output on strong demand

SEMIRARA Mining and Power Corp. (SMPC) is targeting to produce 14.5 million metric tons (MMT) of coal in 2023 as it expects steady demand for the commodity.

The Consunji-led firm said in a statement on Monday that its coal production reached 13.7 MMT in January to September, already close to its goal of 14.5 MMT to 15 MMT in output this year.

"We expect stable demand for coal and electricity next year so we're continually investing in

our production and generation capacities," SMPC President and Chief Operating Officer Maria Cristina C. Gotianun said in a statement.

For 2023, SMPC has set aside P5.6 billion for its capital expenditure (capex) projects, up by 8% compared to P5.2 billion in 2022.

The energy firm said P4.1 billion will be allocated for the mining equipment reflecting of its coal business, while P1.5 billion will be spent on maintenance activities plans for Sem-Calaca

Power Corp. (SCPC) and Southwest Luzon Power Generation Corp. (SLPGC).

SMPC has spent P3.6 billion of its 2022 capex as of end-September. Of this, P2.2 billion was allotted for the acquisition of mining and support equipment while P1.4 billion went to the repair and replacement of plant components of SCPC and SLPGC.

The listed integrated energy firm posted a net income of P10.15 billion in the third quarter, almost three times higher the P4.01 bil-

lion recorded a year ago on high coal production and electricity prices.

Its revenues rose by 51.1% to P21.16 billion from the P14 billion recorded in the same period last year. Of its revenues, coal accounted for the biggest share at P15.04 billion or 71%, with power contributing P6.12 billion or 28.9%.

On Monday, shares of SMPC at the stock exchange closed 1.98% or 65 centavos lower to end at P32.20 per share. — **AEOJ**



SEMIRARAMINING.COM

D&L Industries to start plant operations by mid-2023

D&L INDUSTRIES, Inc. has moved the start of commercial operations of its Batangas plant to mid-2023 from early 2023 due to delayed permits and shipments.

"As mentioned during our third-quarter briefing, while the plant is substantially complete, some steps in the final stages are currently taking longer than expected," D&L President and Chief Executive Officer Alvin D. Lao said in a disclosure.

The company said there were delays in processing permits and certifications, as well as in the arrival of shipments from overseas suppliers affected by the global chain supply disruptions.

"While Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) has granted an extension until the end of 2023, providing allowances in case of a force majeure, D&L's management is committed to start commercial operations by mid-2023," the company said.

Mr. Lao said the delay will not have any material impact on the company's current operations as its current capacity is still enough to cover its requirements in the near term.

The plant will sit on a 26-hectare property in First Industrial Township - Special Economic Zone in Batangas. The plant will be part of the first

phase of the company's expansion which will cover 16 hectares of the PEZA area.

As of end-October, the company spent has around P8.6 billion for the project, which leaves it with around P1.6 billion in capital expenditure budget until early next year.

Once completed, the plant is seen to help the company develop more high value-added coconut-based products and penetrate new international markets.

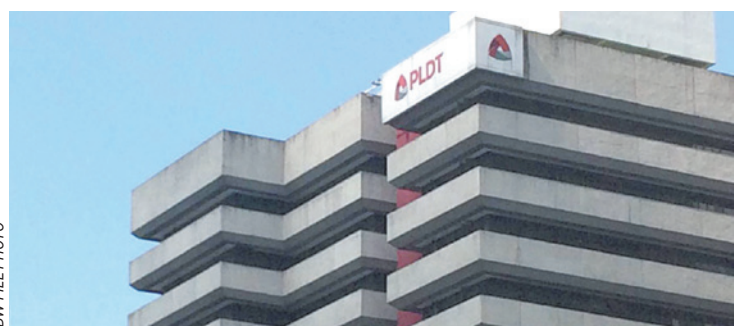
"It will mainly cater to D&L's growing export business in the food and oleochemicals segment. It will add the capability to manufacture down-

stream packaging, thus allowing the company to capture a bigger part of the production chain," D&L Industries said.

In the nine-month period, the company posted a record-high income of P2.54 billion, up by 17.4% from P2.16 billion in 2021.

Its topline during the period rose by 57.5% to P33.9 billion from P21.53 billion revenues a year ago.

D&L Industries engages in product customization and specialization for food, chemicals, plastics and consumer products original design manufacturer industries. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**



BW FILE PHOTO

PLDT looking to ramp up Mindanao network rollout

THE PLDT group announced on Monday that it is looking to further ramp up its network rollout in the southern regions of the Philippines.

The group intends to add around 6,000 fiber ports in Davao de Oro, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Occidental, Davao Oriental, and Davao City, as well as Smart wireless sites before the end of the year, PLDT said in an e-mailed statement.

PLDT's fiber network has reached 17,000 villages as of end-September.

"This accounts for roughly 40% of all barangays (villages) in the Philippines," the telecommunications company said.

According to PLDT, its wireless arm Smart Communications, Inc. recently beefed up its network in Northern Mindanao.

There were "additional sites and base stations in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, and additional LTE (long-term evolution) base stations in the provinces of Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, and Lanao del Norte," it noted.

The group aims to upgrade its services across the country amid digitalization efforts from both the private sector and the government.

The Philippines ranked 55th out of 117 countries in the Digital Quality of Life Index 2022 by virtual private network service provider Surfshark from 48th last year. In Asia, the Philippines placed 14th out of 34 countries.

It performed the worst in internet affordability, ranking 98th globally, down 26 places from 72nd a year prior.

"Internet in the Philippines is not affordable compared to global standards," Surfshark said.

The country placed 60th in terms of time needed to work to afford the cheapest mobile internet, up 44 places from 104th the prior year.

The report said that a 1-gigabyte (GB) mobile internet package costs 4 minutes and 51 seconds of work per month in the Philippines, 59 times more than the 5 seconds of work needed to buy a 1-GB package in Israel, which has the most affordable mobile internet in the world, based on the index.

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**

ALLTV set to expand reach in 2023

VILLAR-LED Advanced Media Broadcasting System Inc. or ALLTV is set to expand its reach nationwide in the first quarter next year.

"Pinapalawak ko pa yung reach bago ako magbuild up ng content [at] ng mga artista (We are still widening our reach before we build up our content and artists)," ALLTV Owner Manny B. Villar, Jr. told reporters recently.

"We do not own the facilities, sa Channel 2 'yon (those are Channel 2's). So, I have to build my own," he added.

To expand its reach, Mr. Villar said the company is planning to buy a combination of new and used equipment. At present, the network is accessible to a few areas of Metro Manila.

"We want to expand it nationwide, otherwise huwag na lang," Mr. Villar said.

Once they reach their target, Mr. Villar said it will start hiring more artists. ALLTV will also be setting up its own newsroom besides the partnership it recently inked with CNN.

Meanwhile, Mr. Villar said they will keep the mix of analog and digital television despite saying that analog is about to be phased out.

"Ang analog pa-phase out na yan, five to ten years na lang... Pero sa gayon if you go digital lang walang masyadong makakapanood sayo, kailangan mo pa rin ng analog (Analog is about to be phased out in five to ten years. But right now, if you only go digital, there's not so many who can watch the channel. So, we still need analog)," Mr. Villar said.

In terms of content, Mr. Villar said that they plan to show Korean dramas and old local movies.

ALLTV is under Prime Assets Ventures, Inc. led by businessman Manuel Paolo A. Villar and is the Villar group's official entry into the broadcasting industry.

ALLTV is available on channel 2 on free-to-air TV and Planet Cable, channel 16 on digital, channel 35 on Signal TV and Sky Cable, and broadcasted on local cable stations around the country. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Productivity gains seen at ICTSI PNG port with new equipment

PORTS OPERATOR International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI) announced on Monday that it is boosting its capacity in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to increase efficiency.

ICTSI's unit, South Pacific International Container Terminal (SPIC) at Papua New Guinea's Port of Lae, recently received a pair of new ship-to-shore cranes from Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industry Co. Ltd.

The Port of Lae, Papua New Guinea's largest container port, is now "capable of handling larger box ships," ICTSI said in a statement.

The new Post-Panamax cranes are the largest port equipment in the country today, it added.

The cranes can "service vessels of up to 6,000 twenty-foot equivalent units and is part of ICTSI's ongoing program to strengthen and enhance the overall operational efficiency" of the port, according to the company.

ICTSI South Pacific Chief Executive Officer Robert Maxwell expects the new cranes to contribute to SPIC's "market leader positioning" in the national and international logistics chain.

"With improved productivity, the Port of Lae will soon become an important transshipment hub for the Pacific islands region," he said.

ICTSI also noted that shipping lines can expect quayside productivity gains and shorter port stays.

"The terminal will soon be able to facilitate direct calls by larger vessels operating in the major trade routes, which in turn would reduce costs for both importers and exporters in the region," it said.

ICTSI is involved in 34 terminal concessions and port development projects in 20 countries worldwide. It has nine terminal operations in the Philippines, including an inland container terminal, a barge terminal, and combined terminal operations in Subic.

For the nine months ended September, the company saw its net income attributable to equity holders increase by 47% to \$465.1 million from \$316.4 million previously.

Revenues from port operations climbed 20.1% to \$1.64 billion from \$1.37 billion last year. — **Arjay L. Balinbin**

Shareholders OK merger of two iPeople schools

AYALA AND YUCHENGCO education holding firm iPeople, Inc. said the stockholders of its two schools have approved a merger, which will result in an institution with over 24,000 students.

iPeople said in a disclosure on Monday that the merger between Affordable Private Education Center Schools (APEC) and The National Teachers College (NTC) will have the latter as the surviving entity.

"The planned merger will allow us to better achieve our goal of transforming lives through innovative education and at affordable prices," NTC and APEC Chairman Alfredo Antonio I. Ayala said in a statement.

Mr. Ayala said students from both institutions will benefit from the merger that will combine NTC's track record with APEC's teaching methods.

Pamela Q. Wu, executive vice-president of NTC said: "We will gain a lot from APEC's modern approach, including its specialization in highly engaging blended learning."

"The planned merger will be a big plus for our students who will now have a clear pathway to college with one of the leading higher education institutions in the University Belt," APEC Chief Executive Officer Joie Lopez said.

"The planned merger is still subject to the filing of the relevant applications and obtaining the requisite regulatory approvals," the company said.

These requirements include endorsement from the Commission on Higher Education and Department of Education and the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

NTC was established in 1928 and was the first to offer collegiate programs dedicated to teacher education.

In the school year 2022-2023, NTC recorded a 24% growth in new enrollments from 2019 or before the pandemic.

Meanwhile, APEC was established in 2013 with the aim of affordable private education to high school students. It has 17 campuses in the National Capital Region, Rizal, Cavite and Batangas.

APEC achieved a 67% growth in new enrollees in school year 2022-2023 from its showing last year.

iPeople is an education group with around 60,000 students among its seven schools. It is under Ayala Corp. and House of Investments of the Yuchengco Group of Companies, which hold 33.5% and 51% stakes, respectively. — **J.I.D. Tabile**