Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) 6,566.39 ▼0.15 PTS. ▼0.002%

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PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC	Ayala Corp.	P695.00	-P12.00	-1.70%
ACEN	ACEN Corp.	P7.62	-P0.02	-0.26%
AEV	Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc.	P57.70	-P0.05	-0.09%
AGI	Alliance Global Group, Inc.	P11.90	+P0.20	+1.71%
ALI	Ayala Land, Inc.	P30.80	+P0.75	+2.50%
AP	Aboitiz Power Corp.	P34.05	+P0.05	+0.15%
BDO	BDO Unibank, Inc.	P105.70	-P0.20	-0.19%
BPI	Bank of the Philippine Islands	P102.00	+P3.00	+3.03%
CNVRG	Converge ICT Solutions, Inc.	P15.88	+P0.22	+1.40%
EMI	Emperador, Inc.	P20.60	-P0.05	-0.24%
GLO	Globe Telecom, Inc.	P2,180.00	-P56.00	-2.50%
GTCAP	GT Capital Holdings, Inc.	P435.00	-P6.60	-1.49%
ICT	International Container Terminal Services, Inc.	P200.00	+P2.00	+1.01%
JFC	Jollibee Foods Corp.	P230.00	——	
JGS	JG Summit Holdings, Inc.	P50.30	-P1.70	-3.27%
LTG	LT Group, Inc.	P9.20	+P0.09	+0.99%
MBT	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	P54.00	-P0.80	-1.46%
MEG	Megaworld Corp.	P2.00	-P0.10	-4.76%
MER	Manila Electric Co.	P298.80	+P4.00	+1.36%
MONDE	Monde Nissin Corp.	P11.08	-P0.24	-2.12%
MPI	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	P3.42	-P0.08	-2.29%
PGOLD	Puregold Price Club, Inc.	P34.90	-P0.05	-0.14%
RLC	Robinsons Land Corp.	P14.96	-P0.04	-0.27%
SCC	Semirara Mining and Power Corp.	P34.50	-P0.25	-0.72%
SM	SM Investments Corp.	P900.00	-P10.00	-1.10%
SMC	San Miguel Corp.	P92.95	-P1.05	-1.12%
SMPH	SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	P35.50	+P0.60	+1.72%
TEL	PLDT, Inc.	P1,317.00	+P4.00	+0.30%
URC	Universal Robina Corp.	P136.00	-P0.50	-0.37%
WLCON	Wilcon Depot, Inc.	P29.50	+P0.50	+1.72%

PSE projects market rebound after decline in 2022

BOURSE operator Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc. (PSE) expects local shares to bounce back in 2023 as it banks on the further reopening of the economy after 2022 saw the main index drop by 7.8%.

"We are optimistic that the stock market can bounce back next year as the global economy continues to open up and corporate earnings return to pre-pandemic growth levels," PSE President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Monzon said in a press release on Thursday, the last trading day of the year.

Mr. Monzon said that despite challenges such as geopolitical tensions, higher inflation and increasing interest rates, he still expects the bourse to be resilient until yearend.

"The Philippines has shown its resiliency through better-than-expected gross domestic product (GDP) growth during the previous quarter, which we hope will carry over for the fourth quarter and in 2023," Mr. Monzon said.

In the third quarter, the Philippine economy expanded by 7.6% or higher than predicted. The growth was better than the revised 7.5% posted in the second quarter and 7% a year earlier. GDP growth averaged 7.7% for January to September.

Meanwhile, PSE recorded a 52.96% decline in raised capital from primary and secondary shares to P110.29 billion from P234.48 billion in the previous year.

Despite this, it remained optimistic after it recorded nine initial public offerings (IPO) in 2022, marking the greatest number of maiden offerings since 2007 or 15 years ago.

The local bourse operator also conducted other capital-raising activities during the year, including a listing by way of introduction, five stock rights offerings and 12 private placements.

"We still consider 2022 a banner year in terms of the number of IPOs, and we look forward to continuing the listing momentum in 2023," said Mr. Monzon.

"We see the equities market becoming a more attractive option for capital raising given the rise in interest rates and as valuations gradually recover," he added.

In 2022, the PSE saw the listing of three new real estate investment trusts (REITs), two of which are energy-themed.

"The local REIT market is still teeming with potential opportunities and we expect our REIT roster to expand and potentially diversify to include other themes beyond what we have listed so far," said Mr. Monzon.

On the last trading day in 2022, the PSE index closed at 6,566.39 points, down by 0.15 points, bringing the year-to-date main index to decrease by 7.8%.

The broader all-shares index rose by 12.71 points or 0.36% to 3,462.04 on Thursday.

The daily average value turnover for the year was at P7.3 billion, down by 18.9% from the previous year's P9-billion average, the PSE said.

The market registered P67.95 billion worth of net foreign selling versus P2.75 billion in net foreign selling in 2021. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

CTA affirms ruling partially granting shipping firm's VAT refund claim

THE Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) has affirmed its ruling partially granting BW Shipping Philippines, Inc.'s P3.18-million refund claim representing its excess input value-added tax (VAT) traced to zero-rated sales for 2015.

In a 22-page decision dated Dec. 22 and made public on Dec. 28, the CTA full court ruled that its third division did not abuse its discretion in granting a reduced amount from the shipping firm's P4.95 million VAT refund claim.

The commissioner of internal revenue (CIR) argued that the services rendered by the firm to foreign shipping companies cannot qualify for a 0% VAT rating as they were doing business in the Philippines.

Under the country's revenue code, taxpayers that engage with foreign firms outside the Philippines are entitled to zero-rated sales that do not translate to output tax.

The tribunal said BW Shipping was able to prove that its foreign clients were non-resident foreign corporations doing business outside the Philippines.

"The foreign clients of the shipping firm cannot be considered as doing business in the Philippines because it did not solicit orders... or the exercise of some of the functions normally incident to and in progressive prosecution of commercial gain or of the purpose and object of the foreign client's business organization," CTA Associate Justice Marian Ivy F. Reyes-Fajardo.

The court also affirmed its division's decision to reject BW Shipping's appeal for a new trial to present corrected pieces of evidence that it claimed proved its entitlement to the full refund amount.

The firm argued that the inaccurate entries found in its VAT receipts stemmed from "excusable" mistakes of its cashier who prepared them and have since been corrected.

The CTA said negligence is not an excuse to justify a new trial to grant the firm's full refund claim.

"It bears stressing that litigation is not a 'trial and error' proceeding," the tribunal said.

"A party who moves for a new trial on the ground of mistake must show that ordinary prudence could not have guarded against it." — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

Vista Land draws on P12-B facility to refinance loans

VISTA LAND & LIFESCAPES, Inc. has obtained a three-year corporate note facility of up to P12 billion that it will use to refinance its obligations, the Villar-led property developer said on Thursday.

In a regulatory filing, the listed company said that it had made an initial drawdown of P8.6 billion at a 7.93% fixed rate per annum.

"The proceeds of the corporate note facility will be used to refinance existing or maturing obligations of the group and for other general corporate purposes," the firm said.

The company has tapped BDO Capital & Investment Corp. and China Bank Capital Corp. as lead arrangers and bookrunners and with Union Bank of the Philippines as joint lead arrangers. China Bank Corp.-Trust and Asset Management Group is the facility agent.

Vista Land subsidiaries Brittany Corp., Crown Asia Properties, Inc., Camella Homes, Inc., Communities Philippines, Inc., Vista Residences, Inc., and Vistamalls, Inc. are all the company's guarantors. Vista Land operates its residential and commercial property development business through six business units.

Michael L. Ricafort, chief economist of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said that the economy's further reopening to greater normalcy gives greater clarity and decisiveness to businesses on securing their needed financing or funding facilities.

"[This] is also amid the need to hedge borrowing requirements amid the rising trend in global and local interest rates as seen in recent months amid higher inflation," Mr. Ricafort added.

The corporate note facility would allow Vista Land to secure more funding from a more diverse group of investors or lenders since the securities are tradable.

"[It] is a part of capital market development ... having more alternative sources of financing, other than the traditional loans," Mr. Ricafort said.

Vista Land, which claims to be the largest homebuilder, last month reported a 12% increase in net income to P6.7 billion for nine months to September.

The company said that as of the third quarter of this year, it has launched 12 projects with an estimated value of about P21.8 billion. It also disclosed plans to launch more projects from its Vista Estate integrated development.

On Thursday, shares in the company jumped 6.45% to close at P1.65 apiece. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

NTC: Over 3 million SIM cards registered so far

MORE THAN 3 million subscriber identity module (SIM) cards have been registered as of Dec. 28 as required by law, according to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).

Figures released by the agency showed that 3.319 million SIM cards have been registered as part of Republic Act No. 11934 or the SIM Card Registration Act.

Of the total, Globe Telecom, Inc. accounted for 1.769 million, followed by Smart Communications, Inc. at 1.019 million, and DITO Telecommunity Corp. at 530,424.

According to the NTC, the figures were provided by the public telecommunication entities to the commission.

All SIM cards in the country are mandated to be registered under the SIM Card Registration Act, which took effect on Oct. 28.

All mobile device users are required to register their SIMs on their telcos' authorized registration platforms within 180 days from the effectivity of the law or until April 26, 2023.

The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) may extend the registration period by another 120 days. Unregistered SIM cards would be deactivated.

Meanwhile, the NTC disclosed that it instructed the three telcos to submit a daily written report over seven days starting Dec. 28 after reports of unsuccessful or incomplete SIM registration and inaccessibility of registration sites.

The report would contain any incident of incomplete SIM registration, the platform involved, the number of subscribers affected, their geographical area, and other issues and concerns affecting SIM registration. It should also cite the actions taken to address these issues and actions to mitigate or eliminate similar incidents.

The NTC said the telco reports are to be submitted to the Office of the Commissioner and Regulation Branch on or before noon of the following day through e-mail.

In a separate statement, the National Privacy Commission reminded the telcos that the processing of data involved in the selfie verification requirement for SIM card registration should observe the provisions under Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act.

"As an additional layer of protection against fraud and identity theft, the processing involved in selfie verification should pass the general data privacy principles of transparency, legitimate purpose, proportionality, and all other data privacy safeguards in the law," Privacy Commissioner John Henry D. Naga said.

"Ensuring the privacy of our registrants is paramount to instilling trust in the full implementation of the SIM Card Registration Act. This will be bolstered if public telecommunications entities can guarantee that all the data in their possession are protected against misuse, unauthorized processing, data breaches, and all other security incidents," he added. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

AC Logistics unit tapped to handle waste in El Nido

SUBSIDIARIES of AC Logistics Holdings Corp. and Ayala Land Hotels and Resorts Corp. (ALHRC) signed an agreement for the transport, handling, and management of hospital and hazardous waste across the latter's resorts in El Nido, Palawan.

In a press release on Thursday, AC Logistics said Integrated Waste Management, Inc. (IWMI), its waste management company, forged the partnership with Ten Knots Phils. Inc., which operates multiple resorts in El Nido.

Through the partnership, IWMI will be in charge of the collection, transport, and proper treatment and disposal of the Ten Knots group's medical and infectious wastes.

IWMI's service under the partnership will include providing documentary evidence on how the generator's hazardous wastes are treated and disposed of. The waste management company specializes in handling hazardous waste and is said to serve 40% of medical establishments in Metro Manila.

"Our team is excited to collaborate with the group's El Nido Resorts and Lio Beach in exploring innovative solutions and practices that protect El Nido's communities and natural environment," IWMI President Cezar Christopher Gregory G. Pacheco, Jr. said.

"Through this partnership, we hope to encourage more organizations to institutionalize proper hazardous waste management and ensure long-term positive impact," Mr. Pacheco added.

"As our businesses grow and the tourism industry recovers, the challenge of managing different types of waste escalates, too," ALHRC President and Chief Executive Officer Javier D. Hernandez said.

"We at Ten Knots are only too glad to work with IWMI in addressing these challenges and meeting our sustainability objectives," he added.

The pandemic has increased the volume of hospital waste like face masks, hazmats, personal protective equipment, vials and syringes, diluents and expired medicines that require proper handling and disposal, according to the firm.

The company said IWMI is at the forefront "in enduring the responsible handling and disposal of hazardous [as it] has been in the business of collecting and treating infectious and hazardous wastes for more than 30 years." — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

SMC unit to supply Albay utility's one-year power needs

SMC Global Power Holdings Corp.'s subsidiary will supply the power requirements of Albay Electric Cooperative (Aleco) for one year, the company announced on Thursday.

"This power supply agreement is primarily in consideration of the welfare of the people of Albay, who would have otherwise been disconnected from the grid," San Miguel Corp. (SMC) President Ramon S. Ang said in a media release.

SMC's power arm said its subsidiary Masinloc Power Partners Co. Ltd. had agreed to supply Aleco's full power requirements.

According to Mr. Ang, the supply deal came after the National Electrification Administration (NEA) sought the help of SMC to prevent Aleco's possible disconnection from the grid after it failed to secure an emergency power supply agreement (EPSA) due to some credit issues.

Masinloc Power Partners is the owner and operator of the 1,000-megawatt Masinloc power plant.

SMC Global Power said that it had signed an EPSA with NEA and Aleco on Thursday. The contract awaits the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).

The power company also said that it would provide consumer protection against the volatility of fuel prices by setting the limit to its monthly rates at P10 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for six months of the one-year supply term. It will also allow a reduction in the monthly tariff rate for the rest of the supply term.

NEA Administrator Antonio Mariano C. Almeda said the agreement among the parties had the full support of the Department of Energy.

"We will continue to work with all stakeholders to help make this supply agreement work for the benefit of consumers," he added.

To recall, Aleco has a pending legal issue with Albay Power Energy Corp. (APEC), another unit of SMC Global Power, related to a terminated concession agreement. Aleco then asked NEA to take over its distribution business.

In October, NEA announced that it was set to exercise supervisory power over the operation of Aleco, which is a power distributor in the Bicol province.

"Apart from ensuring continuous electricity supply, [SMC Global Power] also said that the applicable tariff rate under the power supply agreement is competitively priced, based on the prevailing conditions in the fuel commodities markets and the credit standing of Aleco," the SMC unit said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**