

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,544.45

▼45.43 PTS.

▼0.68%

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023
BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P620.00 -P4.00 -0.64%	ACEN ACEN Corp. P6.08 -P0.11 -1.78%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P52.50 +P2.20 +4.37%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P12.84 -P0.02 -0.16%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P26.35 -P0.10 -0.38%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P37.85 -P0.05 -0.13%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P122.00 -P2.20 -1.77%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P105.10 -P3.90 -3.58%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P15.04 -P0.46 -2.97%	DMC DMCI Holdings, Inc. P11.14 +P0.06 +0.54%
EMI Emperador, Inc. P20.70 -P0.05 -0.24%	GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P1,800.00 -P20.00 -1.1%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P515.00 +P16.00 +3.21%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P207.40 -P5.60 -2.63%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P227.20 +P1.00 +0.44%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P50.60 -P0.40 -0.78%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P10.12 -P0.12 -1.17%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P59.40 -P0.30 -0.5%	MER Manila Electric Co. P317.80 -P2.20 -0.69%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P11.26 -P0.20 -1.75%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P4.13	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P30.05	SCC Semirara Mining and Power Corp. P29.65	SM SM Investments Corp. P875.00	SMC San Miguel Corp. P111.00	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P35.70	TEL PLDT Inc. P1,278.00	UBP Union Bank of the Philippines P88.00	URC Universal Robina Corp. P141.50	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P29.35

Ginebra San Miguel net income up 9% to P4.5B

GINEBRA San Miguel, Inc. (GSMI) has posted a 9% growth in net income to P4.5 billion in 2022 due to a higher volume of sales, the alcoholic beverage manufacturer told the stock exchange on Monday.

In a disclosure, the listed subsidiary of conglomerate San Miguel Corp. described last year's profit as "a new record," which it managed to achieve despite global supply chain disruptions, high inflation, and a weak peso.

"GSMI is one of the few companies that continued to grow despite the challenges of the past years. This is genuine proof of the company's strength and true resili-

ency," said Ramon S. Ang, its president and chief executive officer.

Consolidated sales last year grew by 11% to P47.3 billion compared with the level in the previous year because of volume growth and higher selling prices, the company said.

Income from operations reached P6 billion, which is 13% higher than that of the previous year.

"Strong brand equity, relevant campaigns, and a continuous push to expand distribution coverage in new markets enabled GSMI to sustain its volume ascent and remain the market leader in the hard liquor category," the company said.

Total volume growth went up to 7% across various products, which "boosted the company's bottom line."

Its products Ginebra San Miguel, Vino Kulafu, and its Gin offerings also saw substantial growth for the year, the company said.

Meanwhile, the company's board of directors approved the declaration of P0.75 in regular cash dividends and P1.75 in special cash dividends on common shares for shareholders as of March 24.

GSMI shares on Monday dropped by 3.33% at P5 to close at P145 apiece. — **Adrian H. Halili**



AirAsia posts 95% increase in sold seats for March travel

AIRASIA Philippines said that it saw a 95% increase in the number of seats sold to guests traveling in the month of March to 475,000 from a year ago driven by its competitive pricing.

"AirAsia's competitive pricing is still seen as among the top motivators for guests choosing to fly with us," AirAsia Philippines Communications and Public Affairs Country Head Steve F. Dailisan said in a press release.

"Our effort of mounting different online and on-ground travel promos is our way of providing the best value for our guests' hard-earned money," he added.

For the budget carrier, the top destinations booked during the period are Cebu, Boracay, Tacloban, Taipei, Bangkok, and Seoul.

Meanwhile, the airline will be offering another round of "PISO" seat

sale, which its customers can book from March 13 to March 19.

Through the promo, AirAsia guests can enjoy a peso one-way base fare to Boracay, Bohol, Puerto Princesa, Bacolod, Davao, Kalibo, Cagayan de Oro, and Roxas from Manila; and Boracay, Puerto Princesa, Davao, and Cagayan de Oro from Cebu-Mactan International Airport.

Meanwhile, AirAsia guests may book for P511 to P2,811 international destina-

tions such as Macao, Taipei, Bangkok, Bali, Tokyo, and Osaka for travels from Sept. 4, 2023 to Aug. 13, 2024.

"We advise our guests to plan ahead and book their flights earlier to enjoy affordable rates. We also invite our guests to regularly visit our website and download the airasia SuperApp for exciting deals on hotels and activities," Mr. Dailisan said. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

All about the liver's health

The liver is an essential and vital organ which carries out numerous tasks. It is thus important to maintain a healthy liver, which will in turn allow us to live well.

There are three key functions that the liver is mainly involved in, according to Dr. Kieron Lim, senior consultant in gastroenterology and hepatology at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore. Firstly, the liver is involved with making key proteins such as albumin and bile, which "helps us to digest fat that we consume with our diets as well as clotting factors to maintain health," Dr. Lim explained.

Secondly, it serves as a "storage organ." Essential vitamins, minerals, and glycogen or fuel that our bodies would need are stored in the liver and mobilized when required, said Dr. Lim.

Furthermore, the liver acts as a filter. "It breaks down and metabolizes the food that we eat, to the carbohydrates, the proteins and the fat, as well as detoxifies and breaks down chemicals and drugs that somebody makes," Dr. Lim explained.

Given its role in digestion, our diet and lifestyle hence matter in keeping our liver healthy.

"A low-fat diet is recommended and will aid in keeping your cholesterol levels in check and prevent or reduce the chance of developing fatty liver," Dr. Lim said. Fatty liver disease is a condition where there is an accumulation of fat in one's liver.

In addition, Dr. Lim recommended exercising moderation in alcohol consumption for individuals with no existing or no preexisting liver disease. "The recommended daily amount of alcohol consumption is two standard drinks for men and one standard drink for females," he said.

"For individuals with liver disease or underlying cirrhosis,

it is best to abstain totally from alcohol," he added.

Dr. Lim also stressed the importance of exercise. The recommendations for every individual is to engage in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week.

A sedentary lifestyle and consuming alcohol, as well as suffering from diabetes, high cholesterol, or being overweight are risk factors for fatty liver disease. Fatty liver disease is currently affects 20% to 40% of individuals globally, and represent a major health burden according to Dr. Lim.

Apart from fatty liver disease, viral hepatitis, especially Hepatitis B and C, represent a significant cause of chronic liver disease. Hepatitis B affects up to 300 million people around the world and 75% of HBV carriers are concentrated here in Asia, said Dr. Lim. Vertical transmission from mother to child is the most common reason among those affected by Hepatitis B in this region. Meanwhile, Hepatitis C, which affects 50 million globally, is typically associated with high-risk behaviors such as intravenous drug use and transfusion-related infections like contaminated needles or byproducts.

In the last two decades, there have been numerous advancements in diagnostics and therapeutics for liver diseases, according to Dr. Lim. He highlighted the therapeutic advancements and "game-changer" in Hepatitis C treatment. Compared to earlier treatments which involved weekly injections for up to 1 year, the new direct acting anti-viral tablets have made treatment of HCV "shorter



Dr. Kieron Lim

and less painful" and improved the chance of cure from 30% to over 95%. "Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore has both the specialist as well as the technology to treat patients with complex liver conditions," Dr. Lim shared. "Gastroenterologists and hepatologists like myself work alongside liver surgeons, GI (gastrointestinal) oncologists, interventional radiologists, and intensive care physicians to provide multidisciplinary care for liver patients."

Dr. Lim recommends healthy individuals to undertake regular health screening with laboratory tests and liver imaging. For those who have risk factors for liver disease or are concerned about their liver health, he recommends consulting with liver specialists for a more detailed medical evaluation.

For inquiries, please contact our patient assistance center located at G/F-B, Marco Polo Hotel, Meralco Avenue and Sapphire Street, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1600; e-mail manila.ph@ihhealthcare.com or call 0917-526-7576. Follow us at facebook.com/MountElizabethHospitalsSGPhilippinesOffice.



Mount Elizabeth™

PLDT's Cisco distinction seen to boost its market recognition

PLDT Inc. earned a Gold Provider certification from Cisco which is seen to increase the telco's market recognition and provide it with more opportunities.

In a press release, the company said the distinction recognized its performance in delivering and supporting Cisco-powered services, which are Cisco Software-Defined Wide Area Networking (SD-WAN), Meraki SD-WAN, and Meraki Access Point.

The company said it has been delivering managed networking services through its SD-WAN, Branch-in-a-Box, and Beyond Fiber.

"These services help uplift and accelerate businesses in their cloud journey through faster access to their applications via the internet while delivering resilient and secure network connectivity," PLDT First Vice-President and Head of Enterprise and International Business Groups Albert Mitchell L. Locsin said.

The Cisco certification is said to have been achieved through a third-party audit of PLDT's managed networking solutions processes, which cover product and marketing, capacity management, and after-support and customer experience management.

"We are honored and gratified by this achievement as it encapsulates PLDT's commitment to delivering the best possible experience to our enterprise customers, from simple services to more complex solutions such as SD-WAN," said Benedict Patrick V. Alcoseba, first vice-president and head of enterprise product management and marketing of PLDT.

"This achievement is a testament to PLDT's expertise and commitment to delivering exceptional network and technology solutions to its customers. With this designation, PLDT is poised to support the digital transformation of businesses in the Philippines and drive economic growth on a global scale," Cisco Philippines Managing Director Zaza Soriano-Nicart said.

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. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Cebu Pacific aims to boost demand for Singapore travel

CEBU PACIFIC said on Monday it will add a Clark-Singapore route to its existing Singapore-bound routes from Manila, Cebu and Davao, and boost demand by offering free travel programs in partnership with Singapore Tourism Board (STB).

"In anticipation of summer, peak travel season, we now have four cities with direct accessibility to Singapore. We're quite optimistic for the market for these flights," said Michelle Eve A. de Guzman, Cebu Pacific's marketing director, at a press briefing on Monday.

Starting end of March, flights will increase to four times weekly from Davao and daily from Cebu, while daily flights from Clark will be launched starting April 28.

"The frequency of our Manila-Singapore route, flying three times a day, is almost back to pre-pandemic numbers. This really contributes to the accessibility of Singapore for Filipinos," Ms. de Guzman added.

To boost demand, STB's rewards program SingapoRewards will offer one of 40 complimentary itineraries or experiences to every international short-term visitor who arrives by air throughout 2023.

The experiences will take tourists to lesser-known places such as the Brass Lion Distillery and the S.E.A. Aquarium, and unique adventures such as the Bugis, Waterloo, and Kampong Gelam Instagram walking tour.

Juliana Kua, STB's assistant chief executive, said that Singapore got 6.3 million tourists in 2022, which they aim to increase to 12-14 million this year.

"As for the Philippine market, which has always been a strong one for us, we're hoping it will at least double for 2023, whether it's their first time or repeat visits where they discover sides of Singapore they never knew about before," she told *BusinessWorld*.

The SingapoRewards program was piloted in Australia, India, and Indonesia from October 2022 to March 2023 and is now available globally.

Because of the budget carrier's increase in flights and STB's rewards program, Cebu Pacific is confident that Filipinos can "extract value from the entire Singapore travel experience," according to Candice Iyog, Cebu Pacific's customer experience officer.

"When we announce additional capacity, we intend for it to stay that way. It will depend on the market, but we're optimistic that Filipinos will respond well to these travel opportunities," she said at the briefing.

SingapoRewards can be redeemed and booked through the VisitSingapore app and website. — **Brontë H. Lacsamana**