

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,393.33

▼ 151.12 PTS.

▼ 2.3%

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023

BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P605.00 -P15.00 -2.42%	ACEN ACEN Corp. P5.94 -P0.14 -2.3%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P50.00 -P2.50 -4.76%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P12.66 -P0.18 -1.4%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P26.30 -P0.05 -0.19%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P36.05 -P1.80 -4.76%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P119.40 -P2.60 -2.13%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P103.80 -P1.30 -1.24%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P14.70 -P0.34 -2.26%	DMC DMCI Holdings, Inc. P11.08 -P0.06 -0.54%
EMI Emperador, Inc. P21.05 +P0.35 +1.69%	GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P1,777.00 -P23.00 -1.28%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P503.00 -P12.00 -2.33%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P199.90 -P7.50 -3.62%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P219.00 -P8.20 -3.61%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P48.30 -P2.30 -4.55%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P10.08 -P0.04 -0.4%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P57.00 -P2.40 -4.04%	MER Manila Electric Co. P303.00 -P14.80 -4.66%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P11.04 -P0.22 -1.95%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P4.00 -P0.13 -3.15%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P30.40 +P0.35 +1.16%	SCC Semirara Mining and Power Corp. P29.70 +P0.05 +0.17%	SM SM Investments Corp. P860.00 -P15.00 -1.71%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P108.00 -P3.00 -2.7%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P34.40 -P1.30 -3.64%	TEL PLDT Inc. P1,278.00 —	UBP Union Bank of the Philippines P88.40 +P0.40 +0.45%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P139.80 -P1.70 -1.2%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P29.00 -P0.35 -1.19%

Alternergy to use P20B for RE projects in 5 years

ALTERNERGY Holdings Corp. is planning to invest P20 billion over the next five years to fund renewable energy (RE) projects with varied technologies, its top official said on Tuesday.

"For the entire group in the next three to five years, we are looking at a total capex (capital expenditure) of P20 billion for the lineup of the projects that we have," Alternergy President Gerry P. Magbanua told reporters.

He said the renewables company is planning to develop run-of-river, solar, and wind energy projects largely funded by debt.

"In the next five years, we'll have representative projects for each of these technologies and that's part of the P20 billion capex," Mr. Magbanua said.

He said the budget will fund about 300 to 350 megawatts

(MW) of renewable energy projects, which will include 33-MW solar, 220-MW onshore wind, and 50-MW run-of-river or mini-hydropower facilities.

"We are going to do project financing. We have done this many times in the past for our projects, usually 70-30, 70% funded by debt, 30% by equity," he said.

Part of the proceeds of the company's initial public offering

(IPO) will fund the capex, Mr. Magbanua added.

Alternergy targets to hold on March 24 an initial public offering of shares to raise up to P1.87 billion. Proceeds from the offering will fund the predevelopment stage of projects in the pipeline.

"For the P20 billion, the equity is around P6 billion, let's just say 30%," he said, adding that a portion of the P6 billion or

around P3 billion to P3.5 billion "is what Alternergy expects to fund for itself."

"The goal is to have majority stakes in these projects at least 51%," Mr. Magbanua said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Magbanua said that Alternergy is currently in talks with foreign and local prospective partners for the development of some of the projects.

"We're talking to some but we have not closed any partnerships.

There [are] a number of interested parties who want to partner with us in other technologies. For example [in] solar, there are a number of companies that have approached us to partner with us," he said.

The energy company aims to develop up to 1,370 MW of renewable energy sources such as onshore and offshore wind, solar, and run-of-river hydropower projects. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

AEB readies warehouse management system for PHL

GERMAN logistics software company AEB is set to launch a new warehouse management system for the Philippines as part of its expansion efforts in the country.

"The Philippines is the first country that we're launching it in. It's the only country we're launching it in at this point in time," Frans Kok, general manager of AEB Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd., said on the sidelines of a media briefing in Taguig City on Tuesday.

The new system is designed to manage warehouse operations and customize business processes for "next-level warehouse automation."

"This will be launched in other countries at a later point in time," Mr. Kok said in an interview.

"We have a significant customer base here using the previous generation soft-

ware," Mr. Kok said. "We felt that the Philippine market would really be able to use this solution."

The launch will be on Wednesday at the Supply Chain Trilog 2023 technology conference. Two customers are already awaiting the launch, he said.

"One is a large distributor of frozen meats and the other customer is a large distributor or storage facility of condiments. We are implementing the solution this year in Filipino companies," Mr. Kok said.

This year, AEB is aiming to implement the new system in two to four companies, he said.

"But we've carefully picked these customers as we would not just implement the software but also learn from these implementations. We specifically picked these customers to work with as

they could also give us the experience of the first said launches," Mr. Kok said.

Mr. Kok also said that AEB's new warehouse management system could help the country's food security efforts because of streamlined logistics.

"Things can be stored longer. The quality can be maintained. For the farmer, there's a higher payback in return. But also, for the Filipino consumer, it means that the price is much more stable because it's not that much influenced by the season," he said.

The Supply Chain Trilog 2023 conference at BGC Arts Center in Taguig City will showcase the latest trends in supply chain and intralogistics, warehouse automation, productivity solutions, material handling solutions, warehouse management systems, and supply chain sustainability.

The event will also feature the latest technology, innovation and strategies, the future of the cold chain industry, government initiatives in supply chain and logistics, and practical insights and case studies.

"This conference aims to establish a platform that provides fresh insights, industry updates, and the latest technology to businesses, supply chain leaders, and logistics professionals to drive business growth," Mr. Kok said.

AEB entered the Philippine market in 2016 and officially formed a Philippine team in June last year to handle local operations. Some of the company's customers are Royale Cold Storage, South Alps Cold Storage, Starkson Logistics, Starkson Packaging, and 3M Dragon Logistics. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochoa**



SPROUT.PH

Sprout Solutions aims to double its client count as demand grows

BUSINESS-to-business software provider Sprout Solutions Philippines, Inc. is targeting this year to double the number of clients recorded last year as more companies seek automated solutions.

"We are aiming to double [our clients] year on year. That's our growth target over the coming years. So, this year, next year, kind of continuing that 100% year-on-year growth," Sprout Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder Patrick Gentry told *BusinessWorld*.

Mr. Gentry said the company's clients are Filipino companies belonging to various sectors. The service sector accounts for most of them.

"We have 1,000 clients in the Philippines, from startups all the way to the large enterprise customers. Some of the biggest companies in the Philippines use Sprout. Some of the major conglomerates use Sprout," he said.

"We find a lot of companies coming to us from the BPO (business process outsourcing) sector, from food and beverage, hospitality, finance, and the medical industry. These are some strong industries for Sprout for sure," he added.

Mr. Gentry said that the company has been profitable since 2021, highlighting that it has geared towards profitability despite the pandemic.

"We have been profitable since 2021 and have been growing very well. We are really happy with the kind of impact we are having on the Philippines these days," he said.

For the next five years, Mr. Gentry said that more Filipino companies will seek to improve their backend solutions that address end-to-end human resources challenges.

When asked if the company is planning to enter the capital market, Mr. Gentry said that it is an option down the road.

"It's not something that we are looking at doing today. But an initial public offering is a potential opportunity down the road for Sprout, absolutely," he said.

Sprout focuses on automating employee lifecycle management and has expanded to become a "software as a service" suite of tools that businesses in the Philippines use to automate business processes. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

PLDT and Nokia seek faster digital, sustainable moves

PLDT Inc. and Finnish multinational company Nokia Corp. called for the acceleration of digitalization and sustainability initiatives in response to the evolving needs of their customers.

"Enterprises have realized that in order to remain relevant to their customers, they have to digitally transform, disrupt themselves and the way they conduct business," ePLDT President and Chief Executive Officer Victor S. Genuino said in a statement.

Nokia pledged an environment-friendly and sustainable future and has committed to the use of 100% renewable electricity in its operations by 2025.

"It's not just a job that we have to do," Nokia Vice-President and Head of Southeast Asia Daniel Jaeger said. "But it's really a contribution that we as the communications industry, in a broader sense, need to do."

PLDT unit ePLDT has been pushing for the development of green data centers in the Philippines.

Mr. Genuino said that its PLDT customers have been asking questions that make the company assess how it runs its business.

"It's our customers that drive us to be innovative in the way we build [our] data centers, source power, and manage our operations," he said.

Last month, PLDT announced the launch of its 11th VITRO data center in a 5-hectare lot in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and the expansion of its largest operational data center in Makati.

The new data center, VITRO Sta. Rosa, will have an initial power capacity of 14 megawatts (MW) in early 2024, which ePLDT targets to increase to 50 MW once the data center is fully operational.

Meanwhile, the expansion will add a capacity of 12 MW that will power an additional 1,600 racks to 3,360 racks by March.

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**

SEC provides alternative submission of ASM notices

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is set to introduce alternative means for companies to distribute and provide their notices for annual stockholders' meetings (ASM).

On Feb. 28, the commission en banc in a meeting agreed to provide an alternative mode of compliance for publicly listed companies, public companies, and other companies with registered securities under the SEC.

Companies will be allowed to publish the announcements of their 2023 ASM in the business

section of two general circulation newspapers, in both print and online, for two consecutive days.

"Provided that, the last publication date of the Notice of Meeting shall be made no later than 21 days prior to the scheduled ASM," the SEC said.

The notice would inform a company's shareholders of the meeting's date, time, location, and other information that the commission has required under the Revised Corporation Code.

Additionally, the notice will provide an electronic copy of the

company's information statement, management report, and SEC Form 17A, on the company's website.

For publicly listed companies, these reports should also be available on the Philippine Stock Exchange's portal PSE Edge.

The compliance of the companies would be considered by the SEC as a fulfillment of the requirements under the 2015 implementing rules and regulations of the Securities Regulation Code, Revised Corporation Code, and other applicable issuances of the commission. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Nickel Asia income rises 1.5% to P7.9B on higher ore prices

LISTED mining firm Nickel Asia Corp. saw its attributable net income last year increase by 1.5% to P7.93 billion brought about by higher nickel ore prices.

In a stock exchange disclosure on Tuesday, the company reported a 2.2% increase in revenues to P28 billion in 2022 from P27.4 billion in the previous year.

"Despite the inclement weather that affected our nickel mining business, 2022 remained a good year for [Nickel Asia] with prices for the metal buoyed by high demand," said Martin Antonio G. Zamora, its president and chief executive officer.

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization reached P14.31 billion, down by

0.8% from P14.42 billion in the previous year.

The company's five operating mines sold a combined 15.95 million wet metric tons (WMT) of nickel ore, down from the 17.94 million WMT reported in 2021.

"The drop in sales volume was almost in direct proportion to unrealized workable days caused by unfavorable weather that adversely affected the company's milling operations during the period," said Nickel Asia.

In 2022, the weighted average nickel ore sales price increased by 4.78% to \$29.17 per WMT from \$29.13 in the previous year.

"The company realized P54.90 per US dollar from these

nickel ore sales, an 11% increase from P49.48 last year," Nickel Asia said.

The company exported 8.15 million WMT of saprolite and limonite ore at an average price of \$39.99 per WMT, lower than the 10.79 million WMT at \$40.40 per WMT in 2021.

At the same time, the mining firm sent 7.79 million WMT of limonite ore to its Coral Bay and Taganito high-pressure acid leach plants at an average price of \$11.64 per pound of payable nickel, up from the 7.14 million WMT at \$8.35 per pound of payable nickel.

On Tuesday, shares in Nickel Asia fell by 29 centavos or 3.99% to close at P6.97 apiece. — **Sheldene Joy Talavera**