

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,628.64

▼ 6.47 PTS.

▼ 0.09%

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BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P683.00 -P1.00 -0.15%	ACEN ACEN Corp. P6.10 +P0.05 +0.83%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P54.75 +P0.20 +0.37%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P13.52 -P0.28 -2.03%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P27.35 +P0.35 +1.3%	AP Aboitiz Power Corp. P37.50 +P0.40 +1.08%	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P136.50 +P0.50 +0.37%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P105.00 ---	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P11.54 -P0.20 -1.7%	DMC DMCI Holdings, Inc. P9.85 +P0.13 +1.34%
EMI Emperador, Inc. P21.20 +P0.20 +0.95%	GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P1,730.00 +P5.00 +0.29%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P501.00 -P6.00 -1.18%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P203.80 -P0.80 -0.39%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P232.40 +P5.40 +2.38%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P49.95 ---	LTG LT Group, Inc. P10.00 -P0.10 -0.99%	MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P58.75 -P0.25 -0.42%	MER Manila Electric Co. P331.00 +P3.00 +0.91%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P8.76 -P0.12 -1.35%
MPI Metro Pacific Investments Corp. P4.41 -P0.02 -0.45%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P31.75 +P0.05 +0.16%	SCC Semirara Mining and Power Corp. P28.75 +P0.45 +1.59%	SM SM Investments Corp. P927.00 -P13.00 -1.38%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P105.00 ---	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P33.80 -P0.20 -0.59%	TEL PLDT Inc. P1,275.00 +P30.00 +2.41%	UBP Union Bank of the Philippines P79.90 ---	URC Universal Robina Corp. P150.30 -P1.30 -0.86%	WLCON Wilcon Depot, Inc. P27.35 -P0.50 -1.8%

Ayala group, Singapore firm plan large data center

By Justine Irish D. Tabile Reporter

THE Ayala group and the local unit of a Singapore-based service provider plan to build a 124-megawatt data center that they claim to be the largest in Metro Manila.

In a launching event on Thursday, ST Telemedia Global Data Centres (Philippines) — a joint venture between Globe Telecom, Inc., Ayala Corp. and Singapore's ST Telemedia Global Data Centres (STT GDC) — said that it is expanding its footprint in Asia with the project.

The joint venture, STT GDC Philippines, is building the data center in Fairview, Quezon City.

"It will actually be the largest hyperscaler facility in Metro Manila," said STT GDC Philippines Carlomagno E. Malana at the groundbreaking ceremony, adding that the project is going to be "the only

announced hyperscaler facility in the Philippines."

The first phase of the five-part project, STT Fairview, is expected to go live in the first quarter of 2025 with a capacity of 28 megawatts. The whole project will have more than 83,000 square meters of gross floor area across four buildings.

"It's a testament to our commitment to providing world-class infrastructure and services to the digitalization of our nation," Mr. Malana said.

"To date, we have completed 90% of our design, and truly ready to move forward targeting to be live with our first phase in early 2025," he said.

Bruno Lopez, president and group chief executive officer of STT GDC, said that the investment in the project will be around \$1 billion.

"We are looking to deliver an actual investment of as much as \$1 billion, that much I can see. And that's not a small amount

because it will filter out in terms of value. That's just the capital expenditure that we will put in, but there's also the flow-over effects of that investment," Mr. Lopez said.

Globe President and Chief Executive Office Ernest L. Cu said the development of the data center is timely as the current international geopolitics created an opportunity for the Philippines.

"A lot of locations around the world, around Southeast Asia for that matter, have been eliminated as possible locations for data centers," Mr. Cu said.

"Hong Kong, which is one of the traditional locations, because of recent tensions between China and the US, is no longer a viable location. Singapore is great, it's neutral. However, they've got a limitation on land and power," he added.

The project is said to be the first hyperscale data center in Metro Manila, which STT GDC Philippines expects the project to ignite the shift to hyperscale

developments in the Philippines as data center companies see the entry of more hyperscale players in the country.

"STT Fairview is just the first facility that we are developing alongside our partners Globe and Ayala at the new data center campus in Fairview," the company said in a statement.

"Our investment in this data center and the Philippines more broadly is both significant and long-term. And we are committed to helping the Philippines fulfill its huge digital potential over the long run," it added.

To date, STT GDC Philippines operates five data centers, which have a total capacity of 22 megawatts and with more than 95% of its power coming from renewable energy sources.

TOWER TURNOVER TO FRONTIER TOWER ASSOCIATE

In a separate event, Globe announced the

closing and official handover of 431 telecommunication towers to Frontier Tower Associates Philippines, Inc. for a total cash consideration of P5.5 billion.

The turned-over assets are composed of 82% ground-based towers and 18% rooftop towers, bringing the total towers turned over by Globe to 3,711 valued at P47.9 billion out of an expected P96.3-billion sale.

"We are more than halfway done towards the full turnover of the towers to Frontier and this transaction could not have happened at a more opportune time," Globe Chief Finance Officer, Treasurer and Chief Risk Officer Rosemarie Maniego-Eala said in a press release.

"Despite persistent economic headwinds, we remain committed to provide the country seamless digital connectivity and we are glad to partner with Frontier, who alongside Globe, will redefine connectivity for the better," she added.

Ortigas Land launches 52-storey residential tower

ORTIGAS Land Corp. on Thursday launched its 52-storey mid-market residential tower at the Ortigas Center called Olin at Jade Drive, which it aims to complete in the next six years.

"This newest development is very exciting for us as this launches our venture into the mid-market segment within the Ortigas CBD (central business district)," Ortigas Land Assistant Vice-President and Residential Business Unit Head Jenna J. Belardo said in a statement.

In a press briefing, Ms. Belardo said that Olin at Jade Drive is in a "strong" location due to its accessibility to public transportation in the area.

"It is very much accessible. It is about an eight- to 15-minute walk through

major transport hubs like the MRT and the future subway station," Ms. Belardo added.

The property will offer about 1,245 units within 43 floors of the residential areas of the building. It will also offer one floor as a retail section for essential goods and services.

Residential units will be split between 1,031 studio units ranging from 19 square meters (sq.m.) to 25 sq.m., and 214 one-bedroom units ranging from 32 sq.m. to 36 sq.m.

Ms. Belardo said the price of the units ranges from about P6 million to P7 million for studio units, and about P9 million to P10 million for one-bedroom units.

The company expects about P8 billion in total unit sales from the property, she added.

"Olin at Jade Drive will offer flexible payment terms for up to 72 months, suitable for those interested in finding a home or valuable real estate investment within Ortigas Center," the company said.

During its priority selling launch in April, the company sold about 43% of its total inventory, or 536 units with a total price of P4.3 billion.

To date, the company has sold about 54% or 671 units with a total value of P5.5 billion.

Ms. Belardo said the company's capital spending for the residential build-

ing is about P3 billion, excluding the amount for the purchase of land.

The building will also house a co-working area as the location is geared towards young professionals in adjacent offices and students in nearby academic institutions.

Amenities for residents will include a gym, garden, lounges, pools, and function hall "to cater to the modern city dwellers' needs."

The tower will also house seven podium parking levels and two basement parking with 318 total parking units available.

Ortigas Land expects to turn over its mid-market property by the latter part of 2029. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Motorcycle sales up 16.7% in Q1 as demand rises

PHILIPPINE motorcycle sales increased by 16.7% in the first three months of the year amid surging demand, said a sellers' association, as it expects a 10% sales growth for 2023.

Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association, Inc. (MDPPA) said in a statement on Thursday that the motorcycle sales of its group members — Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, and Yamaha — reached 447,429 units, short by 3,674 units from 2019 sales of 451,103 units.

Of the total first-quarter sales, scooters accounted for a share of 60% or 269,652 units, followed by business units with an 18.6% share or 83,616 units, mopeds or underbond motorcycles with a 17.2% share or 77,152 units, and street and big bikes with 4% or 17,000 units.

"We hope that the performance of the first quarter will be sustained. The market is so volatile as influenced by internal and external variables," MDPPA President Norminio C. Mojica said.

Amid improving sales, Mr. Mojica disclosed that MDPPA is aiming to reach a 10% sales growth this year.

"Our conservative forecast this year is 10% growth, in light of the headwinds of [an] imminent recession in the US and other regions. If the existing business landscape will prevail, the 1.7 million units recorded sales in 2019 may be surpassed," Mr. Mojica said.

According to MDPPA, around 149,000 units were sold on average per month in the first three months, which is higher than the monthly sales average of 127,000 units in the same period last year.

"This makes the three-month totals of 2023 the best-recorded sales in comparison to the first quarters of the three previous pandemic years, including 2020, 2021, and 2022," the MDPPA said.

In 2022, MDPPA members sold 1.54 million units, up 9% compared with 1.43 million units sold in 2021, led by scooter sales. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochove**

Manila Water's Calawis supply project to be completed in June

MANILA WATER Co., Inc. expects its P8.2-billion Calawis water supply system project to be completed next month.

In a statement on Thursday, the east zone water concessionaire said the Calawis project will provide an additional 80 million liters per day of treated water to about 919,784 population in Antipolo City and nearby towns.

The project is part of the company's water supply masterplan, which it said aims to establish reliable water supply and ensure water security within its service areas in the coming decades.

The water treatment plant in Antipolo will also lessen Manila Water's dependency on Angat Dam.

Manila Water said that although the company is still preparing for the full operations of the Calawis project, it has already supplied treated water to some areas in Antipolo.

"Manila Water was able to establish good relationship with relevant Local Government Units, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the affected Indigenous People — the Dumagat Remontados of Antipolo City, and the National Commission of Indigenous People which enabled us to proceed with a successful development of the project," Vince Siat, Manila Water's Senior Project Manager said in a statement. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

Higher enrollments lift STI profits

STI EDUCATION Systems Holdings, Inc. reported on Thursday that its attributable net income during the three months ending March rose 47.4% to P352.39 million from P239.09 million a year ago.

In the company's financial statement, it reported a 24.1% jump in revenues during the quarter to P982.2 million from P791.55 million, driven by a 14% increase or 11,683 in the total number of students for the school year (SY) 2022-2023.

STI Holdings' fiscal year starts on July 1 of every year and ends on June 30 of the following year to coincide with its school year.

The bulk of revenues during the January-to-March period was contributed by tuition and other school fees, which jumped by 26.5% to P891.85 million from P704.91 million in the same period last year.

Cost and expenses for the period likewise rose by 14.1% to P596.02 million from P522.19

million, driven by an increase in general administrative expenses to P327.42 million.

For the nine months ending March, the company recorded a 95.5% surge in attributable net income to P578.69 million from P295.94 million.

The company now has 94,312 enrollees versus the 82,629 students taken in during SY 2021-2022.

Its units STI Education Services Group, Inc.'s wholly owned and franchised schools registered an enrollment of 81,697 students, 12% or 8,947 more than the enrollment in SY 2021-2022.

STI West Negros University registered the biggest increase in enrollments at 35%.

The company's top line for the period went up by 27% to P2.42 billion from P1.91 billion in the same period last year, also propelled by an increase in the enrollment mix of the group.

Its tuition and other fees during the nine-month period hit P2.14 billion, up 24.4% from P1.72 billion in the same period last year.

STI Holdings' cost and expenses for the period went up 15.9% to P1.75 billion from P1.51 billion the previous year. This was due to a 17.8% rise in its general and administrative expenses for the period to P961.23 million from P815.79 million in the same period the prior year.

"Schools also reported revenues from other sources as a result of increased enrollments and more frequent face-to-face classes," the company said.

STI Holdings has three subsidiaries, namely: STI Education Services Group, STI West Negros University, and iAcademy.

On Thursday, STI shares closed unchanged at P0.35 apiece. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Ninja Van Philippines and TikTok Shop collaborate to develop local live sellers

LOGISTICS company Ninja Van Philippines collaborated with TikTok Shop to develop local live sellers amid the surge in electronic commerce.

Ninja Van said in a statement on Thursday that it recently conducted the "Going Viral on TikTok Shop: Secrets to Boost Sales and Achieve Success Your Way" event with TikTok Shop, which advised sellers to utilize social media platforms in improving their businesses.

Gregorio Gabriel, Jr., TikTok Shop seller acquisition manager, said that sellers should utilize the surge in shopping entertainment or shoppertainment.

"From its usual linear progression, shoppertainment has blurred and jumbled all the stages of the consumer journey. In TikTok Shop, a consumer can be discovering a brand while already participating in the product discus-

sions or reviews via video comments or replies," Mr. Gabriel said.

TikTok Shop also features an affiliate program, which has creator matching that could help improve live sellers.

"We will help find for any business or brand the right creator that can best help them grow," he added.

Ninja Van Philippines Chief Commercial Officer Sabina Lopez-Vergara said that live sellers are also vergara

with the decision of choosing their courier partner.

She added that Ninja Van has 100% network coverage across the country and offers real-time parcel tracking to sellers and shoppers.

"Optimizing pages and content on TikTok Shop is just one part of the process, as sellers need to ensure that their customers get their purchases on time. Selecting the right courier partner is therefore

another crucial business decision that sellers make," Ms. Lopez-Vergara said.

"Whether it's parcel pickup, returns, or cash-on-delivery remittance, a Ninja Van account manager is just a call or message away for you," she added.

Jungie Gumiran, AdsLevelUp chief executive officer, said that optimizing the product pages of live sellers is important in converting ad and page views to sales.

"Your product page should tell everything a customer needs to know to help them make a decision to buy," Mr. Gumiran said.

Ninja Van has a presence in six countries namely, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand. The logistics company is aiming to expand its learning opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochove**