

Labor says manufacturing best bet for job creation

By John Victor D. Ordoñez
Reporter

THE GOVERNMENT needs to further support manufacturing to boost job creation and improve job quality, labor groups said.

“Only through industrialization can we push our economy to a higher level, create more productive and supposedly decent jobs and make it possible for us to realize

full employment,” Josua T. Mata, secretary general of Sentrong mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa, said in a Viber message.

He was reacting to a May 16 Pulse Asia survey which indicated about 90% support for strengthening industry.

Some 61% of the respondents also supported more upskilling and reskilling programs for workers, while 50% backed more incentives to remain competitive with other countries.

“We (also) believe that the manufacturing sector will generate more livelihood opportunities and quality jobs,” Jose G. Matula, president of the Federation of Free Workers (FFW), said in a Viber message.

Mr. Matula said the government should embrace technology that raises manufacturing productivity, such as automation and artificial intelligence.

Mr. Matula proposed tax breaks and subsidies to encour-

age domestic and foreign investment in manufacturing.

“A robust industrial policy concentrating on the revival of the home-grown manufacturing industries and development of the agricultural sector is a step in the right direction for the economy,” Renato B. Magtubo, chairman of Partido Manggagawa, said in a Viber message.

Stratbase ADR institute President Victor Andres C. Manhit on Wednesday called for the gov-

ernment to prioritize attracting manufacturing investment.

“We can sustain economic gains by being more focused on investment,” he said at a webinar on Tuesday. “Part of that is... to reinvestigate the manufacturing sector.”

Month on month, manufacturing employment grew by 102,000 jobs in March.

The jobless rate in March eased to 4.7% from 4.8% a month earlier. Job quality improved that

month as the underemployment rate — a measure of workers seeking further employment or longer hours — fell to 11.2%, the lowest level in 18 years.

“FFW calls for continued investment in infrastructure development, including reliable power supply, efficient transportation networks, and well-equipped industrial zones, which are crucial for the growth and competitiveness of the manufacturing sector,” Mr. Matula said.

OPINION

Giving employees a clean slate

I'm the human resource (HR) manager of a medium-sized company. Our employees are clamoring for a policy granting a clean slate on offenses after a certain period. This idea was discussed in our recent town hall meeting with the chief executive officer (CEO), who assigned HR to study its pros and cons. Is such a policy necessary? Why or why not? — Grieving Over.

My brief answer is — not necessarily. Let's do this in a manner that would convince the CEO and the employees. Think about this. At some point in your management career, you may have issued a policy without too much thought or careful analysis, including an examination of the long-term implications. You're not alone. I've seen many managers who would simply agree to certain propositions in the hope of avoiding conflict until real problems come up.

Take it from Peter Drucker who talked about “doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.”

Now, let's agree on the prescription period for certain offenses to avoid having a perpetual black mark on the employees'

records. The underlying assumption is that everyone must be given the opportunity to change after being punished.

It is not necessary for the actual record to be literally removed from the employee's 201 file.

Why would you create a clean-slate policy? I would say giving a new lease on life to violators depends on their actual behavior and work performance. In other words, no amnesty will help any employee if violations of company rules continue, or if they continue exhibiting poor work performance.

ACTION PLAN

Your action plan depends on the frequency of violations, which should be a critical factor in implementing any clean-slate policy. If you're in HR and you're not collecting and monitoring data on discipline, then that's one issue that you should start addressing without further delay.

Without such records, you can't take an intelligent position on the issue. Let's do this step by step.

One, collect, monitor, and analyze all employee violations. To make HR's job easy, assign all team leaders, supervisors and managers to compile a report covering the past year. All reports must contain the following — names of violators, nature of offense, and the type of sanctions meted against them.

Then, verify all information submitted by the line leaders. After that one-year report is submitted, start requiring them to inform HR about all subsequent violations. I'm assuming the ideal set-up of line managers personally handling employee discipline with active assistance from HR.

Two, benchmark with your industry counterparts. This includes understanding the best practices of your competitors, regardless of any difficulties in obtaining their cooperation. My experience tells me that competitors would be happy to cooperate depending on your trustworthiness and the level of interest that you have exhibited.

Three, rationalize your promotion policies and procedures. This includes a review of your performance standards, succession plan and inter-department transfers. Are there any rules that prevent employees with violations from getting a merit increase or be considered in the succession plan? If there are none, then that's one point against any amnesty policy.

If there is no bearing on future merit increases and chances for promotion, why are employees pushing for it?

Four, determine the reason why employees are seeking a clean-slate policy. Now that you're fully armed with all the information, discover why the employees are pushing for the policy. If there are no solid reasons, then your job becomes easy.

Just the same, it's better to understand their logic. You might discover some arguments that are not aligned with the company's vision, mission and values. Armed with your baseline data as discussed above, you can make a case for or against the employee request.

Last, compromise if you must by agreeing to write off minor offenses. If your CEO prefers to grant the request to maintain goodwill with the employees, try limiting the amnesty to minor offenses like the non-wearing of company uniform or identification card, or habitual unauthorized absences and tardiness. Aim for a standard based on the penalties involved — for instance, not to exceed one day's suspension without pay.

In that case, declare a clean slate after one year from date of violation. If you have a union, it's advisable to defer any decision by making it an issue subject to bargaining.

IN THE WORKPLACE REY ELBO

ELBONOMICS: Don't be an accomplice to people who don't know what they're doing.

Join REY ELBO's “Kaizen Study Mission Japan” to be held July 23-29, 2023 in Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture. For details, chat with him on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or send e-mail to elbonomics@gmail.com or via <https://reyelbo.com>



ACEN board clears P7.8-billion credit facilities

THE BOARD of directors of Ayala-led ACEN Corp. has approved the availing of credit facilities amounting to about P7.8 billion from two financial institutions.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange on Thursday, the company said its board had approved the “execution and availment” of credit facilities with China Banking Corp. for P5 billion.

It also said that the board made the same move for \$50 million or about P2.8 billion with Japanese bank Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc.

The decision was made by the board in its regular meeting held on May 18 when it also cleared the company's investment management policy guidelines and trading limits.

In the same meeting, the board also approved “in principle” the increase in transmission line investments to support ACEN's Zambales solar projects, and the delegation

of authority to the executive committee to approve the final investment details.

In its regulatory filing, the company did not disclose where it intends to use the funding.

In March this year, ACEN said that it had executed a subscription agreement with subsidiary Santa Cruz Solar Energy, Inc. to fund the construction of the latter's solar project in Zambales.

The company also said that it had subscribed to 50-million common A shares and 449.98-million redeemable preferred A shares for a subscription price of P5 billion.

The renewable energy company of the Ayala group said the subscription would fund the ongoing construction of phases one and two of the San Marcelino solar power plant project in Zambales.

ACEN said the shares were priced at P10 each. The company noted that an initial payment of P2 billion was already made.

In January, ACEN said it had started the construction of its P16-billion 300-megawatt (MW) Palauig 2 solar farm in Zambales. It said the solar farm would be located within the proximity of the company's 63-MW Palauig 1 solar project.

The P16-billion estimated cost for Palauig 2 includes the construction of a 1,200-MW transmission line and 540-megawatt-peak high-efficiency solar panels, it said.

ACEN aspires to be the largest renewables platform in Southeast Asia. It aims to reach an installed renewable capacity of 20 gigawatts by 2030.

The company has so far tallied an attributable capacity of 4,200 MW from facilities it owns in the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, India, and India. It said the share of renewable energy in its capacity count is 98%, which it said is among the highest in the region.

On Thursday, shares in the company rose by 0.83% or P0.05 to close at P6.10 each.

2GO Group set to voluntarily delist from PSE starting July 17

2GO Group, Inc. has filed a petition to finally delist from the main board of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) effective on July 17.

In a regulatory filing on Thursday, 2GO said the voluntary delisting was proposed by and is fully supported by its two major shareholders, SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) and Trident Investments Holdings Pte. Ltd.

The move is the final step in the company's bid to go private, which started on Feb. 28, when the board of directors of SMIC approved the holding of a voluntary tender offer for up to 378,817,279 common shares or 15.39% of the issued and outstanding common stock of 2GO.

The tender offer started on March 15 and ended on April 28, during which tendering shareholders of 2GO were allowed to offer all or a portion of their shares in the company to SMIC for P14.64 apiece.

The shares were priced based on a fairness valuation report prepared by BPI Capital Corp. The tender offer was conducted by SMIC with a view to the voluntary delisting of 2GO's common shares from the main board of the stock exchange.

During 2GO's annual stockholders' meeting on April 18, shareholders owning 2,409,564,081 common shares or 97.86% of the outstanding common stock of the company voted in favor of the voluntary delisting with no shareholder voting against the move.

Discovery World ventures into solar

DISCOVERY World Corp. said on Thursday that its executive committee had approved the subscription to the capital stock of its subsidiary that will hold solar energy assets.

In a regulatory filing, the company said its executive panel in a meeting on May 18 cleared the move, identifying the unit as Viper Energy Corp., which it will fully own.

It described Viper Energy as “a holding company primarily for solar energy assets in its operating sites and also for future solar energy projects” that the group may undertake.

Discovery World, which is engaged in the hotel and resort business, will subscribe to 2 million shares of the unit with a par value of P1.00 each or a total of P2 million. The subscription is subject to the Securities and Exchange Commission's approval of the incorporation of Viper Energy.

Discovery World develops, invests in, owns, acquires, administers, constructs and operates hotels, resorts, apartelles, condominiums, townhouses, buildings, and other tourist-related structures.

As of last year, the company derived its revenues from the operations of Discovery Shores

Boracay, Club Paradise, Shoppes at Vanilla Beach, Discovery Fleet, and Discovery Hospitality.

In the first quarter, it trimmed its net loss attributable to the parent firm's shareholders to P18.86 million, down from a loss of P43.66 million, after its revenues nearly doubled to P247.94 million.

The bulk of its first-quarter top line came from room revenues at P181.72 million, up 91.4% from P94.94 million in the same period last year.

In its quarterly financial report, the company said it saw steady growth in domestic tourism resulting in an increase in the group's hotel and resort occupancies.

It added that with the gradual return of foreign tourists in the local market, the company is “in a good position to recover from the pandemic and sees an upward economic trajectory in the years ahead.”

Discovery World said it was preparing for the launching of a new 11-hectare real estate development project “in the southern region of the Philippines.”

On Thursday, shares in the company fell by 4.58% or P0.07 to close at P1.46 each.



IN A regulatory filing, DISCOVERY World Corp. said its executive panel in a meeting on May 18 cleared the move, identifying the unit as Viper Energy Corp., which it will fully own.

SOCResources, Inc.

4th Flr. ENZO Building 399 Senator Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City
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NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

To all Stockholders:

Notice is hereby given that the 2023 Annual Meeting of the stockholders of SOCResources, Inc. shall be held on 16 June 2023, at 2:00 P.M. Based on the resolution of the Board of Directors during its special meeting held on 20 April 2023, the Annual Meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom.

The agenda for said meeting is as follows:

1. Proof of notice and quorum;
2. Reading and approval of previous Minutes;
3. Report of Management;
4. Ratification of the acts of the Board of Directors and Officers;
5. Election of Directors;
6. Appointment of Auditors;
7. Other Matters: and
8. Adjournment

For the purpose of the meeting, only stockholders of record at the close of business on 17 May 2023 shall be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. In light of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Company will not be conducting a physical Annual Stockholders' Meeting. The stockholders may only attend by remote communication, by voting in absentia, or by appointing the Chairman as proxy. Stockholders intending to participate via remote communications must notify the Corporation by sending an email to socinfo@socres.com.ph. Attached is the instruction for joining and participating in the virtual annual meeting.

If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to be represented thereat, you may appoint a proxy in writing and file the same, together with the appropriate Board resolution for corporate stockholders and Special Power of Attorney for individual stockholders, with the Corporation on or before 02 June 2023. Duly accomplished proxies may be sent to socinfo@socres.com.ph or hard copies at SOCResources, Inc. 4th Floor Enzo Bldg. 399 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue Makati, City. Said proxies shall be validated until 5:00 pm of 08 June 2023.

The Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors will immediately follow after the annual stockholders' meeting. It will likewise be conducted via remote communication.

WE ARE NOT SOLICITING PROXY.

Magilyn T. Laja
MAGILYN T. LAJA
Corporate Secretary

PARTICIPATION VIA REMOTE COMMUNICATION

The annual stockholders' meeting will be conducted by remote communication via Zoom Application. Stockholders may attend and participate at the annual meeting by following the instructions below:

1. Stockholders who intend to participate remotely should notify the Corporation by sending an email to socinfo@socres.com.ph not later than 02 June 2023 at 5:00 pm.
2. An email confirmation, link for registration and other instructions for the registration and voting will be provided to the stockholders who will indicate their intention to participate at the annual meeting. All successfully registered Stockholders will receive an electronic invitation via email containing the Meeting link and password, including the rules and procedures for the meeting.
3. We advise all stockholders to log onto the meeting link at least 45 minutes before the meeting starts, to avoid any technical difficulty. The meeting broadcast will start promptly at 2:00 in the afternoon.
4. Only Stockholders (or their proxies), who have notified the Company of his/her/its intention to participate in the Meeting by remote communication, will be included in the determination of the existence of a quorum.
5. Further, the meeting shall be recorded in audio and video format and copies thereof shall be retained by the Corporation.