

Electricity spot prices fall in Luzon, Visayas in early September

ELECTRICITY spot market prices fell in Luzon and the Visayas in early September as power demand declined, the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines (IEMOP) said, while prices in Mindanao increased.

"This decline is primarily attributed to ample supply margins and tamer demand compared to the summer months," the IEMOP said in a statement.

In a virtual briefing, Isidro E. Cacho, Jr., IEMOP's head of corporate strategy and communications, said that the average spot market price in Luzon declined to P4.12 per kilowatt hour (kWh) in the first two weeks of September, from P5.53 per kWh in August.

In September so far, average supply increased 3.72% to 13,394 megawatts (MW), while demand fell 3.80% to 9,119 MW.

In the Visayas, the average electricity spot market price likewise fell to P5.93 per kWh in September from P6.18 per kWh previously.

Supply levels hit 2,329 MW, down 2.92%. Demand dropped 1.18% to 1,850 MW. "Meanwhile, in Mindanao, a decrease in the average supply margin of 358 MW, attributed to the deration and outage of some generators, led to a price increase from P4.82 per kWh in August to P5.81 per kWh in September," it said.

The spot market serves as the venue where energy companies can buy power when

their long-term contracted power supply is insufficient for their customers' needs.

"We foresee that, if those predicaments or situations of supply and demand continues... then we expect the prices to be sustained in the current level, if not lower. Hopefully, that's what will prevail," Mr. Cacho said.

As of the first half, Mr. Cacho estimated more than 4,000 identified contestable customers from the Retail Competition and Open Access (RCOA) and the Green Energy Option Program.

"If we pegged it at 4,000, we are seeing that half of the expected contestable customers are already participating in the RCOA or competitive retail electricity market," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Cacho said that the trial period for the reserve market is still ongoing and targeted for completion by the end of the month.

In June, the Department of Energy directed the IEMOP to commence trial operations for the reserve market, while awaiting for the approval of the price determination method from the Energy Regulatory Commission.

"Although the marching orders to us is to ready it anytime... until the end of the year, we will (undertake) final preparations. Hopefully, we get to launch it before the year ends," he said referring to the commercial launch. —

Sheldeen Joy Talavera

Bol-approved investments hit P725.93B, nearing 2022 total



ACEN

Five ACEN floating solar projects set for expedited 'green lane' processing

THE Board of Investments (BoI) said it endorsed five ACEN Corp. floating solar projects for "green lane" treatment, gaining access to an expedited application and licensing process for investments that are deemed strategic.

The five projects are to be built on Laguna de Bay.

Green lane processing is authorized by Executive Order No. 18 or Constituting Green Lanes for Strategic Investments.

ACEN's SolarAce4 project will be built on 100 hectares of the lake's surface off Santa Cruz, Laguna and is expected to produce 140 megawatt peak (MWp) of clean energy.

The 200-hectare AC Laguna Floating Solar Power Plant will be built off Victoria and Pila, Laguna and will generate 280 MWp.

AC Subi will occupy 200 hectares off Victoria and Santa Cruz, Laguna, and is expected to produce 280 MWp.

GigaWind1 Floating Solar Power Plant will be built on 200 hectares off Kalayaan and Paete, Laguna and will generate 280 MWp.

The Ingrid Floating Solar Power Plant will be built on 100 hectares off Lumban, Laguna. It is expected to produce 140 MWp of clean energy.

The BoI said that ACEN's five RE projects "are consistent with the Philippine government's mission to accelerate the growth of eco-friendly investments."

Ayala group's ACEN specializes in renewable energy with solar and wind farms across the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, Laos, and India.

It aims to be the largest listed renewable platform in Southeast Asia and is hoping to build 20 gigawatts of renewable capacity by 2030. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

THE Board of Investments (BoI) said registered projects in the year to date hit P725.93 billion, with the total close to exceeding the P729 billion worth of investments tallied over the full year of 2022.

The BoI said the estimate for approved projects covered the January to Sept. 12 period, with foreign investors accounting for P426.04 billion.

Ceferino S. Rodolfo, BoI managing head and Trade undersecretary, said in a Viber message that around 80% of the projects involve renewable energy, while the remainder mostly have to do with telco infrastructure.

"What is really strong now are game changers related to sustainability and digitalization," Mr. Rodolfo told *BusinessWorld*.

The electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning industries accounted for P557.84 billion of the total, while the information and communication industry generated P95.51 billion worth of investment.

Around 35,086 jobs are expected to be generated from the projects, 22,016 of which are in administrative and support service activities.

The Western Visayas captured the larger slice by project value with P307.14 billion worth of projects, while investments in Region 4A or Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon amounted to P165.5 billion.

The BoI said there were no approved projects in the Bicol Region or Region 5 which comprises the provinces of Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Catanduanes and Masbate.

At the deadline, the BoI had not replied to a query regarding its confidence in achieving its investment registration targets for the year.

In February, Trade Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual raised BoI's investment target by 50% to P1.5 trillion.

Mr. Pascual told reporters last week that he is confident that the BoI will be able to achieve and even surpass its P1.5-trillion investment target. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Water Sustainability: Leading the change at SM Supermalls

The ripple effect of the water crisis has reached every part of the globe. According to the World Wildlife Fund, some 1.1 billion people worldwide lack access to water, and a total of 2.7 billion find water scarce for at least one month of the year. Worst, two-thirds of the global population may face water shortages by 2025 and ecosystems will suffer.

As the gravity of these issues becomes increasingly apparent, several countries have taken significant steps to forge a more sustainable future for the Earth. Noteworthy examples include Singapore's water management plan and The Netherlands' intricate conservation practices.

INSPIRATION FOR THE PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, a multifaceted approach has also been embraced by the public and private sectors in safeguarding and managing water resources. SM Supermalls are at the forefront of the conservation and management of water resources in its mall facilities. Its endeavors form the foundation of a more sustainable and water-secure future that the company has long been advocating.

SM'S VISION: GREENING THE FUTURE

SM has been recycling water since the 1990s, treating an average of 1 billion gallons of water annually in recent years, equivalent to 1,600 Olympic-sized swimming pools. In line with the SM Green Movement, SM has been continuously working towards responsible consumption and water conservation in its properties.

To illustrate, the SM Supermalls' comfort rooms have smart fixtures to manage water flow. There are also signages in the mall that advocate wise water use. Wastewater is channeled to the malls' sewage treatment plants that recycle an estimated total of 4 million cubic meters of water, lessening their



SM Mall of Asia has been involved in various sustainability and environmental initiatives, including water recycling, among others.



The Delta Works in The Netherlands was built by Rijkswaterstaat to protect the country against flooding from the North Sea.



Singapore's Desalination Plant

dependence on freshwater sources for non-potable uses. SM did this even before the measure was required by way of the Clean Water Act in 2004.

Recently, SM took a step further in resource management by launching the first-ever water filtration system in a Philippine mall at SM City Baguio. This



SM Supermalls utilizes recycled wastewater from the mall for irrigating its gardens.



SM took a step further in resource management by launching the first-ever water filtration system at SM City Baguio.

facility can turn collected rainwater into potable water for mall tenant use such as washing and cooking as well as dishwashing and handwashing, allowing the mall to further lessen its dependence on the freshwater supply of the Baguio community.

SM's dedication aligns with the world's environmental sustainability and climate action goals. Rainwater catchment basins in flood-prone areas and the rainwater filtration in SM Baguio further exemplify this commitment. These significant efforts underscore the ongoing need for sustainable practices and policies.

A BRIGHTER FUTURE AHEAD

The journey towards sustainable water management is ongoing. SM Supermalls, through its initiatives, paves the way for a greener, more secure future.

Learn more at SM Cares or follow SM Supermalls on social media.

SM Malls have 'Save Water' signages that typically aim to create awareness about water conservation and inspire people to take simple actions to reduce their water consumption.



The Rainwater Treatment Facility at SM City Baguio



Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong (right) samples the potable water from the SM Baguio rainwater treatment facility with SM SVP for Marketing Joaquin San Agustin (left) and SM VP for Corporate Compliance Engr. Liza Silerio (center).