Fruitas buys foodpanda kitchen equipment for unit's operations

LISTED Fruitas Holdings, Inc. has bought kitchen equipment previously owned and used by food delivery platform foodpanda to improve the operations of its cloud kitchen subsidiary.

In a stock exchange disclosure on Tuesday, Fruitas said its wholly owned unit Fly Kitchen, Inc. acquired the kitchen equipment to help expand its cloud kitchen offerings and capabilities.

"We are pleased to announce this tactical purchase of top-quality kitchen equipment from foodpanda. This decision reflects our dedication to providing outstanding gastronomic experiences to our patrons," Fruitas President and Chief Executive Officer Lester C. Yu said.

The deal came after Delivery Hero confirmed the potential sale of its foodpanda business in select Southeast Asian markets such as Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos.

Delivery Hero is the German-based parent firm of foodpanda.

"With the advanced kitchen technology, Fly Kitchen is now able to expand its menu with new methods, processes, and flavors. The use of cutting-edge equipment allows the company to streamline every aspect of its operations, from food preparation to presentation, resulting in even higher service and product quality," Fruitas said.

"Additionally, the advanced kitchen equipment will give Fly Kitchen the freedom to experiment with new recipes which will excite the taste buds of its loyal consumers and new customers. Finally, the kitchen equipment will open the door for the company to collaborate with and prepare third-party brands which would fit well with its present cloud kitchen operations," the company added.

According to Fruitas, some of the brands established by Fly Kitchen include Hatid Pinoy, Jade Express, and Kanin at Sabaw.

In the first half, Fruitas posted a 48% increase in its net income to P43.5 million compared to P29.3 million due to higher revenues.

On Tuesday, shares of Fruitas at the local bourse rose four centavos or 3.57% to end at P1.16 apiece. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Globe targets to use renewables at more facilities

GLOBE Telecom, Inc. said it targets to shift more of its facilities to renewables as part of the company's commitment to sustainability.

"We do have a target in terms of which sites we can enroll in GEOP (green energy option program). This year, we enrolled seven or eight sites, next year we are targeting seven or more cell towers," Raymond Aguilar, Globe vice-president for enterprise and corporate management, told reporters on the sidelines of the Globe Energize 2023 event on Tuesday.

Launched in 2018, GEOP is a voluntary policy mechanism that allows users consuming at least 100 kilowatts to source power from qualified electricity retailers supplying renewable energy.

So far, Globe has 26 facilities that are powered by renewable energy (RE), Mr. Aguilar said.

"Since 2019, we've been transitioning our corporate sites into RE. Since then, we have transitioned around 26 sites to RE. This 26 includes facilities and cell towers," he said.

The listed telecommunications company said it would continue pursuing climate action strategies such as its target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050.

Earlier, Globe said its other RE-powered sites are located in Makati, Quezon City, Caloocan, Taguig, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Manila, Marikina, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Tarlac, and Cebu. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

AirAsia Philippines aims to sell half-a-million seats by Q4

AIRASIA PHILIPPINES targets to sell about half-a-million seats to air travelers by the fourth quarter amid stronger demand for foreign travel this year.

"AirAsia Philippines continues to herald the return of international tourism through affordable and convenient flights. In fact, we see our performance on international flights increasing to half a million seats sold before the end of December 2023," Steve F. Dailisan, head for communications and public affairs at AirAsia Philippines, said in a media release.

As of October, the budget airline said that it sold about 300,000 seats for travel in the next 90 days for Taipei, Incheon, Osaka, Narita, Hong Kong, and Bangkok.

"We hope to flourish in the APAC (Asia-Pacific region) next year as we open more destinations following the increase in aircraft fleet," Mr. Dailisan said.

AirAsia Philippines added that it aims to add more routes to Japan and China via the Clark International Airport, Mactan-Cebu International Airport, and Kalibo International Airport amid increasing demand. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

MERRYMART'S project aims to help the transformation of a sari-sari store (left) to become a mini-mart (right) while purchasing its grocery inventory from the MM Wholesale app.

MerryMart says its mini-mart plan will help *sari-sari* stores

LISTED retailer MerryMart Consumer Corp. is banking on its mini-mart project to help the transformation of *sari-sari* or small family-owned stores, its top official said.

"We have been observing and studying in detail the *sari-sari* store industry around the country, and we believe that the true long-term solution for these hundreds of thousands of *sari-sari* stores to thrive is to transform and become a mini-mart," MerryMart (MM) Chairman Edgar J. Sia II told the local bourse on Tuesday.

"From doing the selling of items from a small hole in their window, they transform to become a grocery mini-mart where their customers or '*suki*' can now enter their '*tindahan*,' just like the setup of their branded and modern mini-mart competitors that recently opened near their *sari-sari* stores," he added.

Mr. Sia said this as MerryMart announced the opening of its 100th mini-mart member supplied by MM Wholesale. The new store opening is part of a project of MM Wholesale, which helps the transformation of a *sari-sari* store into a mini-mart while buying their grocery inventory from the MM Wholesale application.

The MM Wholesale app has more than 180,000 registered users, according to MerryMart.

MerryMart's mini-marts have a presence in various locations across Manila, Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, and Bataan.

Based on its website, MerryMart is engaged in the operation of retail stores in the supermarket and household essentials category.

In the first half, MerryMart logged a 24.8% jump in its net income to P40.24 million, while revenues rose 29% to P3.7 billion.

On Tuesday, shares of MerryMart at the local bourse increased one centavo or 0.88% to close at P1.14 each. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**