

SPNEC moves to comply with minimum public float

SOLAR PHILIPPINES Power Project Holdings, Inc. (SPPPHI) has donated additional shares of its listed subsidiary to Asia Pacific Institute for Green Development, Inc. (Green Development) to comply with the stock exchange's minimum public ownership (MPO) requirement.

In a regulatory filing on Thursday, Leviste-led SP New Energy Corp. (SPNEC) said its parent firm executed a deed of donation on Wednesday for an additional 1.58 billion unlisted and fully paid common shares of SPNEC to Green Development.

The donated shares represent 4.6% of the issued and outstanding capital stock of SPNEC.

As of November, SPPPHI held 74.38% ownership of SPNEC's outstanding common shares.

SPPPHI first executed a deed of donation for 550 million unlisted and fully paid common shares of SPNEC to Green Development on Oct. 25, which represented 1.6% of the issued and outstanding shares of its unit.

"The shares donated by SPPPHI to Green Development in total represent 6.20% of the issued and outstanding shares of SPNEC, and SPNEC would thereby comply with the MPO requirement," the listed energy company said.

It said that the taxes on the additional donation had been

paid, and the application for the certificate authorizing registration had been filed with the Bureau of Internal Revenue over the transfer of shares.

The activities that SPNEC has undertaken and intends to undertake are part of its MPO requirement.

Separately, SPNEC said that it plans to "pursue several transactions to increase its public float further after the lifting of its trading suspension."

Under the listing rules of the Philippine Stock Exchange, listed firms must maintain an MPO of at least 20%. Those that would fall below "shall be suspended from trading for a period of not

more than six (6) months and shall be automatically delisted if it remains non-compliant with the MPO after the lapse of the suspension period."

On June 2, trading of SPNEC shares at the stock exchange was suspended for falling below the MPO requirement after a series of acquisitions that involved swapping of shares.

To recall, SPNEC's board approved an increase in the company's authorized capital stock on Jan. 10, 2022 to 50 billion from 10 billion shares previously, to support the expansion of its project portfolio.

The company greenlit on May 5 the modified acquisi-

tion by SPNEC of the shares of SPPPHI in various entities from the proceeds of its parent firm's subscription of 24.37 billion shares.

With a public float of 47% prior, SPNEC's increase in authorized capital stock was approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission on June 1.

As a result, SPNEC's total number of nonpublic shares increased to 29.62 billion, with the total number of shares owned by the public at 4.75 billion, which represented a public ownership of 13.82%.

To increase its public ownership, the company said it plans to conduct a follow-on offering

(FOO) to support the expansion of its project portfolio.

"In the meantime, the Company is having discussions with its advisors and potential underwriters for the FOO," SPNEC said.

The company and its parent firm are also in talks with institutional investors for private placement, provided that its shares resume trading.

"The measures outlined in this Compliance Plan are intended to ensure the Company's compliance with the MPO requirement. With this, the Company hopes that its shares may be an attractive investment for the benefit of its public shareholders," it said.

— **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

RHK sees north tower's turnover by 2028

PROPERTY developer RHK Land Corp. launched the Velaris Residences North Tower on Thursday, marking the second tower of The Velaris Residences' three-tower residential enclave.

Rouen Abel V. Raz, RHK Land general manager, said on the sidelines of the launch event that the target turnover date for The Velaris Residences North Tower is by late 2028.

"We are eyeing to have the turnover for The Velaris Residences North Tower by late 2028, around fourth quarter," Mr. Raz said in an interview.

The North Tower, rising to 40 storeys, is situated in the 31-hectare Bridgetowne estate that spans across parts of the cities of Pasig and Quezon, giving access to major business hubs such as Makati City, Bonifacio Global City, and Ortigas Center.

According to Mr. Raz, the newly launched North Tower has 247 units that range from one- to four-bedroom units, penthouse suites, and townhouse suites.

He said prices of the units range from P25 million for smaller units to P200 million for bigger units such as the townhouse.

"We will probably finish the year at around 35% sold for North Tower. The fastest-selling units are the rooms with the bigger cuts," Mr. Raz said.

"The price range for North Tower is between P315,000 to P330,000 per square meter. It is not as expensive as the super luxury [developments]. But if I look at the deliverables and what we're offering, the market is really saying that we have a fantastic price for a fantastic development," he added.

Some of The North Tower's amenities include the indoor and outdoor Japanese sento, a sculpture garden, a garden lounge with floating daybeds, a lifestyle gym with a dance studio and cycling studio, a badminton and pickleball court, a golf simulator studio, an Olympic-length infinity pool, a treetop playground, camping grounds, smart lockers, secure mailroom, business lounge, creative studio, and private elevators.

"The private lifts for two-bedroom and bigger units and the two-units-to-one-elevator ratio of the typical floors provide North Tower residents with a high level of privacy, one of the remaining true luxuries in today's world," RHK Land said.

Other amenities include the Velaris SkyClub, which features a private theater and game room for entertainment aficionados, a wine gallery, casual and gourmet dining areas for gourmands, and a cigar room for tobacco connois-

seurs. The project also offers various options to host private gatherings with the SkyLounge, SkyBar, and SkyDeck areas.

The North Tower development is also set to have improved connectivity with planned and ongoing infrastructure projects such as the Metro Rail Transit Line (MRT) 4, Metro Manila Mega Subway Project, and C-6 Expressway.

"With its central location, The Velaris Residences not only allows owners to create the home they have always envisaged but it can also help them further build equity in the long term by being an attractive investment opportunity," Mr. Raz said.

"The sizeable current economic activity in and around Bridgetowne and The Velaris Residences is expected to continue to soar in the foreseeable future, positioning residents to benefit immensely from this projected growth," he added.

Aside from North Tower, The Velaris Residences also have the South Tower, which was topped off on June 6, and the planned East Tower.

RHK Land is a joint venture between international property group Hongkong Land and Gokongwei-led Robinsons Land Corp. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

SEC warns against investing in Arcane Digital and Mitrade

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) advised the public against investing in Arcane Digital Marketing and Mitrade after engaging in investment-taking activities without the necessary authority.

In separate advisories posted on its website, the SEC said Arcane Digital and Mitrade are not registered with the corporate regulator as a corporation or partnership and are not authorized to solicit investments from the public.

According to the SEC, Arcane Digital is an online social media platform that urges the public to invest a minimum of P1,000 for a business partnership opportunity that promises 12% to 45% profit in 45 days.

"Their activities involving the offer and sale of securities to the public where their investors need not exert any effort other than to invest or place money in its scheme in order to earn profit should be registered with the commission," the SEC said.

"Hence, the public is strongly advised not to invest or stop investing

in any scheme offered by Arcane Digital Marketing or such other entities similarly engaged in the offering and sale of investment contracts without prior registration with the commission," it added.

Meanwhile, the SEC said Mitrade claims to offer the trading of financial instruments from a wide range of asset classes such as foreign currency pairs, shares (foreign), indices (index funds), commodity derivatives, and foreign currency pairs.

The corporate regulator added that Mitrade has been employing promotional campaigns on various social media platforms to attract Filipinos to engage in investment and trading activities using its platform.

Mitrade can be accessed via its website, Google Play Store, and Apple App Store.

"The public is hereby advised to exercise caution before investing in these kinds of unregistered online investment platforms and their representatives," the SEC said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

PEZA, from SI/1

Around a third of the approved investments are in electronics and semiconductors, followed by information technology (IT) services (12.45%) and metals or fabricated metal products investments (8.66%).

"In the coming Industry 4.0, we see huge potential in advanced

and smart manufacturing, electric and hybrid vehicles, artificial intelligence and robotics, frontier technologies, and other unique industries," Mr. Panga said.

The PEZA Board pre-qualified a total of 25 big-ticket locator projects from July 2022 to No-

vember 2023 which are estimated to generate P217.21 billion in investments, \$1.5 billion in exports and 16,414 direct jobs.

Mr. Panga said that a total of 11 economic zones (ecozones) with investments totaling P3.5 billion have already been approved un-

der the current administration. These ecozones are located in Batangas, Bacolod, Bataan, Naga City, Dumaguete City, Davao, Cebu, Pampanga and Sarangani.

There are three ecozones with a total investment of P654.43 billion awaiting the release of the

presidential proclamation. These are MetroCas Industrial Estates-Special Economic Zone, Suyo Economic Zone, and Kamanga Agro-Industrial Economic Zone.

"We have increased our presence outside of Luzon and the metropolis to bring ecozone

development in rural and new growth areas. Rural communities continue to be transformed into bustling urban centers," Mr. Panga said.

To date, the IPA has 422 operating ecozones. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Infrastructure, from SI/1

"In this era of smartphones, tablets, and advanced technology, focusing on how to grow our digital economy should be the priority of all governments right now. We must take full advantage of this cash-lite, digitization movement, and capitalize on people's new post-pandemic, digital-dependent behavior for basic financial transactions," he added.

In 2022, the share of digital payments in the total volume of retail transactions in the country rose to 42.1% in 2022 from 30.3% in 2021. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is targeting 50% of retail payments to be done digitally by the end of the year.

In order to optimize the opportunities from the digital economy, Mr. Villanueva said there is a need for stronger collaboration between the private sector and the government. With the government's support, he noted the private sector can accelerate the reach of digital financial innovations and make digital payments accessible for more Filipinos.

"To be a thriving digital hotspot, we must push for the necessary regulations and regulatory frameworks to be mandated by the government, such as the Open Access in Data Transmission Act, E-Governance, National Broadband Act, and many more. These laws in action will drive our digital economy to greater heights," he said.

Bain & Company Partner Bennett S. Aquino said the Philippines will be able to further accelerate the growth of its digital economy if the government and private sector work together.

"The private sector will need to supply the talent. It will really need to develop their own technologies and really understand the customer pain points," Mr. Aquino said during the report's launch event on Thursday.

"There will be limitations to this. The private sector is also in charge of infrastructure, but it is dependent on the government," he added.

Meanwhile, Ateneo de Manila economics professor Leonardo A. Lanzona cautioned

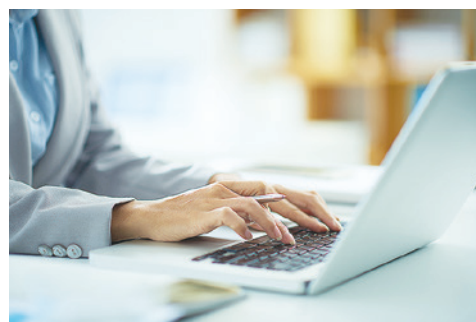


PHOTO: FREEPIK

that there is still not enough sufficient digital infrastructure to benefit the majority of the population.

"Hence, while many are covered by and exposed to the internet economy, their impact is quite limited to only a few savvy and educated individuals. These same individuals are reaping these benefits from their continual and expanded utilization of the internet," Mr. Lanzona said in an e-mail.

Mr. Lanzona said that innovations must be "adapted equally to the needs of the general public and the major economic sectors such as industry and agriculture."

"As these individuals and sectors are being left behind, the unrelenting acceleration of the internet technologies are making it more and more difficult for these laggard individuals and sectors to catch up. In the end, we will end up with a very polarized economy, hardly one that can be seen as a driver of economic growth," he said.

Mr. Lanzona recommended that the government should come up with an innovation system that will incorporate digital transformation, environmental resilience, and inclusion.

"As the market relies and focuses on digital transformation, the other social concerns are being ignored and may prove to be impossible to achieve. If individual self-interest and social welfare diverge, then clearly government intervention is justified. This lack of regulation in the internet economy is what makes us different from other higher income countries like Singapore," he added.

RISKS TO GROWTH

Meanwhile, Google's Ms. Del Gallego said a global slowdown is one of the risks to the growth outlook for the Philippines' digital economy.

The e-Economy SEA report projected the internet economy of the Philippines to grow by an annual 20% to reach \$35 billion by 2025. For 2023, it is projected to grow by 13% to \$24 billion in gross merchandise value.

"Much like many industries, one of the standard risks will be the state of the global macroeconomic environment. We are optimistic and hopeful that the high interest rate stabilizes at some point," Mr. Aquino said.

"If this stays at the current level and if gross domestic product (GDP) growth does not pick up as we have projected it to, that will impact our projections as well," he added.

Ms. Del Gallego said they are optimistic the Philippines' digital economy will achieve 20% annual growth through 2025 despite the global headwinds.

"With our GDP still growing even faster than Southeast Asia and inflation easing, it all goes back to the fundamentals that make us confident that the estimate of 20% will continue its momentum while the risks will always be there," she said.

The Philippines is widely expected to be one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia this year and in 2024.

Ms. Del Gallego said one of the challenges to the growth of the digital economy is consumers' low confidence in digital platforms.

"There are certain hesitations from those who might be new to the digital economy. They are likely looking for signals to allow them to trust certain digital platforms or maybe get the confidence to even try it," she said.

The lack of confidence could be rooted in fears of fraud.

"I think from a consumer level, that remains to be one of the things that needs to be addressed because if everything happens, but the consumers are not ready, then we will not be able to maximize the potential growth," Ms. Del Gallego said.

8th Floor, 8 Rockwell Building, Rockwell Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City

Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2023

ASSETS	AMOUNT
Deposit in Banks	45,835,389.18
Available-for-Sale (AFS) Financial Assets (Net)	151,717,912.08
Accrued Interest Income from Financial Assets (Net)	729,756.02
TC Premises, Furniture, Fixture and Equipment (Net)	64,305,852.49
Other Intangible Assets (Net)	332,007,361.53
Deferred Tax Asset	3,841,799.48
Other Assets (Net)	235,058,342.43
TOTAL ASSETS	833,496,413.21
LIABILITIES	
Income Tax Payable	5,016,062.65
Finance Lease Payment Payable	46,258,893.31
Other Taxes and Licenses Payable	10,792,997.52
Accrued Other Expenses	70,429,617.23
Deferred Tax Liabilities	-
Provisions	23,456,250.46
Other Liabilities	337,789,576.43
TOTAL LIABILITIES	493,743,397.60
STOCKHOLDER'S EQUITY	
Paid-in Capital Stock	212,871,251.00
Additional Paid-in Capital	87,149,761.00
Retained Earnings	21,219,779.63
Undivided Profits	16,536,861.42
Other Comprehensive Income	1,975,362.56
TOTAL STOCKHOLDER'S EQUITY	339,753,015.61
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	
(1) Trust Accounts	289,499,514,016.222
(2) Deficiency Claims Receivable	-
(3) Items Held as Collateral	-
(4) Late Payment Received	-
(5) Derivatives	-
(6) Others	-
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	289,499,514,016.222
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Return on Equity (ROE)	5.84%
Return on Assets (RoA)	3.70%
Percentage of total trust fees to AUM	0.47%
DOSRI Loans and Receivables	0
Past Due DOSRI Loans and Receivables	0
Total outstanding investments to DOSRI and related parties	0

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.
 We, Phillip S. Hagedorn and Andrew P. Caw of the above-mentioned trust corporation do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Balance Sheet are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) PHILLIP S. HAGEDORN
 President

(Sgd.) ANDREW P. CAW
 Head, ATRAM Funds

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME this November 23, 2023, affiant exhibiting to me their Driver's License No. N01-84-007815 issued in Manila valid until July 28, 2026 and Driver's License No. N02-93-212528 issued in Manila valid until November 18, 2031.

ATTY. ROLAND E. CASPIRAS
 Notary Public, City of Manila
 Notarial Commission No. 2023018
 Exp. Date: 31-03-24
 2407 C.A. St. Lungsod ng Sampaloc
 Roll of Attorneys No. 84035
 PTR No. 0822024JAN 3, 2023 H.A.
 007 Membership No. 243549 / 08250022
 MCLE: Examinable G.R.O. No. 2008

Book No.: 34
Page No.: 8
Doc No.: 12
Series of 2023