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Ascott planning 15 more properties in Philippines

HOSPITALITY chain The Ascott Limited aims to have 31 properties in the Philippines in the next three to five years, with 16 currently operational and 15 more in the pipeline, a company official said.

"There are 15 more Ascott properties to come in the next three to five years, [and] we are really excited about the Philippines," Ascott Philippines Country General Manager Philip Barnes told reporters last week.

Properties set to open this year include Citadines Bacolod, Somerset Valero in Makati, and Somerset Gorordo in Cebu, with plans for Citadines Greenhills, Ascott DoubleDragon in Pasay, and Citadines Paragon in Davao for the following year.

Ascott launched its Citadines Roces Quezon City serviced apartment on Jan. 19, marking its 16th property in the Philippines, while on Jan. 16, the 159-room lyf Cebu City hotel opened, marking

the 15th property for Ascott in the country.

Citadines Roces offers various apartment configurations, including studio deluxe, studio executive, one-bedroom deluxe, one-bedroom executive, one-bedroom premier, two-bedroom premier, and three-bedroom premier.

The property boasts facilities such as a fitness center, swimming pool, laundrette services, lounge, meeting rooms, function rooms, and an in-house modern Filipino restaurant named Alejo.

"As we take on this exciting journey, we hope to create a dynamic environment that's one with the vibrant spirit of Quezon City. We look forward to crafting a future where every guest grows their love for the city in every second they stay with us," said Citadines Roces Assistant Residence Manager Thea Karissa S. Peregrino. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Manila Water says P4.2-B sewer network project to finish this year

MANILA WATER Co., Inc. on Tuesday said it expects its P4.2-billion sewer network package in Mandaluyong City to be completed this year.

The Mandaluyong West Sewer Network Package 1 is currently 64.49% finished, featuring a 60-million-liter-per-day (MLD) capacity sewer treatment plant (STP), expandable to 120 MLD, the company said in an e-mailed statement.

The sewer project forms part of a 51-kilometer sewer network called the Mandaluyong West-San Juan South-Quezon City South Sewer Project.

Along with the P2.5-billion Hinulugang Taktak STP, the Mandaluyong sewer network is also part of Manila Water's Three-River System Wastewater Master Plan



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to help rehabilitate and protect waterways and provide sanitation and sewerage services.

"Manila Water is ramping up its sewerage and sanitation ser-

vices to reach more customers as part of its Service Improvement Plan," Manila Water Corporate Communications Affairs Group Director Jeric T. Sevilla said.

"The company is investing heavily in wastewater infrastructure to contribute to better community health and promote environmental sustainability," he added.

By 2037, the sewer network is expected to serve 704,260 residents of Mandaluyong, San Juan, and Quezon City.

At the local bourse on Tuesday, shares of Manila Water climbed by six centavos or 0.32% to close at P18.60 apiece.

The water concessionaire serves the east zone network of Metro Manila, covering parts of Marikina, Pasig, Makati, Taguig, Pateros, Mandaluyong, San Juan, portions of Quezon City and Manila, and several towns in Rizal province. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

Century Pacific Food plans to boost renewable energy investment

CENTURY Pacific Food, Inc. (CNPF) is investing further in renewable energy initiatives, the listed food and beverage company said on Tuesday.

In a statement, CNPF said it plans to increase the capacity of its solar facility in General Santos to 8.6 megawatts (MW), a 65% boost from the previous 5.2 MW, with a total investment of P380 million since 2021.

"In addition to being an environmentally forward choice for CNPF, investing in solar unlocks value for the company and enhances our operational resilience," CNPF President and Chief Executive Officer Teodoro Alexander T. Po said.

The solar facility has generated more than 15 million kilowatt hours since its commissioning in 2021, the company said.

The company is also constructing a biomass broiler as an alternate energy source to power its coconut facility.

"The new boiler will utilize coconut shells as biomass fuel, converting by-products into energy and eliminating coal usage in the process," it said.

"On a broader scale, the company anticipates a substantial 36% reduction in overall coal consumption across its factory," it added.

Coconut shells are by-products of the company's processing of coconut meat products and derivatives.

CNPF Vice-President for Coconut Original Equipment Manufacturer Noel M. Tempongko said that the company will focus on decreasing its environmental impact amid increasing demand for coconut products in local and international markets.

"The expansion of our biomass boilers, utilizing coconut shells from our operations, also serves as an eco-friendly substitute for coal, contributing to substantial reductions in carbon emissions," Mr. Tempongko added.

Another biomass broiler would be constructed during the second quarter of the year, the company said.

"Our company's pursuit of growth runs alongside our desire for longevity. This necessitates a commitment to responsible business practices and creating long-lasting, positive impact on both our bottom line and the planet," Mr. Po added.

Century Pacific's shares fell by 1.58% or 0.55 centavos, to close at P34.25 per share on Tuesday. — **Adrian H. Halili**



Redefining Makati: Progress, Resilience, and Groundbreaking Projects

Excerpts from Makati Mayor Abby Binay's State of the City Address

The year 2023 was not without its tests. The political shift resulting from the departure of ten barangays presented significant challenges, impacting approximately 300,000 citizens. However, we have not passively accepted this change. We are actively working to support those affected, ensuring they remain an integral part of our Makati family. We are committed to rebuilding and strengthening community ties, fostering an environment of inclusivity and value for every resident, regardless of their district.

Despite these challenges, Makati's financial standing remains strong. Our impressive business tax revenue in 2023, which exceeded our target by 31.74 percent, is solid

proof of our local economy's resilience. This financial strength enables us to plan for the future with confidence. Our approved P19.7-billion budget for 2024 is a clear indication of our commitment to progress and resilience.

This year, anticipate groundbreaking projects that will redefine our cityscape.

The Makati Life Medical Center will be fully operational in the first half of 2024, enhancing our medical facilities and services across the city.

We will also launch the Makati Columbarium, providing a dignified resting place for our departed loved ones.

To ensure the safety and well-being of our residents, a new state-of-the-art Fire and Police Station will soon open, equipped with the latest technology and resources to enhance our emergency response capabilities.

We are also initiating the purchase of electric vehicles for our city's fleet, promoting eco-friendly transportation and contributing to our sustainability goals.

These are the highlights of our programs and services for the first half of the year alone.

To our partners in the business community, your steadfast support has been integral to our city's

growth. In recognition of this, I have ordered a comprehensive review on the possibility of lowering the Real Property Tax and other local taxes.

This initiative reflects our commitment to creating a business-friendly environment, providing relief to our entrepreneurs, and fostering sustained economic development in Makati.

As we embark on these transformative projects and initiatives, let us collectively stride into a future of progress and unity.

Your continued support is not only appreciated but essential as we work together to make Makati a beacon of innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth.