

SPX Express sorting hub in Laguna set to serve major regions

SPX Express, a logistics partner of the e-commerce giant Shopee, has introduced its inaugural automated and largest sorting center in the country, located in Calamba, Laguna.

"There's a lot of focus for SPX Express to really push speed, reliability, and productivity, efficiency — all of these together. And I think part of that requires some of this engineering," SPX Express Head Martin Yu told reporters on Wednesday.

With a warehouse space of 25,000 square meters, the sorting center boasts a processing capacity of over three million parcels per day.

From inbound to outbound, the processing time can take up to three minutes for bulky parcels and up to one hour for sacks.

Specifically designed to cater to shoppers in key regions, including the National Capital Region, Greater Manila Area, south Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, the sorting center is poised to significantly contribute to SPX Express' regional delivery network, according to Mr. Yu.

"There are people who are designated to deal with error parcels, and they have to check it, and it involves calling the buyers, calling the sellers, and checking how we can best manage such issues," he said.

"And I think that's the benefit that this state-of-the-art technology gives us. It helps us catch those much better," he added.

Currently, the company has two sorting centers in the Philippines, with one equipped with an automatic sorting machine.

The company said that the sorting efficiency has increased by 60%, and the lead time for every parcel going through the new facility has been reduced by approximately two hours.

SPX Express, launched in 2018, offers delivery services across Southeast Asia, supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises, brands, and sellers.

The company operates a nationwide network of delivery centers across more than 300 hubs.

"The e-commerce industry remains to be the main growth driver of the local digital economy," SPX Express said in a statement.

"With the Philippines being among the fastest-growing e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia, there is a necessity to enhance infrastructures to meet the growing demands of customers," it added.

E-commerce is expected to drive the Philippines' digital economy, which is seen to expand by 21% annually to hit \$24 billion by 2025, according to the e-Conomy SEA report by Google, Temasek Holdings, and Bain & Company.

It is seen to reach \$60 billion in gross merchandise value by 2030. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

Ayala Land sets P100-billion capex budget for this year

AYALA Land, Inc. (ALI) has allocated P100 billion for its capital expenditure (capex) budget this year, with plans to launch P115 billion worth of projects, the property developer's chief financial officer said.

The company's capex budget for 2024 is 16% higher than the P86.2 billion allocated for capex last year, ALI Chief Finance Officer Augusto D. Bengzon said during a briefing on Tuesday.

"In terms of the 2024 capex breakdown totaling P100 billion, 34% would go to the residential business, 24% for estate development, 19% for land acquisition, 10% for malls, 8% for offices, and 5% for hotels and resorts," he added.

He also said that ALI aims to launch projects worth P115 billion this year, comprising P100 billion in residential projects and P15 billion in commercial and industrial projects.

Mr. Bengzon added that 44% of the launches will be in Metro

Manila, 38% in Southern Luzon, 11% in Visayas, and Mindanao, and 7% in Central Luzon.

"We will launch 52% as horizontal projects and 48% as vertical projects," Mr. Bengzon said.

For commercial leasing, he said that ALI will complete 68,000 square meters (sq.m.) of gross leasable area consisting of Ayala Malls Vermosa (38,000 sq.m.), Ayala Malls Evo City (18,000 sq.m.), and Park Triangle (22,000 sq.m.).

The company will also add 98,000 sq.m. of gross leasable area for office spaces.

ALI President and Chief Executive Officer Anna Ma. Margarita Bautista-Dy said that 80% of the launches will be in the premium segment while the remaining 20% will be in the core segment.

"The market that we feel is more robust is really the premium segment, which is why we are ready and really improving all our quality, our specification to make

sure that we continue to lead in that particular segment," she said.

"The core segment is very reliant on mortgage, while the premium segment is less reliant on mortgage. Inflation and everything that has happened since the pandemic, it's usually the middle market that is more vulnerable to changes while the premium segment is a little more resilient," she added.

ALI is continuing to improve on its core brands such as middle-income brand Avida, she noted.

"Over the medium term, with a country like the Philippines, we need the core to come back, which is why now we continue to nurture our Avida brand. We have the land bank and the projects. We continue to plan and we intend to have projects on push-button mode, so that if there should be opportunities, we will be very quick in being able to capture market changes," she said.

"We need the core to grow. That's really where most of the Fili-



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pinos are. That's a segment that we will continue to participate in a big way just as soon as market conditions improve," she added.

ALI posted a 32% increase in its 2023 net income to P24.5 billion led by strong property demand and consumer activity. The company's consolidated revenue climbed by 18% to P148.9 billion.

On Wednesday, ALI shares rose by 1.86% or 65 centavos to P35.55 apiece. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Aboitiz InfraCapital eyes expansion of LIMA Estate business hub

ABOITIZ InfraCapital, Inc. is planning to expand the business hub of its LIMA Estate by 40 hectares within the first half, the infrastructure arm of the Aboitiz group said on Wednesday.

"Our vision for LIMA is to create a dynamic, innovative, and socially responsible urban center that resonates with the lifestyles of Batangueños and those seeking an appealing alternative

outside Metro Manila," Rafael P. Fernandez de Mesa, head of Aboitiz InfraCapital Economic Estates, said in a statement.

Located in Lipa and Malvar, Batangas, Aboitiz InfraCapital's LIMA Estate is an 800-hectare economic zone, serving as an industrial and economic estate in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (Calabarzon).

LIMA's Estate's business district is a 30-hectare hub.

Its planned expansion is targeted within the first half of the year which will include commercial, retail, mixed-use and residential space, Aboitiz InfraCapital said.

"The upcoming launch of LIMA Tower One, the first of seven towers in LIMA's Office Park, is a significant step in supporting the needs of growing companies, especially in IT and business services," the company said.

The tower is set to open within the year. It will offer seven stories of office spaces, it said.

"At LIMA Estate, we prioritize innovation, community engagement, and sustainability. By embracing a more holistic approach, we are paving the way for the future of central business districts not only in the Philippines but also around the globe," Mr. Fernandez said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

Beyond rides and deliveries: A look at how these Filipinos succeed in life with the help of Grab

Grab for many Filipino consumers is a safe, reliable, and cost-effective online marketplace that connects them with vital aspects of their everyday life — may it be in transportation, on-demand deliveries, and financial services.

Having established a strong presence in the Philippines for over a decade, Grab has developed a deep understanding of the dynamic needs of the local market — enabling it to introduce hyperlocal solutions that uplift the lives of its Filipino users. Consequent to this, Filipinos have increased their reliance on and appreciation of superapps like Grab, witnessing how this technology is making their life more seamless with just a few taps on their smartphones.

Today, Grab remains at the forefront of shaping digital mobility and on-demand deliveries in the Philippines as it offers its suite of services in more than a hundred cities across the country. The superapp experience, founded on Grab's key services GrabCar, GrabTaxi, GrabFood, GrabMart, and GrabExpress, has allowed the leading superapp to redefine the modern Filipino lifestyle in a digital-first post-pandemic era.

Grab continues to outserve the evolving needs of its consumers, it becomes more indispensable in the lives of many Filipinos. This allows Grab to gain a strategic advantage in providing programs, initiatives, and solutions to empower its growing community of partners in the Philippines.

Grab recognizes the strong linkage between the quality of service it renders to its consumers and the welfare and social mobility of its partners. This continuously inspires Grab to leverage its growth, leadership, and tech expertise to be an effective vehicle of economic progress and an enabler of livelihood for every *kuya* and *ate* Grab. This is demonstrated by the success stories of partners like GrabCar Driver Erlita Lebosada, GrabFood Delivery-Partner Christofer Maglinao, and GrabFood Cyclist Sarah Aguja.

Erlita Lebosada: A Mother's Drive Towards Success

Erlita Lebosada, a dedicated GrabCar driver-partner, has been a valuable member of the Grab driver community for over eight years. "Ang Grab ang pangunahin naming source of income ng tatlo kong anak. Bilang isang single mother, naging napaka-halaga sa akin na merong stable at maganda na kita para masiguro na 'di lang kami nakakaraos sa araw-araw, kundi nakakapamahay nang komportable." After years of dedication and hard work, Erlita has finally achieved her dream of owning a six-seater Toyota Innova. Passengers who have the pleasure of riding with Erlita are in for a delightful experience, as she proudly operates her vehicle as a Hello Kitty-themed GrabCar — marrying her love for driving and the global feline icon by adorning her vehicle with her personal collectibles. "Mahalaga na masaya ang mga pasahero kaya maliban sa safe na pag-da-drive at magandang service, nakakatuwa na nakapagbibigay tayo ng ngiti 'pag nakikita nila si Hello Kitty. Masaya ako na makapag-bigay nang maginhawang transportasyon sa mga commuter kasama ang mga collectibles ko. At syempre, nakakagalak na naitataguyod ko ang aking pamilya sa pamamagitan ng passion ko na ito."

Erlita, a single mother, emphasizes the significance of the work flexibility provided by Grab. This flexibility allows her to manage her time effectively, prioritizing her responsibilities as a mother above all else. She appreciates the autonomy Grab offers, stating, "Sa Grab, wala akong boss kaya hawak ko ang oras ko. Dahil dito, natutukan ko ang aking mga anak habang pinapanatili ko ang aking hanapbuhay."

Christofer Maglinao: Dreams Achieved One Delivery at a Time

In an ADB study in 2023, it was revealed that the average daily income of GrabFood delivery-partners is approximately double the minimum wage, allowing them to



With her Hello Kitty-themed GrabCar, Erlita proudly drives around the metro ferrying passengers as she provides for her three young children.



Sarah Aguja was named Padyak Champion 2023 by The Mobility Awards, recognizing her exemplary work as a cyclist and delivery-partner.

effectively enjoy above-par earnings on the platform. This optimal earnings potential continues to attract Filipinos aspiring for a better life for themselves and their families.

Among them is former ice cream agent and *ukay-ukay* seller Christofer Maglinao — a GrabFood delivery-partner. "Okay naman po ang kita ko noon, pero sa GrabFood bilang rider, mas natutustusan ko po ang pangangailangan ng aking pamilya, lalo na pagdating sa maintenance medicine ng aking mga magulang."

Christofer serves as his family's primary provider. Now in his fourth year as a delivery-partner, Christofer looks back at key milestones he was able to achieve thanks to his dedication to his livelihood. Among those that he takes most pride in is sending his siblings to school and being able to sustain his family's day-to-day essentials.

As a proud owner of his motorcycle, Christofer now plies the road more confidently as he inches closer to his dreams one delivery at a time — with his next stop being buying his family's very own home.

Sarah Aguja: A Champion Peddling Through the Metro

Sarah Francesca Aguja, a dedicated GrabFood delivery-partner since June 22, 2019, transitioned from the corporate world to prioritize her mental well-being. She appreciates the flexible schedule Grab offers, allowing her to enjoy hobbies and time with loved ones. Sarah's main goal is to support her parents, her mother with chronic diseases, and her retired father. Her role at GrabFood not only covers their daily needs but also allows her to save for emergencies and leisure activities. As a member of the Grab cycling group, she enjoys special incentives and welfare programs like insurance packages —

empowering her to brave the roads of the metro with an extra layer of safety and protection.

Sarah has recently been honored with the prestigious title of Padyak Champion by The Mobility Awards. This accolade is exclusively bestowed upon the most exceptional cyclist messengers and delivery riders who are involved in on-demand and parcel delivery services. This accomplishment serves as a powerful endorsement of their extraordinary dedication and superior performance in the delivery industry, all while upholding sustainable transportation methods.

"Malaki po ang pasasalamat ko na ako ay naging isang GrabFood Cyclist. Dahil dito, natutustusan ko at nasusuportahan ko ang aking pamilya. Bukod dito, nakakapag-travel din ako na isa sa mga kinahihilingan ko. Katulad ng Grab, hindi po ako tumitigil sa paghahanap ng paraan para mas mapabuti pa ang aking hanapbuhay. Sa pamamagitan ng aking pagdedeliver, ako rin po ay unti-unti na rin na nakakapag-invest sa mga negosyo at stocks," Sarah proudly shares.

A Viable Livelihood for Kuya and Ate Grab

The aspirations of Grab partners revolve around a central theme — to attain a brighter future for themselves and those that they hold dear in life. This reality serves as a polestar for Grab in growing and sustaining a robust marketplace that is best positioned to provide a viable livelihood to every partner.

Grab Philippines Country Head Grace Vera Cruz shares, "It is a common view that Grab is a towering figure in the Philippine tech and mobility industry. And this stature transcends mere business figures for us — it is a meaningful quest to lift as many more Filipinos with us as we sustain our ecosystem's growth. This is why Grab is committed to striving every day to be the best superapp for the everyday Filipino because thousands of individuals, like Erlita, Christofer, and Sarah, depend on us to lead the way."