

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,628.20

▲ 69.57 PTS.

▲ 1.06%

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

Table with 10 columns and 3 rows of stock tickers including AC, ACEN, AEV, AGI, ALI, BDO, BLOOM, BPI, CNPF, CNVRG, DMC, EMI, GLO, GTCAP, ICT, JFC, JGS, LTG, MBT, MER, MONDE, NIKL, PGOLD, SCC, SM, SMC, SMPH, TEL, URC, and WLCON.

REIT listing for PLDT's data center arm may draw investor interest — analysts

By Ashley Erika O. Jose
Reporter

A REAL ESTATE investment trust (REIT) listing for the data center arm of PLDT Inc. is expected to draw interest from investors, according to analysts.

PLDT is in talks to sell up to 49% of its data center business to Japan's Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT), but it is also open to a REIT listing if the valuation targets are not achieved.

"Business is business. If they cannot meet the target objective of valuation for PLDT, we have to talk to others who offer high valuation. If we cannot get the values from equity investors, let's say we decided to keep control, we might get a REIT listing for the data centers," PLDT Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Manuel V. Pangilinan said during the company's financial briefing on May 9.

Sought for comment, Chinabank Capital Corp. Managing Director Juan Paolo E. Colet said in a Viber message: "A data center REIT listing on the PSE would be the first of its kind in the local market, so that novelty factor alone will draw the attention of investors."

"There's also a potentially good investment story given the secular tailwinds for the digital infrastructure industry, foremost of which are the growth of artificial intelligence and the expansion of the digital ecosystem," he added.

To date, PLDT, through its subsidiary ePLDT, has 11 data centers, including the 50-megawatt hyperscale data center in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, which is expected to be completed by July.

REITs are companies that own real estate-related assets, generating income from properties like land, buildings, and real estate securities. They are created to provide an alternative to illiquid real estate investments, offering a liquid asset class. Publicly traded

property stocks, such as REITs, enable investors to access real assets.

"PLDT's data center REIT could be a good option for investors seeking exposure to the growing data center market," First Grade Finance, Inc. Managing Director Astro C. del Castillo said in a Viber message.

The Philippines is seen as an attractive location for hyperscalers as the country is strategically positioned to take advantage of the transitions in the Southeast Asian region.

For Mr. Del Castillo, a possible REIT listing is expected to generate interest due to the growing data center demand.

"The data center demand is growing and this bodes well for stable and potentially growing income for investors. Another reason would be PLDT estimates the data center business to be worth over \$1 billion. REITs are known for offering good dividends, so investors could benefit from a share of that value," he said.

However, he also said, since this would be the first REIT listing of its kind in the Philippines, investors might be cautious about the track record and stability of payments to investors.

High interest rates are also a factor to consider and may sway investors due to the current conditions, Mr. Colet said.

"At the end of the day, investors will focus primarily on the total return, especially the dividend yield, that a REIT can deliver to shareholders. Since we are in an elevated interest rate environment, investors will demand premium dividend yields, which will lower the IPO (initial public offering) valuation of a REIT," he said.

Last year, PLDT said it was targeting to grow its data centers by up to 25% with a planned expansion in Luzon.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has a majority stake in BusinessWorld through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls.

Maynilad receives SEC approval for blue bond issuance

MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. said the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has approved its proposed blue bond issuance.

The SEC confirmed Maynilad's proposal to issue Series A Blue Bonds due 2029 and Series B Blue Bonds due 2034, the company said in a statement on Thursday.

This complies with the ASEAN Green Bond Standards, as well as SEC Memorandum Circular No. 12 from 2018 and SEC Memorandum Circular No. 15 from 2023.

"This is the first Blue Bond public offering in the Philippines," the company said.

Maynilad is proposing to offer up to P12 billion of fixed rate with an over-subscription option of up to P3 billion, subject to the company's compliance with certain remaining requirements.

The company is targeting to offer the blue bonds from May 27 to May 31 and issue and list on the Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp. on June 7.

Net proceeds from the offer are intended to finance sustainable water and wastewater management projects, according to the company.

The SEC said blue bonds refer to "a subset of green bonds and Sukuk whose proceeds will exclusively be used to finance or refinance new and/or existing eligible blue projects and activities."

Eligible blue projects are classified into several categories, including sustainable fisheries management, sustainable aquaculture, wastewater management, and marine and offshore renewable energy that do not harm marine ecosystems, among others.

Maynilad's blue bonds have been rated "PRS Aaa" with a stable outlook by the Philippine Rating Services Corp.

The company has tapped BPI Capital Corp. as the sole issue manager for the offer. BPI Capital will also act as joint lead underwriter and joint bookrunner, together with BDO Capital & Investment Corp., First Metro Investment Corp., and East West Banking Corp.

Maynilad serves the cities of Manila, except San Andres and Sta. Ana. It also operates in Quezon City, Makati, Calocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, and Malabon. It also supplies the cities of Cavite, Bacoor, and Imus, and the towns of Kawit, Noveleta, and Rosario, all in Cavite province.

Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which has a majority stake in Maynilad, is one of three Philippine units of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has an interest in BusinessWorld through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — Sheldeen Joy Talavera

GT Capital attributes Q1 growth to key sectors

LISTED conglomerate GT Capital Holdings, Inc. saw its first-quarter (Q1) attributable net income grow by 7.1% to P7.11 billion, led by its banking, automotive, and insurance businesses.

"This was driven by the record performance of Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. (Metrobank), the net income of which is at P12 billion, Toyota Motor Philippines (TMP), which realized a net income of P4 billion, and AXA Philippines Life and General Insurance Corporation (AXA Philippines) with a net income of P 728 million," the company said in a statement on Thursday.

"Federal Land, Inc. (Federal Land) recorded a net income of P291 million, while associate Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) also contributed to GT Capital's robust performance during the period," it added.

Combined revenues for the first-quarter period rose 6.2% to P74.1 billion from P69.8 billion in the corresponding period a year ago. — Ashley Erika O. Jose

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code or by typing the link <tinyurl.com/4pxhre2p>

Manila Water divests from Bulacan water companies

MANILA Water Co., Inc. announced on Thursday its subsidiary's divestment from Bulacan Water Co., Inc. (BWCI) and Obando Water Co., Inc. (OWCI) for a total of P1.02 billion to fund other initiatives.

Filipinas Water Holdings Corp. (FWHC) has signed a share purchase agreement with SMC Bulacan Water Services Corp. for the sale of all of FWHC's interests, Manila Water said in a regulatory filing.

The interests constituted a 90% stake in BWCI, amounting to 135 million shares, and a 90% stake in OWCI, amounting to 88.2 million shares.

BWCI is a joint venture corporation with Bulacan Water District to operate the concession for the provision of water and sanitation services in Bulacan town.

Meanwhile, OWCI is a joint venture corporation with Obando Water District to operate the concession in the Municipality of Obando, both in the province of Bulacan.

Manila Water 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

ALLIED COMMERCIAL BANK
XIAMEN, CHINA
新联商业银行

NOTICE TO ALL SHAREHOLDERS
告全体股东书

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Art. 7 Par. 20 of the Articles of Association and By Laws of Allied Commercial Bank (February 2023 Revision), the annual meeting of the shareholders of Allied Commercial Bank shall be convened at 10:00 A.M. on 1 June 2024 via Microsoft Teams as resolved in the Board Meeting on 13 April 2024 to consider the following matters, among others:

根据新联商业银行章程（2023年2月修订版）第七章第二十条的规定，兹通知：经2024年4月13日董事会会议决议，银行年度股东会会议将于2024年6月1日上午10:00以视频会议方式召开，审议以下事项：

- 1. Call to Order. 会议召集。
2. Proof of Notice of Meeting/Certification of Quorum. 会议通知证实/法定人数认证。
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Shareholders' Meeting on 22 April 2023 and the Minutes of the Special Shareholders' Meeting on 14 October 2023. 审批于2023年4月22日召开的年度股东会会议纪要及于2023年10月14日召开的临时股东大会会议纪要。
4. Annual Report to Shareholders, including related party transactions and the proposed budget for 2024. 向股东作年度报告，包括关联交易，以及2024年的拟议预算。
5. Approval of the External Auditor's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year 2023. 审批2023年度外部审计报告。
6. Ratification of all Acts, Transactions and Resolutions of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Board Committees and Management for the year 2023. O批准2023年银行董事会、执行委员会、董事会下设的专业委员会及管理层的一切行为、事务处理及决议。
7. Election of Directors, for years 1 October 2024 - 30 September 2027. 选举董事，任期为2024年10月1日- 2027年9月30日。
8. Election of Board Supervisor(s), for years 1 October 2024 - 30 September 2027. 选举监事，任期为2024年10月1日- 2027年9月30日。
9. Report of the Board Supervisor. 监事报告。
10. Appointment of External Auditor for calendar year 2024. 聘请2024年度外部审计机构。
11. Confirmation of Board appraisal of ACB's major shareholder for Year 2023. 通报对新联商业银行主要股东/大股东2023年各项情况的评估结果。
12. Other matters. 其他事项。

All shareholders are cordially invited to attend the meeting in person. However, if you cannot personally attend the meeting and you wish to be represented thereat, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a proxy instrument to the Office of the Chairman at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue corner Legaspi Street, Makati City, not later than the close of business on 27 May 2024.

诚意邀请全体股东出席本次会议。然而，如果您无法亲自出席，但有委托他人代理表决的意愿，请不迟于2024年5月27日向董事长办公室，Allied Bank Centre, 6754 Ayala Avenue corner Legaspi Street, Makati, City, Philippines, 送达书面委托。

For and on behalf of
ALLIED COMMERCIAL BANK
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
新联商业银行董事会

(Sgd.)
LUCIO C. TAN, Chairman
陈永裁, 董事长

30 April 2024
2024年4月30日