

## Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,619.89

▼40.10 PTS.

▼0.6%

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2024

BusinessWorld

## PSEI MEMBER STOCKS

<b>AC</b> Ayala Corp. P617.00 -P8.00 -1.28%	<b>ACEN</b> ACEN Corp. P5.01 +P0.01 +0.2%	<b>AEV</b> Aboltiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P37.70 -P0.10 -0.26%	<b>AGI</b> Alliance Global Group, Inc. P9.08 -P0.02 -0.22%	<b>ALI</b> Ayala Land, Inc. P28.85 -P0.55 -1.87%	<b>BDO</b> BDO Unibank, Inc. P135.70 -P0.80 -0.59%	<b>BLOOM</b> Bloomerry Resorts Corp. P10.80 -P0.04 -0.37%	<b>BPI</b> Bank of the Philippine Islands P123.00 -P1.00 -0.81%	<b>CNPF</b> Century Pacific Food, Inc. P36.05 +P0.05 +0.14%	<b>CNVRG</b> Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P10.68 -P0.02 -0.19%
<b>DMC</b> DMCI Holdings, Inc. P11.00 -P0.08 -0.72%	<b>EMI</b> Emperador, Inc. P18.64 +P0.44 +2.42%	<b>GLO</b> Globe Telecom, Inc. P2,006.00 ---	<b>GTCAP</b> GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P622.00 -P4.00 -0.64%	<b>ICT</b> International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P353.00 +P1.80 +0.51%	<b>JFC</b> Jollibee Foods Corp. P230.00 +P1.00 +0.44%	<b>JGS</b> JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P32.00 +P0.20 +0.63%	<b>LTG</b> LT Group, Inc. P10.22 +P0.02 +0.2%	<b>MBT</b> Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P69.00 +P0.55 +0.8%	<b>MER</b> Manila Electric Co. P369.00 -P5.80 -1.55%
<b>MONDE</b> Monde Nissin Corp. P11.00 -P0.36 -3.17%	<b>NIKL</b> Nickel Asia Corp. P4.29 -P0.03 -0.69%	<b>PGOLD</b> Puregold Price Club, Inc. P24.60 -P0.10 -0.4%	<b>SCC</b> Semirara Mining and Power Corp. P33.05 -P0.75 -2.22%	<b>SM</b> SM Investments Corp. P896.00 +P1.00 +0.11%	<b>SMC</b> San Miguel Corp. P102.30 -P0.20 -0.2%	<b>SMPH</b> SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P27.50 -P1.20 -4.18%	<b>TEL</b> PLDT Inc. P1,420.00 +P20.00 +1.43%	<b>URC</b> Universal Robina Corp. P107.90 +P0.90 +0.84%	<b>WLCON</b> Wilcon Depot, Inc. P19.46 -P0.52 -2.6%

# Megaworld allots initial P5B for 150-ha beachside golf estate

LISTED property developer Megaworld Corp. said it has earmarked an initial P5 billion to develop a Batangas beachside golf estate in the next ten years.

The company, through its subsidiary Global-Estate Resorts, Inc. (GER), is developing the 150-hectare Lialto Beach and Golf Estates in Lian town, Batangas, marking its 32<sup>nd</sup> township development, Megaworld said in an e-mailed statement over the weekend.

Lialto Beach and Golf Estates will include a residential village, an 18-hole golf course by the bay, a beach clubhouse featuring a 20-meter tall lighthouse, landscaped gardens, and nearly one kilometer of coastline.

The residential village of the property will offer lots ranging

from 300 square meters to 1,200 square meters in size, including those situated along the fairways and on elevated areas.

"We designed this development for people who want to be surrounded by the beautiful vistas of the beach and the sea, while also enjoying an unparalleled golf lifestyle," Megaworld Global-Estate, Inc. Vice-President of Sales and Marketing Javier Romeo K. Abustan said.

The property's beach clubhouse will be exclusive to property owners and their guests. It will feature a modern, resort-inspired reception lobby, swimming pools with cabanas and lounge areas, changing rooms, children's playground, a multi-purpose covered

court, outdoor tennis court, yoga area, pocket parks and open spaces, and a viewing deck.

"Lialto came from the words 'Lian,' which is the municipality where the development is located, and 'Alto,' which means high altitude or height, a vivid description of how this development stands on an elevated area in this side of Batangas," Mr. Abustan said.

The property will also have solar-powered streetlights. It will also adopt a mangrove area along the beach that will become the community's protected marine sanctuary, the company said.

The project is approximately 2.5 hours away from Metro Manila and about 45 minutes away from Tagaytay.

From Makati or Taguig, it can be accessed via the South Luzon Expressway and the Cavite-Laguna Expressway leading to the Calatagan-Lian Highway.

Other GERI communities include Eastland Heights in Antipolo, Rizal; Twin Lakes in Laurel, Batangas; Boracay Newcoast in Boracay Island; The Hamptons Caliraya in Lumban-Cavinti, Laguna; Sta. Barbara Heights in Iloilo; Arden Botanical Estate in Trece Martires-Tanza, Cavite; Southwoods City in the Laguna-Cavite boundary; and Sherwood Hills in Trece Martires, Cavite.

Megaworld shares were last traded on May 24 at P1.85 apiece. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochoa**

## OUTLIER

### ALI shares fall despite block share success

AYALA Land, Inc.'s (ALI) shares fell last week despite success in block share selling, attributed to investor profit taking and delays in Fed rate cuts.

According to the Philippine Stock Exchange, a total of 64.6 million worth of P1.89-billion ALI shares were exchanged on the market from May 20 to May 24, making it the second-most actively traded stock last week.

ALI closed at P28.85 on Friday, down by 1.9% from P29.40 per share a week ago. Year to date, the price dropped by 16.3%.

"The decline this week was brought about by softer market sentiments amid fresh worries of a delay in Fed rate cuts and profit taking in ALI after an 8% rally," China Bank Securities Corp. Research Director Rastine Mackie D. Mercado said in an e-mail.

From May 13 to May 17, Ayala Land, Inc. saw a rally as the price per share surged from P27.75 on Monday to P29.40 on Friday's close.

Following the rise in the share price of ALI, "foreign investors have persistently offloaded shares," Globalinks Securities and Stocks, Inc. Senior Trader Mark V. Santarina said in a Viber message.

He added that investor sentiment was impacted by both the liquidity event and interest rate fluctuations.

On Tuesday, Federal Reserve policy makers signaled that rate cuts would be pushed back to several more months to ensure that inflation is back to the 2% target, a Reuters report said.

Since July, the Fed has kept the benchmark policy rate at 5.25%-5.5% as inflation was stronger than expected in the last three months.

Similarly, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas monetary board has maintained key rates at 6.5% as inflation accelerated to 3.8% in April from 3.7% in March.

ALI's decline in stock price overshadowed its rise in liquidity following a successful block share sale.

"The block sale initially boosted investor confidence due to the significant capital raised, indicating strong liquidity and strategic financial management by Ayala Land," Mr. Santarina said.

On Wednesday, Ayala Land raised 3.18 billion from a block sale of 98 million AREIT, Inc. shares at P32.45 apiece as part of a property-for-share swap deal. The swap deal includes ALI real estate properties amounting to P11.25 billion in exchange for 252.13 million AREIT primary common shares worth P44.65 apiece.

Mr. Santarina said that the deal resulted in positive short-term sentiment among investors despite this "some investors remained cautious about the long-term impact of asset sales on the company's growth prospects and operational focus."

On the other hand, Mr. Mercado said that this development influenced AREIT's price action more than ALL.

In the first quarter of the year, ALI's net income attributable to parents grew by 39.44% to P6.29 billion from P4.51 billion in the same period last year.

For the January to March period, Ayala Land's net income reached P7.44 billion, 43.35% higher than the P5.19 billion in the same period last year.

Mr. Santarina expects Ayala Land, Inc.'s full-year income to reach P10 billion while its net attributable income is at P8.8 billion.

"[Assuming that there is] continued operational efficiency and favorable market conditions," he said.

Mr. Mercado placed immediate support and resistance levels of ALI at P27.60 and P29.75, respectively.

"Immediate support is anticipated at P28.50, with stronger support at P27.80 if the stock experiences further declines while the major resistance point at P30, which the stock will need to breach to signal a potential upward trend," Mr. Santarina said. — **Andrea C. Abestano with Reuters**

## First Gen says 80-MW projects set for 2024 launch

FIRST Gen Corp. targets to have 80 megawatts (MW) of geothermal energy projects completed by 2024, the company's president said.

This comes after the completion of the 29-MW Palayan Binary Power Plant, First Gen President and Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles B. Puno said on the sidelines of *BusinessWorld's* economic forum last week.

"That just started operating, so it is ideal when there's a need for supply. That's new capacity that's coming as well," Mr. Puno added.

First Gen subsidiary Energy Development Corp. (EDC) announced the construction of the binary power plant in Albay in 2021.

Last year, EDC said it would pour in P60 billion in the next three years to drill 40 additional wells in Leyte, Davao, Albay, and Sorsogon.

"When you look at it, there's P60 billion invested in geothermal, and then for LNG (liquefied natural gas), we invested close to \$400 million. And on top of that, the lease of FSRU (floating storage regasification unit)," Mr. Puno said.

In 2023, First Gen and Prime Infrastructure Capital, Inc., through their subsidiaries, signed a 15-year lease agreement over the former's LNG FSRU in Batangas.

Mr. Puno said that they are waiting for the approval of the Department of Energy to operate at full capacity.

When queried about the necessity for another delivery of LNG cargo, he said: "I believe so. We did not anticipate the surge in demand for electricity due to the elevated temperatures this year."

First Gen has awarded a contract to Chinese company CNOOC Gas and Power Trading & Marketing Ltd. for the supply of one LNG cargo at approximately 130,000 cubic meters.

The LNG will be used by First Gen's existing gas-fired power plants in the First Gen Clean Energy Complex.

The awarded contract stemmed from the initiated fifth tender process for LNG cargo in March. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

## Grab PHL eyes more areas for services by 2<sup>nd</sup> half

GRAB Philippines plans to expand its ride-hailing and food delivery services to key "tourist areas" by the second half of the year, a company official said.

"We are going to continue to expand to more cities, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao for the second half of 2024. Part of the reason for that is because the LTFRB released slots for the Visayas and Mindanao," Grab Philippines Country Head Grace Vera-Cruz said on the sidelines of the *BusinessWorld's* economic forum last week.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has opened slots for transport network vehicle service (TNVS) in Visayas and Mindanao regions.

According to a resolution dated May 7 and signed by its chairman Teofilo E. Guadiz, the LTFRB opened additional TNVS units — 2,300 in Visayas and 2,200 in Mindanao — to "respond to the needs of modern commuters and address the large demand for transport services."

"For those regions that are open, we are really looking to work with

the local government units to ensure that we deliver a good service in those areas," Ms. Vera-Cruz said.

Under the LTFRB resolution, the slots opened in Visayas encompass Western Visayas, Central Visayas, and Eastern Visayas.

For Mindanao, new slots are allocated in the Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao Region, Caraga, and SOCCSKSARGEN (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos City).

"Our transport business will continue to grow because we are

enabled by the LTFRB in opening those regions for us," she said.

The company is also looking to expand its food delivery services to tourist areas.

"For the food business, we still want to grow but we are looking at tourist cities and see if there is enough volume right now," Mr. Vera-Cruz said.

Last month, Grab Philippines said it would expand its food delivery services to at least seven new areas in the country within the year. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

## Angkas now preparing for four-wheel operations, expansion

DBDOYC, Inc., the company behind the Angkas motorcycle taxi app, aims to offer its services to more locations nationwide and is currently preparing to operate four-wheel vehicles, its top official said.

"It is really determining the key cities. I think there is an opportunity for us to be able to expand the Angkas system where it is really needed, especially in the provincial cities," Angkas Chief Executive Officer George I. Royeca said on the sidelines of the *BusinessWorld* Economic Forum last week.

"We hope we will get their approval soon. If we could expand to as many cities as possible, that would be great," he added.

The motorcycle taxi provider is also venturing into the four-wheel business after securing approval to commence operations.

"We have gotten our approval already, so it is just a matter of time. We are in preparation right now. Hopefully, over the next few months, we will see Angcars on the road," he said.

Mr. Royeca said that Angcars will initially launch in Metro Manila, while the fleet size is still being determined.

Angkas expects this new addition to boost the company's overall operations.

"Well, it is definitely a much bigger base. I think it is going to be a high contributor but our hearts are still focused on developing the

informal sector of two-wheels," Mr. Royeca said.

He also said the government should legitimize motorcycle riders as they are a big contributor to the country's economy.

"The informal workers, such as boatmen, masseuses, and *habal-habal* drivers, are already working, but without the help of the government and financial services, and proper access to a lot of these different benefits. What's missing are policies in our economy that recognize them.

Through recognizing the informal sector, we could reinforce their work, significantly boost the economy, and uplift millions of Filipinos almost overnight," he said during the forum. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

## Napocor working to bid out RE hybridization in off-grid areas

STATE-LED National Power Corp. (Napocor) said it targets to complete the bidding process for the Accelerated Hybridization Program (AHP) soon to allow private companies to put up renewables in off-grid areas.

"We made an innovative structure, so they are doing the line-by-line review of the bidding documents and the terms of reference," Ferdinand Martin Y. Roxas, Napocor president and chief executive officer, told reporters on the sidelines of a forum last week.

"Hopefully it becomes approved soon and we are able to bid out by end of May or June," he added.

The AHP is aimed at allowing the private sector to build renewable energy generation plants or facilities to supplement, augment, or replace the existing capacities in the op-

erations of Napocor's Small Power Utilities Group (SPUG) diesel power plants.

Under the program, Napocor plans to bid out four clusters of off-grid areas such as Batanes, Palawan, Bicol, and Tawi-Tawi.

"So, if this became successful, we will think about applying it to the rest of other power plants," Mr. Roxas said.

Mr. Roxas said that the bidding will be under a 20-year contract wherein Napocor will serve as the offtaker and will pay for the energy delivered to its switchyard, including losses.

"It is technologically agnostic, as long as it's RE (renewable energy). We will pay them the SAGR (Subsidized Approved Generation Rate). If the SAGR goes up, we will pay 50% each," Mr. Roxas. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**