

## Araneta group's ACI says Cyberpark Tower 3 on track for 2025 opening

THE ARANETA group's ACI, Inc. said it has topped off its third office building in the five-tower Cyberpark development at Araneta City in Cubao, Quezon City.

The company aims to open the P5-billion building by the first quarter of 2025, Araneta Group Marketing Assistant Vice-President Marjorie C. Go told reporters on Thursday.

She said Cyberpark Towers 4 and 5 have not started construction and are planned within the next five years.

The expansion, she noted, is supported by Cyberpark's proximity to Light Rail Transit 2, the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), jeepney stops, and bus terminals.

"It's a big factor for the office workers that their office area is something accessible or very convenient to go to," she noted, adding the live-work-play environment due to nearby malls, Araneta Center, and New Frontier Theater.

She added that six out of the 28 floors have already been leased to the business process outsourcing company Telus.

"This milestone not only signifies the nearing completion of the latest addition to our expanding Cyberpark business district. It also represents a significant forward for Araneta City's position as a premier business destination in the Philippines," said Rowell L. Recinto, the Araneta group's senior management consultant.

ACI said that the 28-level office space includes three



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basement parking levels and two floors of retail space on its podium.

Cyberpark 3 features a floor area of 2,500 square meters (sq.m.) per floor, with a total gross floor area of 80,000 sq.m. excluding the basement.

According to the company, amenities include a smart elevator system and 100% backup power.

The third tower is the first property in the Cyberpark development to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

This certification program promotes sustainability from construction through to operations in commercial establishments and office buildings.

Among Cyberpark 3's sustainability features are renewable energy solutions, double-glazed ribbon windows, rainwater collection systems, and solar panels. — **A.R.A. Inosante**

# Next-gen gaming platform CRETA sees opportunities in Philippines

NEXT-GENERATION gaming entertainment platform CRETA announced on Thursday that its token is scheduled to debut on the local cryptocurrency exchange Coins.ph on July 8.

Ray Eiichiro Nakazato, chief creative officer of CRETA, made the announcement during the platform's launch event in Taguig City, saying that it is necessary to be listed on "a major crypto exchange in the Philippines."

"CRETA token is a utility token, so all the services we

provide within the CRETA platform, you're going to have to use CRETA token. It is a utility token within the CRETA ecosystem," he said.

Mr. Nakazato also said that the CRETA token will also be listed on the Philippine Digital Asset Exchange platform, although he did not specify a date.

Officially launched on Thursday, CRETA offers a gaming experience on a decentralized metaverse platform where both gamers and professional game studios can

provide Web3 games and new gaming services.

CRETA, headquartered in Dubai, integrates Share to Earn, blending user video sharing platforms with Play to Earn and Create to Earn functionalities.

CRETA also uses blockchain technology called Locus Chain, ensuring that the platform is cost-effective and sustainable. The platform also comes with a proprietary game creation engine that allows users to develop their own games, with the freedom to publish and dis-

tribute their creations as non-fungible tokens.

Mr. Nakazato said that CRETA chose the Philippines for the launch since it is an "emerging market."

"For emerging markets like the Philippines, people and industry are more open to new ideas and new systems. We can try out a lot of new things here. We decided to launch beta testing in Southeast Asia first, then get feedback from users before we go into the mature markets," he said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

## Regulator: Retail electricity prices fall in Q1

THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission (ERC) on Thursday said the average price in the retail electricity market decreased in the first quarter (Q1), leading to increased competition in pricing.

The national average supply price of retail electricity suppliers (RES) in the first three months fell to P5.49 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) from P6 per kWh in the same period last year, the ERC said in a statement.

The latest figure was also lower compared to the prices from distribution utilities (DUs) in 2023, which had an average generation charge of P6.7460 per kWh for captive customers at the national level.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, qualified contestable customers, or end users consuming at

least 500 kilowatts a month, may choose their own power suppliers under the Retail Competition and Open Access scheme.

End users are given the opportunity to participate — on a voluntary basis — in the Competitive Retail Electricity Market (CREM), allowing them to choose from an array of power suppliers that offer cheaper electricity.

Captive customers are those served by DUs in the areas where they are based.

The lower average price in the CREM drove the increase in the number of consumers exercising their right to choose their own suppliers.

As of March, the total number of registered CREM customers increased to 1,999 from 1,918 in 2022, while 330

customers opted for the Green Energy Option.

About 60% of the 3,329 customers are being served under CREM, while the remaining 40% of those eligible are yet to choose their own suppliers and remain under their respective DUs.

"We are optimistic that the retail market will continue to grow as the Commission addresses the issues on market concentration with continuous and more diligent monitoring to prevent and penalize anti-competitive behaviors," ERC Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer Monalisa C. Dimalanta said.

Ms. Dimalanta also said that the ERC has received several applications for RES licenses from non-affiliated entities.

"This is a clear sign of increasing competition in the retail market which should only lead to better choices for our consumers," she said.

The ERC has issued licenses to 48 RES and 29 local RES, which are in-house RES of DUs. Of these, 32 RES and two local RES have active contracts with CREM customers.

The ERC said that the Manila Electric Co. Group remained the largest group in terms of the total number of customers, supplying 678 out of the total 1,999 contestable customers.

Meanwhile, the Aboitiz Group remained the largest affiliate group in terms of demand served, supplying 30% of the 4,208 megawatts actual demand. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

# Reforestation for the birds and turtles of Aboitiz Cleanergy Park

While accustomed to a life on the move below water, female sea turtles use their geomagnetic abilities, or an internal GPS, to return to their place of birth and lay their own eggs.

At the same time, way above, migratory birds also possess their own inner compass, which guide them in moving from low resource areas to areas with high or increasing ones.

For both species, food and nesting locations are major considerations when determining where to go. This puts a premium on places that are bustling with plant life — mangroves for the turtles and trees for the birds — which host fishes and insects for their consumption. This puts emphasis on the importance of conserving and protecting these special sites.

At the coastal area of Punta Dumlalag, Davao, the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park stands as a sanctuary for sea turtles and various bird species, owing to initiatives to populate the site with more trees and mangroves, as well as conscious efforts to conserve and protect wildlife.

### SEA TURTLES AND MANGROVES

Sea turtles can lay over 150 eggs at a time. Beaches with mangroves are among the suitable sea turtle nesting sites since the mangroves' roots and dense vegetation offer safety and protection from predators and the sea waves.

In some cases around the world, mangroves provide temporary shelter, hiding spots, and ample food for the sea turtles. Mangrove ecosystems foster a rich biodiversity of marine organisms, like small fish and crustaceans, making it an ideal breeding and feeding area.

At Aboitiz Cleanergy Park, park personnel patrol its beach to monitor sea turtle nesting activities. A team from Davao Light, an Aboitiz Power Corporation (AboitizPower) distribution utility, along with the Aboitiz Foundation and volunteers, help protect the area through educational campaigns, coastal clean-ups, and mangrove planting.



**Hatched.** A total of 9,507 sea turtle hatchlings have been hatched and released from the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park since 2014, according to Davao Light. Photo is courtesy of the distribution utility.

Further, when the turtle eggs are seen to be vulnerable to being caught by the sea waves, they are transferred to the park's turtle hatchery.

The park held its most recent sea turtle hatchling release last April, involving 90 hatchlings from a nest found in February. In total, 9,507 hatchlings have been released from the area since 2014. These turtles are immediately greeted by a rich coral reef surrounded by a 37-hectare Marine Protected Area.

While only a few will survive into adulthood, conservation efforts and proper waste management remain important to ensure that these endangered creatures can thrive in the oceans. Sea turtles help maintain the health of seagrass beds and



coral reefs. Hawksbill sea turtles, in particular, live on coral reefs and, in their own way, give back to the environment by eating overgrown sponges that suffocate slow-growing corals, resulting in a healthy reef. They also help prevent the overpopulation of jellyfishes in the ocean.

To date, over 21,448 mangroves have been planted at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park's mangrove reforestation site and coastal forest. However, several natural and man-made factors have rendered its survival rate at only 30%, which emphasizes the need for continuous collaborative efforts to plant more mangroves and increase awareness of its importance to sea turtles and the rest of the natural world.



**An absolute hoot.** The nocturnal gold's frogmouth, a near-threatened species solely found in Southeast Asia, rests on a tree branch at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park. Photo is courtesy of Davao Light.

### BIRDS AND TREES

Similarly, birds have a symbiotic relationship with trees. Most build their nests in trees as strong branches and dense canopies can keep their eggs and themselves safe from predators and other external threats. Barks are also adequate materials for building nests.

When it comes to food, flowers and leaves attract insects which are critical to a bird's diet. Trees also provide other varieties of food, including sap, nuts, and fruit, as well as water that collects on its leaves, which birds use for drinking and bathing.

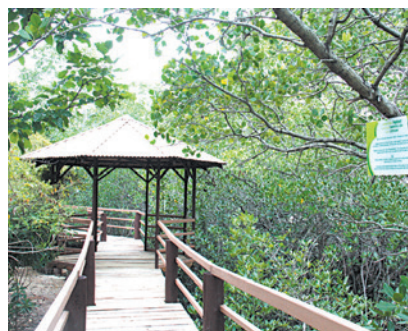
Aside from the mangrove reforestation site, the eight-hectare Aboitiz Cleanergy Park also propagates multiple native tree species. Consequently, many species of birds — from migrants, residents, to

localized endemics — consider it their home. Following a recommendation by the University of the Philippines Mindanao and the University of Southeastern Philippines back in 2013, the park steadily propagated trees in the area through years of joint efforts from the public and private sectors, enabling an increase in the number of bird species residing there — rising from just five in 2015 to 108 in 2024.

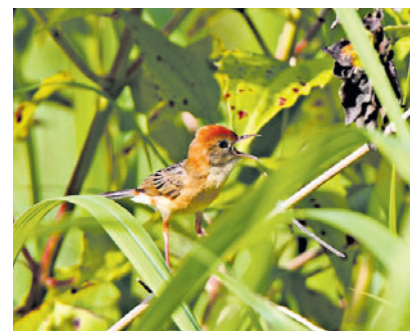
As observed by birdists who frequent the park, more trees meant more food and shelter that accommodated the influx of more bird species. This growth was further sustained by habitat conservation activities and proper biodiversity management which made it a safer reserve for the birds, especially as too few people move around the area.

In other parts of the country, other AboitizPower business units in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao also consistently champion initiatives throughout the past few years to plant more trees and mangroves and produce carbon sinks within their host communities.

With its efforts, Aboitiz Cleanergy Park continues to be a model of habitat conservation and biodiversity management in an urban setting. It affirms the collective vision of various stakeholders — AboitizPower and the rest of the Aboitiz Group, the local and national government, the academe, and other friends and volunteers — to create a positive impact by preserving the environment and nurturing wildlife.



**Mangrove boardwalk.** Visitors of Aboitiz Cleanergy Park can tour the site's mangrove reforestation site and coastal forest — home to 108 different bird species — and, at the right timing, maybe even participate in the release of sea turtle hatchlings on its beach.



**Golden.** (L-R) The golden-bellied gerygone likes to stay in subtropical or tropical moist lowland or mangrove forests, while the golden-headed cisticola prefers grassy areas like rivers and wetlands. Pictures were taken by Peter Simpson at the Aboitiz Cleanergy Park.