

RLC bets on premium demand to drive Le Pont Tower 2 sales

By Revin Mikhael D. Ochave
Reporter

REAL ESTATE developer RLC Residences is banking on increased demand in the premium market segment to drive sales of the second tower of its Le Pont Residences high-rise development in Pasig City.

“Tower 1 is almost 90% sold. We expect Tower 2 to have roughly the same sales velocity — that’s about 18 months. It speaks really well of the continued strength of the premium market,” RLC Residences Senior Vice-President Chad Sotelo said during a media event in Pasig City on Wednesday last week.

The second tower will have 644 units across 51 floors, with sizes ranging from a one-bedroom unit (45-46 square meters (sq.m.)), an executive one-bedroom unit (63 sq.m.), a two-bedroom unit (82.5-115 sq.m.), a three-bedroom unit (151 sq.m.), a four-bedroom unit (220 sq.m.), and a penthouse (269.5-431 sq.m.).

In January last year, RLC launched the first tower of Le Pont Residences, which offers one- to three-bedroom units and bi-level penthouse options.

Mr. Sotelo said the first tower of Le Pont Residences is outpacing the government’s ten-year tenor of 6.5%.

“In just 1 year and 6 months since launching the first tower, the net value has already appreciated by 8%, with current unit prices at P310,000 per sq.m. compared with the initial launch price of P286,000 per sq.m.,” Mr. Sotelo said.

“We are also proud to share that Le Pont Residences is actually the fastest-selling property

in the area since we launched the first building last year,” he added.

All units feature smart home deliverables for additional safety and convenience, along with appliances such as an air conditioning unit, refrigerator, range hood, cooktop, and washer and dryer. The penthouse units will also have a dishwasher.

Le Pont Residences will have facilities that are exclusively available to residents. These include a clubhouse, infinity and wading pools, a fitness center, a pet park, a game simulator, and work lounges.

On the top floor, the property will have Altitude 51, which will offer exclusive function villas and a sky lounge for private events and celebrations.

Le Pont Residences is located within the 31-hectare Bridgetowne Estate in Pasig City. It recently secured its preliminary EDGE certification from the International Finance Corp., making it the first and only EDGE-certified sustainable condominium within the estate.

The building has water- and energy-saving features such as a rainwater harvesting system and eco-friendly fixtures in units and common areas to reduce its ecological footprint and provide cost savings to homeowners. It will also offer e-parking spaces for electric vehicles in select parking slots.

“We are truly proud of how Le Pont Residences can bridge our future homeowners to the best life that they envision for themselves and their families. We can’t wait for them to experience what it’s like to live in a home and community where they can achieve their life goals while making great memories with their loved ones,” Mr. Sotelo said.



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POGO BAN

RLC Residences does not see any impact on its business following the recent government ban on Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs), according to Mr. Sotelo.

“If I speak of total RLC Residences, we have very minimal Chinese buyers. Starting this year, we don’t have any Chinese buyers,” he said.

“We don’t anticipate any impact from the decision of the government,” he added.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. previously announced a total ban on all POGOs, citing their ties to illicit activities such as financial scams, money laundering, prostitution, and human trafficking.

According to Mr. Sotelo, RLC does not have inventory in Manila Bay Area, where POGO employees and residents are mostly concentrated.

RLC has a presence in Manila Bay Area through its two-tower residential project called The Radiance Manila Bay.

“We also don’t have any inventory in the Manila Bay Area. We only have one project there, Radiance. It’s almost sold out and we hardly have any Chinese buyers as well,” he said.

He also said that upcoming project launches for RLC Residences in the remaining months of the year would depend on market conditions.

“We’ll assess how the market responds in the next couple of months. If market conditions continue to be good or continue to strengthen, we may choose to launch something else,” Mr. Sotelo said.

“If not, then we’ll move it to next year. We’re always in an assessment,” he added.

RLC Residences had four launches this year so far. These include the two towers of the MIRA condo complex in Quezon City, the second tower of the Le Pont Residences condo project in Pasig, and the fifth building of the Sierra Valley Gardens condo development in Cainta, Rizal.

Mr. Sotelo said that RLC Residences does not see any new risks to its operations aside from high inflation, interest rates, and geopolitical tensions.

“If things change, hopefully the market responds in a way that we consider to be positive. We don’t see any new or major risks beyond what we already have,” he said.



LIMA TOWER 1, Batangas’ first office building, is set to transform the region into a thriving business hub. — Aboitiz InfraCapital, Inc.

LIMA Tower 1 seen to help boost Batangas business potential

ABOITIZ INFRACAPITAL, INC. (AIC) Economic Estates recently launched the first building of LIMA Office Park, LIMA Tower 1, aiming to help transform Batangas province into a premier business hub.

It is the first of seven office buildings in LIMA Office Park, located within the 70-hectare Biz Hub at LIMA Estate in the province.

“LIMA Tower 1 embodies our commitment to creating spaces where businesses can thrive, where people can work in environments that foster innovation and collaboration, and where the future of Batangas as a premier business destination begins,” Monica L. Trajano, AIC vice-president for Business Development, Leasing, and Sales, said in a statement on Aug. 16.

The 11-story building offers 32 office spaces and nine retail spaces, covering a total gross leasable area of 25,243 square meters. It also hosts 187 companies and employs 71,000 workers.

The property holds a Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence certification for environmental sustainability, has pre-certification from the WELL Building Standard, which assesses features promoting health and well-being, and is registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, offering benefits for operating within an economic zone.

Aboitiz said the Biz Hub at LIMA Estate will soon feature additional office towers to complement existing attractions such as the Outlets at Lipa and LIMA Exchange.

“The estate also offers expansive green spaces for recreation, with The Aboitiz Pitch serving as a lively center of activity. An efficient transport network, operated by electric buses, further enhances the interconnectedness of this ecosystem,” the firm said.

In addition, the 136-room Holiday Inn & Suites Batangas LimaPark provides accommodations, enhancing the estate’s appeal as a comprehensive business and lifestyle destination.

“The strategic location of LIMA Tower 1 within this ecosystem offers unparalleled access to resources, talent, and markets, positioning Batangas as a competitive player in the national and regional business landscape,” the company said.

Aboitiz said that by teaming up with LPPA Design Group and Figari Solutions, Inc., the company has created a workspace that not only meets the demands of modern businesses but also anticipates the future of work.

It added that the design reflects an understanding of the needs of today’s workforce, highlighting functionality, aesthetics, and well-being. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

D.M. Wenceslao’s P4-B Parqal in Aseana City focuses on work-life balance

By Aubrey Rose A. Inosante
Reporter

D.M. WENCESLAO and Associates, Inc. (DMW) said it had invested P4 billion in Parqal, its latest mixed-use development located in Parañaque City’s Aseana City.

The project focuses on creating a “third space” designed to enhance work-life balance for individuals working in Aseana City. Third spaces are environments intended for social interaction and public relaxation, distinct from home and office settings.

Parqal spans five hectares and has a gross floor area of 70,000 square meters

(sq.m.). It has reached a 90% occupancy rate for retail spaces and 40% for commercial spaces, DMW Chief Executive Officer Delfin Angelo C. Wenceslao told *BusinessWorld* via an e-mailed statement on Aug. 16.

“Parqal created an ecosystem where office workers can access not just retail and commercial services but amenities that support the community and contribute to enhancing social connections through its world-class public spaces,” Mr. Wenceslao said.

The property has nine four-story buildings with retail and commercial spaces occupying the first and second floors, and offices located on the third and fourth floors.

“With the increasing demand for office spaces in Metro Manila, Parqal aims to offer not just a place to work but a chance to feel at home away from home,” Mr. Wenceslao said.

He said Parqal is changing the work experience of the office population by providing access to public spaces and amenities that promote relaxation and social connections.

Office workers have proximity to wellness facilities, sports amenities, and outdoor spaces and plazas such as the courtyard and amphitheater.

The firm also said the “floating canopy,” which serves as a flagship component of Aseana City’s sidewalk master plan, covers about 5,000 sq.m.

of the development’s linear greenway spine.

“The company is currently in the late planning stages of additional office, residential, hospitality, and medical clinic/office projects for its five-year development pipeline,” Mr. Wenceslao said.

He added that Parqal’s foot traffic is increasing, with daily visitors rising from 10,000 to 20,000 weekly. Footfall even doubles during events, showcasing the destination’s growing popularity.

Since opening in September 2023, Parqal has hosted the Big Bad Wolf Book-sale, Toycon Launch, Nikon Day 2024, and the Aurora MLBB event.

It has also hosted the weekly community run of Aseana City, or Run Aseana,

in partnership with the Recreational Outdoor Exchange and Run With Pat.

Mr. Wenceslao said Parqal highlights the company’s vision of a “15-minute city,” aiming to provide essential uses, amenities, services, and experiences to all Aseana City residents within a 15-minute distance.

Parqal also aims to curb carbon emissions by reducing car usage through pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

“While DMW has the option to expand its land bank on its frontage, the company is currently focused on developing its existing portfolio. Approximately 50% of Aseana City is currently occupied with existing developments,” DMW said.

Netenergy Renewable Group introduces SolarEdge battery technology in PHL

SOLAR EQUIPMENT distributor Netenergy Renewable Group (NRG) is targeting a sales volume of up to 30 megawatts (MW) this year following its launch of a residential battery technology aimed at advancing safety and efficiency in solar energy systems.

“For everything, we are looking at 30 megawatts,” Netsolar, Inc. Vice-President for Operations Lance Ellison L. Dy said on the sidelines of the launch in Quezon City on Monday.

The residential battery technology, designed by international smart energy technology company SolarEdge, is available for single-phase applications and can provide 9.7 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of capacity, equivalent to running a 1.5-horsepower air conditioner for eight hours, the company said in a statement.

It said that three batteries per inverter can deliver up to 29.1 kWh of backup capacity.

At the launch, NRG unveiled its “SolarEdge Home ecosystem,” which features the new “Home Hub Inverter,” “Home Battery,” and “Home Backup Interface.”

“SolarEdge Home is designed to harvest more energy from the sun with DC-coupled technology, storing more energy in the battery to power



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the home or provide longer critical backup during potential grid outages,” the company said.

Mr. Dy said that the goal of the initiative is “for people to realize [that] there are better options for solar installation with batteries for the house.”

NRG said that the launch of its residential battery is crucial at a time when more solar capacity is expected to come online in the Philippines.

However, with the expansion, the company noted concerns regarding system safety, including fire risks and electrical faults, thus the need for enhanced safety measures.

Citing data from the Fire Protection Bureau, NRG said that fire incidents nationwide increased by 34.4% during the first six months of the year, mostly in residential areas due to open flames.

“The positive response to our new battery technology addresses critical safety concerns in the solar industry,” Mr. Dy said.

“With the Philippine solar market expanding rapidly, ensuring that our systems adhere to the highest safety standards is essential. This launch is a significant step in providing Filipino homes with advanced, reliable, and safe solar solutions,” he added.

NRG said that SolarEdge has complied with “various safety regulations” through its Sense Connect technology and Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter capabilities. These features monitor potential electrical faults, automatically stop power flow, and activate safety measures to prevent fires. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**



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Isuzu eyes EV launches in Philippines

ISUZU Philippines Corp. is exploring the expansion of its product lineup to incorporate electric vehicles (EVs) due to the increasing demand for carbon-neutral transportation options in the country, the company said on Monday.

During a press conference for the 9th Philippine International Motor Show (PIMS) on Monday, Isuzu Executive Vice-President Shojiro Sakoda said the company is assessing its strategy for launching EVs in the Philippine market.

“We are indeed very excited about the developments in our EV lineup, as seen in Japan and Thailand,” he said.

“For the Philippine market, we recognize the increasing interest in electric vehicles, and we are carefully assessing the best strategy to introduce our EV models here.”

Regarding the potential introduction of hybrid variants in the Philippines, Mr. Sakoda said that Isuzu is open to adapting its lineup to meet the evolving needs of Filipino consumers, particularly for trucks.

“Introducing hybrid vehicles is something we are actively exploring, especially as we con-

sider the unique challenges and opportunities in the Philippine market,” he said.

“Hybrids could serve as a practical bridge towards full electrification, offering better fuel efficiency and lower emissions while utilizing existing infrastructure.”

Despite the industry’s growth and resilience post-pandemic, Mr. Sakoda acknowledged that limited manufacturing support, high taxation, and regulatory constraints present challenges to achieving further growth.

“Our primary focus is on ensuring that the infrastructure, support systems, and consumer readiness are in place to deliver the best customer experience,” he added.

Isuzu will unveil its new offerings at PIMS, scheduled for Oct. 24-27.

“We invite the public to visit the 9th PIMS in October to see what Isuzu has to offer in terms of EVs,” Mr. Sakoda said.

“While no definitive timeline has been announced, Isuzu’s ongoing commitment to innovation and sustainability indicates that exciting developments are on the horizon,” the company added. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**