Air carriers call for smooth terminal changes; NNIC assures phased shift

IMPLEMENTING terminal reassignments at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) will need adequate time to ensure a smooth transition and minimal disruption to passengers, local airlines said on Tuesday.

"To ensure a seamless transition with minimal disruption to passengers, a thorough consultative process and sufficient preparation time are essential for every terminal transfer," Cebu Pacific said in a statement.

The Gokongwei-led budget carrier said discussions and coordination to transfer its flights from the Terminal 1 of Singapore's Changi Airport to Terminal 4 took a year.

"This illustrates the critical need for comprehensive planning and cooperation in such transitions," Cebu Pacific said.

According to the New NAIA Infrastructure Corp. (NNIC), the terminal reassignment is included in its "quick fixes" plan for NAIA, which will be implemented within three months to a year following its takeover on Sept. 14.

"Ultimately, what matters most is ensuring minimal disruption for passengers, especially during peak travel periods like Christmas, which is the busiest time of year for us," Cebu Pacific said.

Under the terminal reassignment plan of NNIC, Terminal 1 will be designated for Philippine Airlines, Terminal 2 for domestic flights, Terminal 3 for all foreign airlines including Cebu Pacific and AirAsia Philippines' international flights, and Terminal 4 for AirAsia Philippines' domestic operations.

"Such terminal reassignment requires careful planning, including time and motion studies, consideration of environmental factors, and adequate time for implementation to minimize disruptions, especially as we are also nearing the peak season," AirAsia Philippines said.

For flag carrier Philippine Airlines, the terminal reassignment should be further studied.

"We just need to identify the pros and cons of transferring to a terminal. And then if there will be cons that can be addressed, we can work it out together. I think that's the most reasonable timeline to transfer," PAL President and Chief Operating Officer Stanley K. Ng said.

GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION

"Any future changes or improvements, including terminal reassignments, will be implemented gradually and strategically," NNIC said in a statement.

NNIC General Manager Angelito A. Alvarez said these changes are part of a broader plan to modernize the airport and elevate the overall passenger experience.

"The standard objective for assignment in multi-terminal airports is to ensure, as much as possible, for each airline to be in one terminal to make flight connections easy," said Nigel Paul C. Villarete, senior adviser on public-private partnership at the technical advisory group Libra Konsult, Inc.

He said bigger airlines or those with higher daily frequencies must be assigned first followed by smaller carriers or those with lesser daily number of flights.

"Of course, you need to consider the international and domestic flights because these need customs and immigration facilities," Mr. Villarete said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

Angkas founder eyes expansion of four-wheel service Angcars

DBDOYC, Inc., operator of the Angkas ride-hailing app, is eyeing an expansion of its four-wheel service Angcars beyond Metro Manila, its founder said.

"There will definitely be expansions outside of Metro Manila as well," Angkas Founder Angeline Xiwen Tham told reporters on the sidelines of the Management Association of the Philippines 22nd International CEO Conference in Taguig City on Tuesday.

"It's basically any area where there's a need. This is something that we're closely working with the local government units on," she added.

Currently in beta phase, Angcars is serving areas such as Mandaluyong, Makati, Pasig, and Bonifacio Global City in Taguig. The service also only caters up to four passengers.

Angcars also seeks to introduce options like Angcars Economy and Angcars Plus, which would allow a passenger to request four-seater or six-seater vehicles.

Ms. Tham said that Angkas is also looking to expand the coverage of its motorcycle taxi service.

"There's a lot of plans to launch the service outside of other locations. We have a lot of interest from local government units to bring this service to help them to professionalize the transportation systems in their cities," she said.

The company's two-wheel service is currently available in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, Cebu, and Cagayan de Oro.

When asked about the company's public listing plans, Ms. Tham said that Angkas is currently prioritizing business growth.

"I think we're focused on building the business right now and making sure to bring the right service to our customers. That's really our focus at this point," she said. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

DMCI Power pushes SPUG exclusion from coal ban

DMCI Power Corp., a subsidiary of DMCI Holdings, Inc., is pushing for the exclusion of Small Power Utilities Group (SPUG) power plants, operated by the National Power Corp. (NPC) for off-grid areas, from the coal moratorium.

"I think the moratorium should exclude SPUG because, in SPUG, you are replacing diesel — the most expensive fuel," DMCI Power Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Isidro A. Consunji told reporters in mixed English and Filipino late Monday.

DMCI Power operates in areas served by SPUG.

SPUG power plants provide electricity to remote and off-grid areas not connected to the main power grids. DMCI Power is involved in generating power for these areas, often through coal-fired power plants.

To date, NPC operates 272 SPUG power plants in 222 areas.

In 2020, the Department of Energy issued a moratorium on the development of new coal-fired power plants.

Mr. Consunji said that the company's coal-fired power plant in the off-grid area of Masbate supplies electricity at a rate of P9 to P10 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), which is lower than the P19 to P23 per kWh cost of diesel-generated electricity.

DMCI Power has an existing 15-year power supply agreement with Masbate Electric Cooperative through a competitive selection process.

The company executive said that consumers in SPUG areas "do not have the money to pay for their electricity bills, but unfortunately, they are currently the ones paying for expensive electricity."

He also said that the company's proposed coal-fired power plant in Palawan will proceed as it was "pre-approved" even before the coal moratorium took effect.

DMCI Power focuses on providing energy to off-grid small and remote islands.

It operates and maintains bunker-fired power plants, diesel generating sets, and thermal power plants in Masbate, Palawan, and Oriental Mindoro.

MINING

Meanwhile, DMCI Holdings said that it could not comment on the Consunji family's plans to inject its 10% stake in the Tampakan copper-gold project in South Cotabato to the listed firm.

In a regulatory filing, DMCI said that the transaction was "private transaction contemplated above the listed company."

"No definitive agreement has been executed concerning this matter at this time," the company added.

It said that DMCI's potential 10% acquisition of the Tampakan mine site has not yet been discussed by its board of directors.

"Its infusion in DMCI's portfolio will require the customary board approval requirement," it added.

The Tampakan project is said to be among the largest untapped minefields in Southeast Asia. The site is estimated to contain 15 million tons of copper and 17.6 million tons of gold.

On the other hand, its mining unit DMCI Mining Corp. said it is still keen on starting the commercial operations of its new Zambales and Palawan nickel mine sites within the year.

"(Zambales) would be within the year; (for Palawan), our internal targets are also within the year," DMCI Mining President Tulsi Das C. Reyes said.

Last year, Mr. Reyes said the company was targeting to begin operations at the Zambales nickel site by the first quarter of 2024, while the other site was targeted for the second quarter.

The company had said that it was securing permits for new mines in Zambales and Palawan to boost production and shipments.

He added that both mine sites expect to produce one million metric tons (MT) of nickel ore annually, based on its Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC).

"Our ECC for Palawan is one million MT, and our ECC for Zambales is (also) one million MT," Mr. Reyes said.

DMCI Mining's new nickel mine would be operated by its subsidiary Zambales Chromite Metals Corp., with estimated ore of about 20 million MT.

"For Zambales Chromite, we hope to have good news in the near future... We have fully submitted all the documentation for Zambales," he added.

The Zambales site would be in an existing area owned by the company's unit Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. Additionally, Mr. Reyes said that the company is still planning to break ground for the Palawan mine site this 2024. The new mine site has an estimated 70 million MT of ore.

"It would be within the year, backhoes on the ground," he added. The exact location of the Palawan site has yet to be disclosed.

DMCI Mining reported a net loss of P43 million for the second quarter, a reversal of the P250 million net income reported a year earlier. The company attributed this to weak market prices, reduced shipments, and costs incurred at its Palawan mine.

For the first half of the year, the company spent about P200 million on fleet expansion, exploration, and site development activities at pipelined mining areas.

The company operates open-pit mines in Palawan and Zambales through its subsidiaries Berong Nickel Corp. and ZDMC. It extracts nickel ore, chromite, and iron laterite. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera** *and* **Adrian H. Halili**

Monde Nissin invests in Amico Innovations

LISTED food and beverage manufacturer Monde Nissin Corp. will invest P17.5 million in retail company Amico Innovations, Inc. as it explores new business opportunities.

Upon the execution of subscription documents, Monde Nissin will subscribe to 87,500 or 70% of Amico Innovation's common shares at P200 per share, equivalent to P17.5 million, Monde Nissin said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday.

The transaction was approved by Monde Nissin's executive committee during a meeting on Monday.

"(The subscription is) for the exploration of startup opportunities in new categories and businesses," Monde Nissin said.

"The subscription will happen on or before Sept. 30, 2024," it added.

Amico Innovations is a new Philippine corporation engaged in the importing, exporting, repacking, processing, buying, selling, marketing, distributing, trading, or dealing all kinds of goods, wares, and merchandises, which are or may become articles of commerce.

The company is currently in the process of applying for incorporation with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

For the first half, Monde Nissin grew its net income by 17.4% to P4.1 billion as combined revenue surged by 3.1% to P40.1 billion.

The company is aiming to sustain the growth of its Asia-Pacific branded food and beverage (APAC BFB) business in the third quarter.

"Our APAC BFB gross margins have substantially rebounded from last year's levels, and while we believe further sequential gains will be limited, we expect to see continued improvement in Q3 on a year-on-year basis," Monde Nissin Chief Executive Officer and Executive Vice-President Henry Soesanto said.

A global food and beverage company, some of Monde Nissin's brands include Lucky Me noodles, SkyFlakes crackers, Fita crackers, Monde baked goods, and Quorn meat alternative products.

The Board of Investments recently approved Monde Nissin's P1.21 billion biscuit project in Davao City.

The project will manufacture butter coconut biscuits intended for initial distribution to the Visayas and Mindanao.

Monde Nissin currently produces butter coconut biscuits in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, serving the Luzon market.

On Tuesday, Monde Nissin shares were unchanged at P9.20 per share. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

Robinsons Ilocos hosts DFA Apostille Receiving Center

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has opened an Apostille Receiving Center (ARC) in Robinsons Place Ilocos Norte mall to provide more accessible authentication services, according to Robinsons Land Corp. (RLC).

An apostille is an internationally accepted form of public document verification. It is attached to documents such as birth certificates, professional licenses, and school records.

"This is the very first ARC branch in Ilocos Norte and just the second Apostille Receiving Center in the country. The newest DFA ARC can be found at Robinsons Ilocos' Lingkod Pinoy Center," RLC said in a statement on Tuesday.

With the new facility, residents in the north no longer have to travel far or book online appointments in advance to get their documents verified, the company said.

The ARC is open to all citizens, not just those based in Ilocos.

"If it's more convenient, one may also apply for the apostille at three other DFA consular offices based in Robinsons Malls, more specifically in Robinsons Iloilo, Robinsons Starmills (Pampanga), and Robinsons Galleria Cebu," RLC said. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

Maynilad completes P380-M pipeline upgrade in Manila

MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. has completed a P380-million project replacing old and undersized pipelines in Tondo and Sta. Cruz, Manila, the water solutions provider said on Tuesday.

This upgrade improves water pressure and meets the city's higher water demand, Maynilad said in a statement.

"By replacing undersized pipes, we are also future-proofing our distribution system to handle higher consumption," said Maynilad Chief Operating Officer Randolph T. Estrellado.

The project involved upgrading the pipe system, including the laying of 1.7 kilometers of pipelines in 21 barangays in Manila to replace decades-old pipelines.

With the project's completion, the company said it was able to recover approximately four million liters per day of treated water that was previously lost to pipe leaks and illegal connections.

Maynilad aims to replace a total of 592 kilometers of "deteriorated pipelines" throughout its concession area within the 2023-2027 period.

For 2024, the company has allocated P4 billion for pipe replacement across the west zone.

The company serves Manila, except portions of San Andres and Sta. Ana. It also operates in Quezon City, Makati, Caloocan, 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**

SPNEC eyes new location for 280-MW solar power project

SP New Energy Corp. (SPNEC) is seeking a new location for its 280-megawatt (MW) solar power project in Santa Rosa, Nueva Ecija.

"We're looking at possible replacement at the same capacity but maybe different location," SPNEC President and Chief Executive Officer Emmanuel V. Rubio told reporters last week.

In a regulatory filing last month, SPNEC said that it had asked the Department of Energy (DoE) to terminate the award of the project it won during the first round of Green Energy Auction (GEA) in 2022.

Mr. Rubio said that the company's request for termination mainly stemmed from transmission constraints.

Formerly Solar Philippines Nueva Ecija Corp., SPNEC's primary purpose is to construct, operate, and maintain power-generating plants and related facilities for renewable energy.

"We're drafting now actually a reply looking for a legal basis really to stand firm, but we're willing to actually replace the capacity in other areas where we can actually evacuate the energy," Mr. Rubio said.

He said that the company will ask the DoE if it can consider "a certain level of repricing" and that it is willing to accept "some concessions on the penalties but not the bond."

Under the terms of reference for GEA-1, the performance bond guarantees the winning bidder's faithful performance under the GEA program guidelines and related agreements.

Based on data from the DoE as of end-June, the solar power project is targeted for commercial operation by 2025.

SPNEC, through its subsidiary Terra Solar Philippines, Inc., is currently developing a power project consisting of a 3,500-MW solar power plant and a 4,000-megawatt-hour energy storage system.

The company recently announced the $600-million (approximately P34 billion) investment made by UK-based investment firm Actis in Terra Solar, representing 40% stake upon closing.

The first phase of the project is scheduled to be delivered by 2026, while Phase 2 is targeted for 2027.

SPNEC is controlled by the Pangilinan group through MGen Renewable Energy, Inc., a subsidiary of Meralco PowerGen Corp., which is the power generation arm of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

Meralco's controlling stakeholder, Beacon Electric Asset Holdings, Inc., is partly owned by PLDT, Inc.

Hasting 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**