Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) 6,615.16 ▼1.35 PTS. ▼0.02%

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2024 BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC	Ayala Corp.	P613.50	-P0.50	-0.08%
ACEN	ACEN Corp.	P3.74	+P0.20	+5.65%
AEV	Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc.	P33.80	——	
AGI	Alliance Global Group, Inc.	P8.81	-P0.01	-0.11%
ALI	Ayala Land, Inc.	P26.25	-P0.35	-1.32%
BDO	BDO Unibank, Inc.	P149.70	-P0.30	-0.2%
BLOOM	Bloomberry Resorts Corp.	P4.73	-P0.22	-4.44%
BPI	Bank of the Philippine Islands	P134.80	+P2.80	+2.12%
CNPF	Century Pacific Food, Inc.	P42.00	-P3.00	-6.67%
CNVRG	Converge ICT Solutions, Inc.	P15.68	-P0.62	-3.8%
DMC	DMCI Holdings, Inc.	P10.50	-P0.04	-0.38%
EMI	Emperador, Inc.	P18.02	-P0.02	-0.11%
GLO	Globe Telecom, Inc.	P2,064.00	-P12.00	-0.58%
GTCAP	GT Capital Holdings, Inc.	P624.00	-P24.00	-3.7%
ICT	International Container Terminal Services, Inc.	P400.00	+P3.00	+0.76%
JFC	Jollibee Foods Corp.	P257.20	-P2.80	-1.08%
JGS	JG Summit Holdings, Inc.	P19.60	-P0.50	-2.49%
LTG	LT Group, Inc.	P10.48	-P0.02	-0.19%
MBT	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	P76.75	+P1.25	+1.66%
MER	Manila Electric Co.	P470.00	-P4.00	-0.84%
MONDE	Monde Nissin Corp.	P8.00	-P0.26	-3.15%
NIKL	Nickel Asia Corp.	P3.12	——	
PGOLD	Puregold Price Club, Inc.	P30.25	-P0.75	-2.42%
SCC	Semirara Mining and Power Corp.	P33.65	-P0.45	-1.32%
SM	SM Investments Corp.	P900.00	+P12.00	+1.35%
SMC	San Miguel Corp.	P88.00	——	
SMPH	SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	P26.20	——	
TEL	PLDT Inc.	P1,260.00	-P38.00	-2.93%
URC	Universal Robina Corp.	P76.80	-P0.65	-0.84%
WLCON	Wilcon Depot, Inc.	P13.36	+P0.08	+0.6%

ACEN plans to operationalize 1.2 GW of projects by 2025

ACEN CORP. targets to operationalize power projects with a combined capacity of approximately 1.2 gigawatts (GW) by the end of next year, according to the company's president.

The company is expanding its renewable energy presence within and outside the Philippines, ACEN President and Chief Executive Officer Eric T. Francia told reporters on Monday.

Among the big-ticket energy projects expected to be completed in 2025 is the 520-megawatt (MW) Stubbo Solar in New South Wales, Australia, through its subsidiary ACEN Australia.

Other international projects set to beef up the company's global presence are the 146 MW Monsoon Wind project in Laos, the 123-MW hybrid solar and wind project in India, and the 109-MW Stockyard Wind project in Texas, United States.

"It's on track to operate," Mr. Francia said, referring to the development of the Laos wind project.

Back home, ACEN is set to energize the 160-MW Pagudpud and 57-MW Capa Wind projects, both in Ilocos Norte, and the 60-MW Pangasinan Solar project.

This pipeline of projects forms part of the company's 6.8-GW portfolio of attributable renewable capacity in operation, under construction, and committed projects.

The company operates across a diverse range of markets, including the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, India, Indonesia, Laos, and the US.

"ACEN's renewable capacity has grown to almost seven GW, in line with the strong momentum behind the energy transition in the region. The company continues to focus on execution, especially for projects in construction and under development," Mr. Francia said.

To ensure technical operations and maintenance of its local operations, ACEN has subscribed to additional shares in its subsidiary Paddak Energy Corp. worth a total of P11.75 million.

In a stock exchange disclosure on Monday, the company said it signed a subscription contract with Paddak for the subscription to the latter's 1.175 million common shares and 10.575 million preferred shares at P1 each.

"The subscription will allow ACEN to have full ownership in Paddak, which will provide technical operations and maintenance-related services to ACEN's Philippine operating companies," the energy company said.

Paddak is ACEN's designated company that will provide technical operations and maintenance-related services to ACEN's Philippine operating companies.

The company said it will partially pay the subscription price amounting to P2.94 million.

Amid these developments, the Department of Energy (DoE) has recognized ACEN's "significant contribution to advancing clean energy solutions" as it was named a winner at the agency's Sustainable Energy Awards 2024.

In particular, ACEN's 81-MW North Luzon Renewables (NLR) wind project in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte, was recognized under the category of Renewable Energy Projects in On-Grid Areas for its "outstanding role in fostering a secure, reliable, clean, and resilient energy sector."

The project generates approximately 205,000 megawatt-hours of clean energy per year, powering around 50,000 homes.

"The success of NLR reflects ACEN's unwavering commitment to sustainability and our vision of a renewable energy-powered future," Mr. Francia said.

"This recognition from the DoE affirms the impact of our initiatives in addressing both environmental challenges and the socioeconomic needs of our host communities," he added. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

PAGCOR leases Nayong Pilipino property to SMC

SAN MIGUEL CORP. (SMC) has signed a 25-year lease with the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) to use the 15-hectare Nayong Pilipino property in Pasay.

Under the lease agreement, officially signed on Dec. 12, 13 hectares of the Nayong Pilipino property will be used for "SMC's initiatives, which will mostly include infrastructure to complement airport requirements," PAGCOR said in a statement on Monday.

San Miguel leads the New NAIA Infra Corp., which took over the operations and maintenance of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, near where the idle Nayong Pilipino complex is situated.

Meanwhile, the two hectares will be used to build PAGCOR's new corporate office, which will be fully funded and built by San Miguel, PAGCOR Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Alejandro H. Tengco said, adding it will be at no cost to the gaming agency.

It added that the overall cost is P2.45 billion, of which P2 billion will be allotted for building construction and P450 million for fit-out.

PAGCOR said the office building will span 40,000 square meters (sq.m.), with an additional 15,000 sq.m. for fit-out space.

"For many years, PAGCOR has operated across various rented locations, with our employees spread out and often working under less-than-ideal conditions," Mr. Tengco said.

He added that aside from the rental for the 13-hectare property, PAGCOR also expects additional revenues from renting out unused portions of the new corporate office once it is completed.

When asked for the timeline, the gaming agency said the office building "will commence immediately upon PAGCOR's final approval of the building plan which is still being finalized."

SMC Chairman and CEO Ramon S. Ang said that construction of the PAGCOR building "would commence promptly upon PAGCOR's formal approval of the design."

"Our goal is to maximize the potential of this property for the public's benefit. The new PAGCOR headquarters will be a key part of this plan, providing a modern space to support their crucial role in funding government programs that uplift the lives of many Filipinos," Mr. Ang said.

In the same event, Mr. Ang also turned over checks of nearly P100 million representing advance rentals and security deposits to PAGCOR.

BW ONE-ON-ONE

How First Gen is expanding its portfolio to meet Philippines' power demand

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera
Reporter

FIRST GEN Corp. is diversifying its energy portfolio to meet the Philippines' power demand, with a strong focus on renewable energy sources like geothermal and solar.

"We've been in the business for quite a long time, and so, over the years, our priorities have always adjusted," First Gen President and Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles B. Puno said in an interview with *BusinessWorld*.

"And of course, one of our big priorities is climate change. Part of our advocacy in climate change is to really promote renewable energy," he added.

First Gen is a holding company for the power generation and energy-related businesses of the listed conglomerate First Philippine Holdings Corp.

The company has a total of 3,668 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity from its portfolio of plants that run on geothermal, wind, hydro, solar energy, and natural gas.

"Many of our investments were originally in fossil fuels, particularly gas. We never invested in coal. But over the last many years, our priority has been in geothermal," Mr. Puno said.

"Hopefully, we will be able to deliver more capacity next year — to deliver more 24-hour baseload renewable energy to our consumers," he said.

For 2025, the company has set a lower capital expenditure (capex) budget amounting to P35 billion, of which 90% will be allocated to its renewable energy subsidiary Energy Development Corp.'s drilling activities and growth projects.

First Gen has set a P60-billion capex program, of which P30 billion is for drilling wells and another P30 billion for building more geothermal power facilities, as well as battery energy storage facilities.

"We're spending a lot on our well drilling program. But the other issue we're facing is that our power plants above ground are quite old already," he said. "So, we're also trying to figure out how to make sure that we're maximizing the steam capability of concessions matched with the right technology."

First Gen has set a goal to expand its solar energy portfolio, with a portion of its capex allotted for the development of a 50-MW solar facility in Batangas.

"Right now, we're hoping that we can build our largest solar investment, which will be 50 MW, and that will be the springboard for more solar expansion of the First Gen Group moving ahead," Mr. Puno said.

As the Philippines aims to shift to renewable energy, First Gen is banking on liquefied natural gas (LNG) as a transition fuel.


FIRST GEN PRESIDENT and Chief Operating Officer Francis Giles B. Puno

Currently, the company is integrating LNG with Malampaya natural gas for its gas-fired power plants.

"We're also trying to transition from full Malampaya operations to partly Malampaya, partly LNG," Mr. Puno said.

"Because Malampaya is running out and is no longer sufficient to deliver all of our gas-fired power needs, we needed to bring in LNG," he added.

First Gen has four existing gas-fired power plants with a combined capacity of 2,017 MW in the First Gen Clean Energy Complex in Batangas.

Its subsidiary, FGEN LNG Corp., constructed an interim offshore LNG terminal and executed a five-year time charter party for BW Batangas to provide LNG storage and regasification services.

Mr. Puno said that proper implementation of policies is needed as the country is going through "a very critical phase," especially to address the feasibility of LNG for the country's energy security.

"We have to be more proactive in making good policies and regulations, but also to provide incentives for investors so we can bring in more investments," he said.

"If they do it wrong, then it will reduce the attractiveness for us to make those investments," he added.

MAP names Al Panlilio as 77th president

THE MANAGEMENT Association of the Philippines (MAP) announced on Monday the appointment of Alfredo "Al" S. Panlilio as its president for 2025.


BW FILE PHOTO
ALFREDO "AL" S. PANLILIO

Mr. Panlilio, who currently serves as chairman of Maya Bank, Inc. and director of PLDT Inc., will take over the role following the reelections necessitated by the withdrawal of the former appointee, the organization said in a statement.

MAP had previously elected Emmanuel P. Bonoan as its 77th president, but he withdrew before taking office due to personal reasons.

Mr. Panlilio served as president and chief executive officer (CEO) of PLDT from June 2021 to December 2023, and Smart Communications, Inc. from August 2019 to December 2023.

"With PLDT as a long-time supporter of the Philippines' digital transformation, Al is among the founding members under the Digital Infrastructure pillar of the Private Sector Advisory Council, which was formed in July 2022," MAP said.

Mr. Panlilio had also held positions in Manila Electric Co. and its various subsidiaries.

"An advocate of the value of sports in maintaining a strong republic and international relations, he is a member of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) Central Board and second vice-president of the FIBA Asia Board," MAP added.

He currently holds positions in the MVP Sports Foundation, the National Golf Association of the Philippines, the Philippine Olympic Committee, and Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

Mr. Panlilio holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Computer Information Systems from San Francisco State University.

He also holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from both the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

MAP said that board members for 2025 include Metro Pacific Investment Corp.'s Michael T. Toledo as vice-president, SGV and Co.'s Wilson P. Tan as treasurer, Ayala Healthcare Holdings, Inc.'s Paolo F. Borromeo as assistant treasurer, and GT Capital Holdings, Inc.'s Gil B. Genio as secretary.

Other members include Ayala Corp.'s Jose Rene Gregory D. Almendras, Center for Excellence in Governance's Rex C. Drilon II, CEO Advisors, Inc.'s Marianne B. Hontiveros, and KPMG's Mr. Bonoan. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Converge eyeing to finish Sky's migration to fiber by next year

LISTED fiber internet provider Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. is targeting to finish the migration of Sky Cable Corp.'s existing fixed-line subscribers to fiber by the end of next year, according to the company's chief executive officer (CEO).

"We started with Sky. We are migrating the old cable to fiber, starting in Quezon City. It's challenging, but we need to put some focus. Hopefully, in six to seven months, we can transfer more," Converge CEO Dennis Anthony H. Uy told reporters on Monday.

In July, Converge and Sky Cable announced a commercial agreement to upgrade Sky Cable's network and services. Under this partnership, Sky Cable will use Converge's network to enhance its offerings.

"Sky is a household brand already. We can expand it nationwide," Mr. Uy said.

The company is also planning to expand Sky Cable's reach nationwide, Mr. Uy said, adding that the company is targeting to start this planned rollout in Baguio, Davao, and General Santos cities.

Further, he said that Converge's network utilization is only 30%, which could yield enough room for possible partnerships with independent providers.

"Our ports are now at nine million. What we want is to roll out in all Filipino homes. We believe in open access to all Filipino homes," he said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**