

# BCDA 2024 revenue tops P11B

THE Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) said it booked P11.3 billion in gross revenue last year, up 3%, with results driven by its joint venture (JV) deal for a mixed-use development in Taguig City.

In a statement over the weekend, the government-owned corporation described its revenue performance as "steady" and "positive."

"This steady growth and positive financial performance was mainly attributed to the execution of a JV agreement for the development of the 6.1-hectare mixed-use development in Bonifacio Capital District in Taguig, which yielded an initial

payment of P3.5 billion to the BCDA," it said.

BCDA also cited the 39% increase in toll and airport concession revenue to P3.2 billion.

It also saw a 48% increase in dividends from affiliates to P1 billion.

"Through collaboration with partners that share our vision and efficient revenue generation efforts, the BCDA wrapped up 2024 as another banner year for the organization, sustaining its good financial performance over the years," BCDA President and Chief Executive Officer Joshua M. Bingcang said.

"This is fueled by our mission to build world-class cities and

implement game-changing projects for the benefit of the Filipino people," he added.

For 2025, he said the BCDA expects to continue with revenue levels exceeding P10 billion.

"We are committed to continue generating strong revenue, as this will allow us to boost our support for our beneficiary agencies and stakeholders, especially our military forces," he added.

In a separate statement, the BCDA warned of the dissemination of inaccurate interpretations of the Supreme Court decision regarding the issue on Camp John Hay.

"Despite the clear language of the Supreme Court Decision, some persons in the guise

of allegedly protecting the rights of third persons, have sought to disseminate misinformation and an inaccurate interpretation of the decision," the BCDA said.

"The BCDA advises everyone to be vigilant and read the Supreme Court Decision itself to correct any and all attempts at defrauding the public," it added.

According to BCDA, the Supreme Court's recent ruling allows BCDA to regain control over Camp John Hay, which is expected to attract new investment, open the site to all, allow redevelopment, and drive sustainable economic growth. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

## Green energy industry urges no delays in auction round

THE Philippine Solar and Storage Energy Alliance (PSSEA) has urged the Department of Energy (DoE) to ensure that the fourth round of green energy auction (GEA-4) goes ahead with no delays this year to reassure investors.

"The industry strongly urges the Department of Energy... to relentlessly pursue its net zero emission goals by ensuring the implementation of the contracting round for solar in the first quarter of 2025," the alliance said in a statement at the weekend.

### FULL STORY



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The GEA program establishes the framework for facilitating timely investments for new and additional renewable energy (RE) capacities, to ensure the adequate supply of RE under a competitive process.

The program is designed to help the Philippines achieve its renewable energy goal which is to increase the RE share of the power generation mix to 35% by 2030 and 50% by 2040.

The government had planned to conduct two auction rounds last year but had to postpone. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

## Exporters vying with biodiesel for dwindling coconut supply

By Adrian H. Halili Reporter

THE biodiesel industry is competing for the limited supply of coconuts, crowding out exporters of products like coconut oil and coco-water, industry officials said.

"The recent increase in the country's biodiesel requirement may possibly divert more coconuts for domestic consumption," Romeo I. Chan, chairman and chief executive officer of Axelum Resources Corp., told *BusinessWorld* via e-mail.

He sees a possible erosion of volume available for export, while acknowledging "the positive benefits for the environment (from biodiesel use), better fuel efficiency and higher copra prices," Mr. Chan said.

"We also need to caution that this may potentially erode the competitiveness of the export sector, which produces high-value coconut products and generates dollar flows for the country," he added.

In October, the biodiesel fuel blend was raised to 3%, or B3, on order of the Department of Energy. The government plans to increase the biodiesel blend to B5 in the next three years.

"In the end, we believe this necessitates a delicate balancing act to manage its broader impacts," Mr. Chan said.

The US Department of Agriculture has reported that El Niño could dampen coconut oil exports due to declining production.

Exports are projected to drop to 900,000 metric tons during the 2024 to 2025 market year, from 1.14 million MT the prior year.

Confederation of Coconut Farmers' Organizations of the Philippines, Executive Director Charles R. Avila said that the increased require-

ment for coco-diesel may not be adequately supplied by the industry, citing limited yields due to the age of Philippine coconut trees.

"The legally expected increase in biodiesel blend is one thing. Coconut production, however, is clearly on the decline by easily 15% year on year, so it cannot be expected to meet the demand without sacrificing exports," Mr. Avila told *BusinessWorld* via Viber.

Axelum's Mr. Chan expects coconut production to be flat this year.

Coconut production hit 14.89 million metric tons (MT) in 2023, against the 14.93 million MT posted a year earlier, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

"There is no substitute for a serious planting or replanting program," Mr. Avila said.

In 2023, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. ordered the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) to draft a plan to rehabilitate the coconut industry, including planting 100 million coconut trees by 2028.

Under the Philippine Coconut Industry Development Plan 2024-2034, the replanting project is expected to increase coconut output by 4.7 billion nuts annually, valued at P33.1 billion, by 2034.

This year, the PCA aims to plant 15.3 million trees, followed by 25.4 million yearly between 2026 and 2028.

Mr. Avila said that coconut farmers should have a bigger role in the government's replanting efforts.

"We can dream of greater exports and a thousand more uses of coconut products—but the evidence mounts that the only sure thing is the government denying the coconut farmers their constitutional right to participate in programs affecting their welfare and development, which, of course, is a sure formula for ultimate failure," he added.

## OPINION

## Shaping the future with confidence

### IN BRIEF:

- Confident CEOs are better equipped to navigate macroeconomic and geopolitical changes, driving bold strategic actions.
- Embracing emerging technologies and data-driven strategies enhances organizational resilience and market positioning.
- Geopolitical dynamics in regions like ASEAN present significant opportunities for investment and growth.

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, CEO confidence plays a pivotal role in shaping strategic decisions and driving organizational success. Confident CEOs are more likely to take bold action in response to macroeconomic and geopolitical changes, technology shifts, and market disruptions. This article explores how CEO confidence, coupled with an understanding of geopolitical dynamics, can create a competitive edge and foster long-term growth.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CEO CONFIDENCE

CEO confidence is a critical factor in making proactive and strategic decisions. Confident executives are more willing to invest in innovation, expand into new markets, and pursue high-reward opportunities while managing greater risks. This confidence stems from a deep belief in their company's abilities and market position, enabling faster and bolder strategic choices.

The latest EY-Parthenon CEO Outlook Survey of 1,200 global executives revealed that the most confident CEOs are better prepared to adapt to macroeconomic, geopolitical, and industry changes. They are more likely to engage in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and reassess key performance indicators (KPIs) to align with evolving market conditions, positioning their companies for future opportunities and growth.

### EMBRACING EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Confident CEOs recognize the transformative potential of emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI). AI can automate processes, enhance decision-making, and create innovative products and services. By leveraging AI, companies can improve efficiency, accuracy, and reliability in their operations, freeing up resources for more strategic activities.

For example, an AI-driven payroll chatbot can address employee payroll questions efficiently and accurately, providing quick and accessible answers. This not only reduces the burden on employers but also enhances the employee experience. The implementation of AI in payroll management demonstrates how technology can streamline complex processes and drive significant improvements in organizational performance.

In the hiring landscape, which presents various opportunities for deceitful practices, machine learning algorithms are becoming increasingly adept at analyzing vast amounts of data and detecting patterns of potential fraudulent behavior. Blockchain technology also holds the promise of creating secure, immutable records of hiring candidates' employment histories, education, and credentials. Through the power of data and technology in hiring candidates with verified profiles, companies can enable a more secure and reliable recruitment process. Across payroll, labor and employment law, and mobility, teams can work together collaboratively to meet workforce compliance needs wherever they are. Global processes, technology, and data models are smoothly integrated, providing a single, cohesive, high-quality service.

In addition, AI can help redefine organizational resilience by enabling companies to anticipate disruptions and fortify operations. In order to adapt, businesses are utilizing AI to transform their approach to Business Continuity Management (BCM), enabling proactive risk assessment, dynamic planning, and adaptive response strategies, ensuring organizations are better prepared for disruptions. AI-driven simulations and continuous learning from exercises and real events refine BCM plans while organizations navigate challenges such as resource requirements, data reliability, and ethical decision-making.

### GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Geopolitical dynamics, particularly in regions like ASEAN, present significant opportunities for investment and growth. The recent ASEAN Summit highlighted the region's efforts to attract foreign investment and trade by leveraging their relatively neutral geopolitical posi-

tions. Investment in ASEAN has increased significantly, with foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows reaching \$230 billion in 2023.

Western multinational companies are likely to continue investing in ASEAN amid global supply chain diversification efforts. Middle-income economies in Southeast Asia are particularly attractive due to favorable business environment characteristics such as government stability, institutional predictability, and a skilled labor force. Chinese companies are also expanding their presence in the region to reduce supply chain exposure to geopolitical risks.

### NAVIGATING DISRUPTIONS AND CAPITALIZING ON OPPORTUNITIES

CEOs must navigate a complex landscape shaped by emerging technologies, changing customer behaviors, and macroeconomic uncertainties. To capitalize on these opportunities, CEOs should take the following actions:

**1. Rethink strategic assumptions.** Regularly revisit and update strategic assumptions to ensure alignment with the external environment. This involves monitoring key indicators, staying abreast of geopolitical and industry developments, and reassessing customer needs.

**2. Develop a virtual doppelgänger.** Leverage AI and advanced analytics to create digital twins that cover the entire business. A digital twin is a virtual model of the physical versions in functional teams, such as an end-to-end supply chain, enabling data-driven decisions using real-time data, and improving agility in both sensing and responding to disruptions. Digital twins can serve as a cornerstone of a company's digital strategy, where data from various sources and systems – from Internet of Things (IoT) sensors to signals from GPS devices, for example – is connected to create a virtual replica, reflecting the same parameters and financial targets. Predictive analytics can forecast future market movements and inform decisions about which assets to hold, sell, or acquire.

**3. Enhance cross-functional collaboration.** Encourage cross-functional teams to participate in portfolio reviews, ensuring strategic decisions are informed by a comprehensive understanding of the company's capabilities and market position.

**4. Scan, focus, and then act.** Establish a culture within the organization that encourages employees at all levels to stay informed about emerging technologies and changing market dynamics. CEOs and all decision-makers need to understand how each development is likely to unfold in the year ahead (scan), assess the impact of each development on specific business functions (focus), and provide considerations for how the company can successfully manage them (act).

**5. Enhance customer engagement and insights.** Develop sophisticated systems for gathering and analyzing customer data to anticipate shifts in behavior and preferences. This might include implementing advanced analytics tools, conducting regular customer surveys, or creating customer advisory boards to maintain a direct line of communication with key stakeholders.

**6. Build agile and resilient business models.** Design organizational structures and processes that can quickly adapt to changing market conditions. This could involve diversifying supply chains, creating flexible work arrangements, or developing scenario-based strategic planning processes to prepare for various geopolitical and economic outcomes.

### CONFIDENTLY SHAPING THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC GROWTH

Confident CEOs who embrace emerging technologies and leverage geopolitical opportunities are well-positioned to lead their organizations to new heights. By continuously optimizing their portfolios, incorporating flexibility in deal structures, and using scenario planning, CEOs can confidently make informed and resilient strategic decisions.

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## PhilHealth benefit for heart disease up by over fifteen-fold

As Filipinos celebrate the holiday season, the Department of Health (DOH) recently called on people to prioritize their well-being by practicing moderation in their food intake and maintaining an active lifestyle. This is particularly important given that cardio-vascular diseases, specifically ischemic heart disease (IHD), remain the leading cause of death in the Philippines.

To provide expanded financial coverage associated with heart disease treatment, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) significantly increased its benefits coverage for Ischemic Heart Disease-Acute Myocardial Infarction (IHD-AMI) or "heart attack" for all inpatient admissions effective December 21, 2024.

PhilHealth Circular No. 2024-0032 published on the same date provides coverage for (1) Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) at P524,000 from P30,300, an increase of 1,629 percent; (2) Fibrinolysis at P133,500 from P30,290 or a 900% increase; (3) Emergency Medical Services with Coordinated Referral and Interfacility Transfer at P21,900; and (4) Cardiac Rehabilitation after PCI at P66,140.

The expanded PhilHealth benefits packages for heart attack ensure that patients receive timely medical treatment by including emergency medical transport services to a capable health facility and all the medical interventions needed to ensure survival and good patient outcomes.

"We understand the significant financial burden that heart disease can place on families," said PhilHealth President and Chief Executive Officer Emmanuel R. Ledesma, Jr. "We have listened to the patients and their families, and with the cooperation of our partner health facilities, we have been able to determine the prevailing costs that led

us to adjust and substantially increase our financial support in these life-saving treatments," he added.

The enhanced heart packages support a comprehensive range of services that include emergency medical services, medicines, laboratory and diagnostic tests, medical supplies, use of equipment, and pertinent administrative fees. In the case of percutaneous coronary intervention, the procedure can be availed of at any of the 70 accredited Cath Labs nationwide.

The PhilHealth Chief reminded the members that there should be no co-payment for inpatient admissions in basic or ward accommodations in both public and private health facilities nationwide.

"But we should not forget, heart ailments can be prevented. To support our members in their journey towards better health especially in the coming new year, we encourage everyone to avail of our primary care benefits under Konsulta," urged Ledesma, specifying consultations with primary care physician, laboratory tests for early detection as well as medicines to support those that already have heart conditions, all for free.

"Through the Konsulta, we can identify potential health risks early on, including family history of heart disease, allowing for timely interventions such as medication for cholesterol management and lifestyle advice, to prevent or mitigate the development of heart disease." He asked Filipinos to register to their Konsulta provider of choice at any of the local health insurance offices nationwide or through their own account in the PhilHealth Member Portal.

By embracing a healthy lifestyle and by utilizing the Konsulta, Filipinos can better protect themselves from heart diseases for a healthier and productive future, he added.