

Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi)

6,303.72

▲ 8.17 PTS.

▲ 0.13%

FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2025

BusinessWorld

PSEi MEMBER STOCKS

AC Ayala Corp. P599.00 +P4.00 +0.67%	ACEN ACEN Corp. P2.50 -P0.02 -0.79%	AEV Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Inc. P33.40 -P0.15 -0.45%	AGI Alliance Global Group, Inc. P8.30 -P0.26 -3.04%	ALI Ayala Land, Inc. P25.95 -P0.20 -0.76%	AREIT AREIT, Inc. P40.80 —	BDO BDO Unibank, Inc. P151.00 +P2.10 +1.41%	BLOOM Bloomberg Resorts Corp. P4.45 +P0.42 +10.42%	BPI Bank of the Philippine Islands P122.00 +P3.00 +2.52%	CBC China Banking Corp. P62.50 +P0.50 +0.81%
CNPF Century Pacific Food, Inc. P37.30 +P0.10 +0.27%	CNVRG Converge ICT Solutions, Inc. P18.06 -P0.78 -4.14%	DMC DMCI Holdings, Inc. P10.68 -P0.02 -0.19%	EMI Emperador, Inc. P15.58 +P0.08 +0.52%	GLO Globe Telecom, Inc. P1,650.00 +P8.00 +0.49%	GTCAP GT Capital Holdings, Inc. P653.00 +P9.00 +1.40%	ICT International Container Terminal Services, Inc. P438.00 -P7.00 -1.57%	JFC Jollibee Foods Corp. P219.20 +P0.20 +0.09%	JGS JG Summit Holdings, Inc. P19.98 -P0.42 -2.06%	LTG LT Group, Inc. P13.00 —
MBT Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. P72.90 +P1.45 +2.03%	MER Manila Electric Co. P544.00 +P8.00 +1.49%	MONDE Monde Nissin Corp. P7.64 +P0.14 +1.87%	PGOLD Puregold Price Club, Inc. P36.55 +P0.55 +1.53%	SCC Semiraya Mining and Power Corp. P32.70 +P0.15 +0.46%	SM SM Investments Corp. P819.50 -P10.00 -1.21%	SMC San Miguel Corp. P75.00 -P1.50 -1.96%	SMPH SM Prime Holdings, Inc. P23.15 -P0.05 -0.22%	TEL PLDT Inc. P1,251.00 +P3.00 +0.24%	URC Universal Robina Corp. P92.10 -P0.35 -0.38%
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Topline sets sights on fuel market share gains in Visayas

CEBU CITY — Top Line Business Development Corp. (Topline) sees room for continued growth as it scales up its retail fuel presence in the Visayas through acquisitions and expanded capacity, supporting its goal of capturing a larger share of the regional fuel market.

Topline Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer Eugene Erik C. Lim said the expansion of the company's retail fuel subsidiary, Light Fuels Corp., is expected to support its financial performance this year.

He said the company is targeting to have 50 Light Fuels-operated stations in place by yearend.

"We're hoping it can be a banner year because of the 50 (fuel) stations. From three stations last year, then it is now hopefully 50 stations this year. It's really a banner year," Mr. Lim said in an interview on the sidelines of the company's 12th anniversary event held last Friday.

Topline announced last Thursday its plan to acquire a gasoline station in Consolacion, Cebu from Phoenix Petroleum Philip-



TOP LINE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORP.

pines, Inc., a company led by Dennis A. Uy, for P8.5 million.

This came after Topline recently bought P180 million worth of assets under a P925-million investment to support its expansion in the Visayas.

The company entered into a purchase agreement with Total Oil & Gas Resources, Inc. and Ballston Metro Corp.

The acquired assets consist of 38 retail fuel stations located across Cebu, Leyte, Siquijor, and Negros Oriental; a two-million-liter depot facility; 15 fuel tanker trucks; machinery and equip-

ment; and intangible assets such as a customer loyalty program and leasehold rights.

Mr. Lim said the acquisitions support Topline's push for a higher market share in Central Visayas, which is currently estimated at 7%.

"There's still a lot of room for growth. We would want to hopefully add more market share soon, especially with the acquisition of the different stations. As to how much, we don't know yet because we haven't seen the numbers," he said.

Mr. Lim said Topline increased its fuel depot capacity to 15 million

liters from 5 million liters due to higher orders in Central Visayas.

During the company's annual stockholders' meeting, Mr. Lim said Topline's gross revenue rose by 36% to about P1 billion in the first quarter from P738.7 million in the previous year, driven by higher fuel sales.

He said Topline saw a 38.3% increase in liquid fuel sales to 44.43 million liters in the first half from 32.12 million liters in the same period a year ago.

"We're now at 44 million liters for the first half. We're about 61% already of the 72 million liters sold last year. That's before we also acquired the different stations," Mr. Lim said.

Topline has business interests in commercial fuel trading, depot operations, and retail fuel in the Visayas region.

Its subsidiaries include petroleum trading and distributor Topline Logistics and Development Corp., and retail fuel company Light Fuels.

Topline shares were last traded on July 18, down by 7.14% or nine centavos to P1.17 per share.

— **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

SN Aboitiz Power eyes solar projects for portfolio diversification

SN ABOITIZ POWER GROUP (SNAP), a joint venture between Aboitiz Power Corp. and Norwegian firm Scatec, is seeking to diversify its portfolio by pursuing solar power projects.

"We're very eager to build out our next leg. We envisioned not being just a hydro player. So, batteries are now taking shape," SNAP President Joseph S. Yu told reporters last week.

"We still have hydro projects in the works, but the third leg is solar plants, and we intend to be in all to help the industry along."

Mr. Yu said there are already solar power projects in the company's pipeline but declined to provide details.

The company is accelerating the investment decision process for up to 200 megawatts (MW) of energy storage systems.

"We need them as soon as possible. The grid needs it. So, we're trying to help the NGCP (National Grid Corp. of the Philippines) in the mission to stabilize the grid," Mr. Yu said.

SNAP is a renewable energy developer that owns and operates the 112.5-MW Ambuklao and 140-MW Binga hydroelectric

power plants in Benguet, and the Magat hydroelectric power plant with a capacity of up to 388 MW located on the border of Isabela and Ifugao.

It also operates the 8.5-MW Maris hydro and the 24-MW Magat battery energy storage system (BESS) in Isabela.

Currently, SNAP is constructing its 40-MW Binga BESS in Benguet and the 16-MW Magat BESS Phase 2.

The company is targeting a total battery energy storage capacity of 80 MW by 2026.

— **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

DigiPlus pushes for regulation over blanket online gambling ban

TANCO-LED digital entertainment provider DigiPlus Interactive Corp. said lawmakers should consider the potential effects of a total ban on online gambling, noting that regulation could help prevent a shift of users to unregulated platforms.

"Crucially, DigiPlus urges policymakers to weigh the consequences of a total ban. The experience of other countries has shown that banning licensed platforms does not eliminate demand for online gaming, but merely shifts users to unregulated black markets where there are no protections, no taxes, and no accountability," DigiPlus said in a statement last week.

"In contrast, a well-regulated environment can protect players, generate billions in government revenue, and sustain over 40,000 jobs across tech, marketing, entertainment, customer service, and compliance," it added.

DigiPlus operates online gaming platforms BingoPlus, ArenaPlus, and GameZone.

The company said it is supportive of "smart and balanced" regulation that protects players, ensures industry accountability, and sustains the economic value generated by the legal online gaming sector.

"We believe regulation is the path to player protection. It's the only way to safeguard players, preserve jobs, and close the door on illegal, underground platforms that operate without any oversight," DigiPlus Chairman Eusebio H. Tanco said.

"With the right rules in place, the Philippines can be

a model for safe, transparent online gaming in Asia. We are ready to work hand-in-hand with regulators, legislators, and community groups to make that vision real," he added.

DigiPlus said it has already implemented safeguards across its platforms, including strict know-your-customer verification with government ID checks and age gating. The platforms have also had responsible gaming features since November 2024, such as deposit limits, self-exclusion options, and cooling-off periods.

The company plans to introduce new initiatives such as enhanced affordability checks, behavioral nudges to curb excessive gaming, and referral pathways to licensed mental health experts.

It plans to roll out in-app community spaces this month to foster responsible gaming discussions and peer support, alongside featuring related content across all its platforms.

"DigiPlus emphasizes that these measures are not reactions to regulatory pressure, but part of a multi-year strategy to build a responsible gaming ecosystem. The company invests in data science, player support systems, and compliance technologies precisely because it believes the future of gaming depends on trust and transparency," the company said.

"That is why it fully supports updated legislation, particularly around stronger penalties for illegal operators, and clearer advertising standards," it added.

— **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**



GLOBE JOINS global tech and telco companies at the Asia United Gateway (AUG) East Submarine Cable Project contract signing.

Globe partners with global telcos for cable system

AYALA-LED Globe Telecom, Inc. said it will work with global technology and telecommunications (telco) companies to develop an 8,900-kilometer submarine cable system aimed at delivering additional bandwidth and strengthening network diversity and reliability.

In a statement on Sunday, the listed telecommunications company said it has joined the Asia United Gateway East (AUG East) project to support East Asia's rising demand for high-speed, high-capacity connectivity, fueled by the development of artificial intelligence (AI).

The cable will follow a key route linking the digital hubs of Singapore and Japan, with landing points in the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, South Korea, and Taiwan.

The project is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2029.

"This new data superhighway strengthens our nation's digital backbone. It gives businesses the scale, speed, and reliability they need to compete globally and embrace technologies that can uplift lives and drive inclusive progress for all Filipinos," said Globe President and Chief Executive Officer Carl R. Cruz.

Raymond Policarpio, Globe Business vice-president and head of strategy management and business investments, said that the investment in the AUG East cable system "is a cornerstone of our long-term strategy to future-proof the Philippines' digital infrastructure."

"As AI-powered applications become increasingly pervasive, the demand for resilient, high-capacity international connectivity will also experience a surge," Mr. Policarpio said.

"By securing our stake in this vital digital thoroughfare, we are proactively enabling our enterprise clients to leverage cutting-edge technologies, drive innovation, and expand their global reach, ensuring the Philippines remains a competitive hub in the digital economy," he added.

Globe said that AUG East can deliver massive capacity to "data-hungry enterprises, equivalent to streaming millions of ultra-high-definition movies simultaneously." — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

DigiPlus, BingoPlus Foundation pledge P2 million for tech scholarships, expand FutureSmart with Edukasyon.ph

DigiPlus Interactive Corp., through its social development arm BingoPlus Foundation, has pledged P2 million to fund scholarships for 50 aspiring tech professionals under its flagship FutureSmart Program. This fresh investment comes with a new partnership with Edukasyon.ph to bridge technology education and real-world careers for Filipinos.

The Memorandum of Agreement signing was held on May 26, 2025, at AWS Philippines in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City.

As part of this partnership, selected scholars will complete the AWS re/Start program, a 12-week workforce development training that prepares learners for entry-level cloud careers. After training, Edukasyon.ph will provide job placement support to help graduates land employment within three months, with opportunities available within DigiPlus and its extensive network of tech industry partners.

Earlier this year, FutureSmart received a Gold Stevie Award for Excellence in Social Impact at the 2025 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards in Seoul, a testament to the program's tangible impact and the value of strategic partnerships in expanding access to technology education across the Philippines.

As demand for digital skills continues to rise, DigiPlus and BingoPlus Foundation remain committed to investing in future-ready education and inclusive employment opportunities. Through FutureSmart, the Foundation aims to build a workforce that is not only skilled but empowered to help shape the country's digital future.

Ready to Launch a Career in Tech?

BingoPlus Foundation and Edukasyon.ph are now accepting applications for the AWS Cloud Skills Training Program. IT and Computer Science experience is required. Participants will gain knowledge in Amazon Web Services, earn certifications, and open doors to career opportunities in cloud technology.

Apply now through <https://tinyurl.com/AWSTrainingApplication>.