ABOITIZ LAND

# Aboitiz Land reports value growth in RFO homes

ABOITIZ LAND, INC., the real estate segment of the Aboitiz group, said the value of its ready-for-occupancy (RFO) homes has increased, suggesting potential returns for investors.

In a statement on Thursday, the company noted that its Seafront Residences in San Juan, Batangas, recorded a 473% value increase since its launch in 2017, equivalent to a 23% compounded annual growth rate.

Amoa, Aboitiz Land's residential subdivision in Compostela, Cebu, posted a 381% increase in value since its 2015 launch, registering 17% compounded annual growth.

The Villages at LIMA Estate, within the group's 1,000-hectare mixed-use development, saw a 157% increase in value since its launch, also achieving 17% compounded annual growth.

The company said value gains were also observed across its Ajoya communities, including Ajoya Cabanatuan in Nueva Ecija (195%), Ajoya Pampanga (110%), and Ajoya Capas in Tarlac (95%).

Ajoya Cabanatuan recorded 17% compounded annual growth since launch, it said.

"RFO homes are the best choices for prospective homeowners looking to move in immediately, letting families and professionals move in almost immediately after purchase and allowing them to enjoy the benefits of their community right away," the company said.

The company also offers a 5% downpayment option for first-time homeowners and investors, with the remaining 95% payable over time.

"This structure is equally attractive to investors, who can acquire an RFO unit quickly, then begin generating rental income immediately — often enough to help cover monthly amortizations," Aboitiz Land also said.

At the local bourse on Thursday, AEV shares closed flat at P31.55 per share. — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

# CAB retains fuel surcharge at level 4 for October flights

THE Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) will retain the passenger fuel surcharge at level 4 for October, keeping airline fuel charges steady for the third straight month.

At level 4, the passenger fuel surcharge will range between P117 and P342 for domestic flights, and between P385.70 and P2,867.82 for international flights originating from the Philippines.

For airlines collecting fuel surcharges in foreign currency, the applicable rate for the period will be P57.04 to the dollar, the CAB said in an advisory on Thursday.

Fuel surcharges are adjusted based on the movement of jet fuel prices, using the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark.

According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the global average jet fuel price slipped by 0.1% to $89.33 per barrel week on week as of Sept. 12.

On an annual basis, the global average jet fuel price dropped 9.8%, IATA said.

In a June report, the trade association said airlines are projected to record a net profit of $36 billion this year, driven mainly by passenger revenues and steady jet fuel prices.

Jet fuel is expected to average $86 per barrel in 2025, below last year's $99 average, translating to about $236 billion in fuel costs, or 25.8% of total airline operating costs.

Separately on Thursday, flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL), operated by PAL Holdings, Inc., said it will boost flights on key domestic routes starting October to capture anticipated demand during the peak travel season.

PAL said it will increase flights between Manila and Butuan to 21 from 14 weekly; Manila and Cagayan de Oro to 42 from 35; Manila and Cotabato to 14 from 11; and Manila and Legazpi to 28 from 21.

The flag carrier will also raise services between Manila and Tacloban to 25 from 21 flights weekly, while operating daily Manila-Siargao flights and 21 weekly Cebu-Siargao services.

By October, PAL will mount daily flights between Clark and Siargao, while offering 42 weekly flights between Manila and Boracay, seven weekly flights between Cebu and Boracay, 14 weekly Manila-Coron flights, and 14 and 21 weekly flights on the Clark-Coron and Cebu-Coron routes, respectively.

"For the peak season, PAL will operate a total of 1,154 weekly flights between Manila and key domestic destinations, with overall flight frequencies rising by 7%," PAL Express President Rabbi Vincent L. Ang said in a statement.

The airline said it expects seat capacity out of Manila to expand by more than 14,000 seats due to the additional flights starting next month.

PAL is also set to launch a Cebu-Calbayog service on Oct. 26 to strengthen its Visayas and Mindanao hubs.

"This new service will provide travelers from Eastern Visayas direct access to Visayas and Mindanao, enhancing connectivity and convenience. We're investing in Cebu as a strategic hub to help drive tourism and economic growth across the region," Mr. Ang said.

For the January-to-June period, PAL carried 8.47 million passengers and operated 57,598 flights.

The flag carrier earlier said it is preparing to operate 22 brand-new aircraft in the coming years, starting with the delivery of the Airbus A350-1000 by yearend.

PAL is also expecting the delivery of additional A350-1000s and 13 A321neo regional aircraft starting in 2026, along with the arrival of 18 retrofitted Airbus A321ceo aircraft by October this year.

At the local bourse on Thursday, shares in PAL Holdings closed unchanged at P3.99 apiece. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

# RFM says fourth 2025 dividend totals P300 million

LISTED food and beverage company RFM Corp. on Thursday declared a P0.08903 per share cash dividend, payable on Oct. 22 to shareholders on record as of Oct. 1.

The P300-million payout is the company's fourth dividend for 2025, bringing total cash dividends for the year to P1 billion, compared with P1.3 billion in 2024.

At the share price of P4.27 on Sept. 16, RFM's 2025 dividend yield is roughly 7%, the company said.

RFM Chief Executive Officer Jose Ma. "Joey" A. Concepcion III said the balance sheet is "very strong to support this level of cash dividends," while leaving surplus cash for potential projects or acquisitions.

The company said it is on track for stronger earnings in 2025 versus its 2024 net income of P1.4 billion.

Mr. Concepcion noted that softer commodity prices and volume growth in RFM's brands and institutional segments, including the ice cream joint venture, are key drivers of 2025 income.

"The recent flooding and heavy rainfall disrupted logistics, but underlying demand remained resilient. We expect this consumer demand to continue into the fourth quarter, supported by easing inflation," he added.

RFM's portfolio includes Selecta milk, Fiesta and Royal pasta, flour and buns, and ice cream through a joint venture with the country's leading ice cream company, selling Magnum, Cornetto, and Selecta brands.

At the local bourse on Thursday, shares in the company rose 2.58%, closing at P4.38 apiece. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

# Grab launches Grab Asenso: A Digital *Diskarte* Program to accelerate regional MSME digitalization in the Philippines

Grab today launched Grab Asenso: A Digital *Diskarte* Program, a nationwide push to speed up the digital shift of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) outside Metro Manila. The program combines a multi-city Learning Caravan with the rollout of mobile-first merchant tools inside the GrabMerchant app, giving entrepreneurs practical skills and plug-and-play infrastructure to grow online.

MSMEs are the backbone of Philippine commerce — 99.59% of all establishments and roughly 65% of jobs — yet many are still early in their digital journey. The country's shift to cash-lite is now mainstream — 57.4% of retail payments by volume and 59% by value were digital in 2024, driven by QR PH and instant transfers — making merchant readiness urgent for inclusive growth.

Supported by the local government units, DICT Regional Office, and Grab merchant-partners, the inaugural leg kicked off in Angeles City and will expand to Cavite, Baguio, Bohol, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Bacolod, and Cagayan de Oro in the coming months.

Grab Philippines Vice-President for Cities CJ Lacsican shares, "Progress happens when every entrepreneur, regardless of business size, can fully participate in the digital economy. Grab Asenso goes beyond seminars. We pair hands-on, mobile-based learning with ready-to-use tools — marketing, payments, logistics, and an AI-copilot — so MSMEs can find consumers, run leaner operations, and scale their business faster. When small businesses thrive, supply chains strengthen, jobs multiply, and local economies become more vibrant and more resilient."

The Grab Asenso Program has also earned the endorsement of the DICT, with Director of the ICT Industry Development Bureau Emmy Lou Versoza-Delfin underscoring the program's alignment with the agency's digital livelihood agenda. "The Department of Information and Communications Technology is deeply honored and excited to be a part of the Grab Asenso Learning Caravan.


**Grab Philippines Vice President for Cities CJ Lacsican, together with representatives from the Angeles City LGU, DICT, and the local merchant community, officially launched Grab Asenso: A Digital Diskarte Program. [L–R] Kuya Jeck's Tapsilogan owner Ronnie Casupanan, DICT Pampanga Provincial Head Engr. Jonathan Solis, Grab PH Regional Manager for Northern Luzon Joe Mangiliman, Angeles City Vice Mayor Amos Rivera, Grab PH Vice President for Cities CJ Lacsican, Morgen Kaffee owners Miguel and Micaela Evangelista, and Grab PH Country Communications Head Arvi Lopez.**



This initiative is more than just an event; it's a testament to our shared belief in the power of digital technology to transform lives and build a brighter future for the Philippines. Grab Asenso is a powerful display of digital *bayanihan* — a modern-day take on our cherished tradition of community cooperation. The DICT and our valued private sector partners like Grab have come together to bridge the digital divide and bring opportunities directly to your doorstep."

**WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT GRAB ASENSO**

Unlike training-only initiatives or tools-only platforms, Asenso links three essentials in one track: skills + tools + access to demand.

**ASENSO LEARNING CARAVAN: MOBILE-FIRST CAPACITY BUILDING**

Designed for real-world use on a smartphone, the Caravan delivers concise modules that MSMEs can apply same-day:

- Mobile-First Digital Marketing. Make and measure social posts, promos, and storefront updates directly from a phone; use basic analytics to improve reach and repeat orders.
- AI 101 for MSMEs. Work with prompt templates to draft product descriptions, promo captions, menu updates, and basic customer insights in minutes — inside GrabMerchant.
- Financial Growth Planning. Use payout data to set weekly targets, track unit economics, and manage cash flow for healthier working capital.

This approach addresses the adoption gap: 77% of Filipino MSMEs want to use more digital tools, but only 16% actively do so, largely due to skills and perceived complexity — precisely the friction points Asenso removes.

**ASENSO TOOLS: PRACTICAL INFRASTRUCTURE EMBEDDED IN THE GRAB MERCHANT APP**

- Payment Solutions: Tap & Scan To Pay turns any NFC-enabled Android phone or merchant device into a checkout terminal — accepting tap-to-pay cards and QR PH. Quick activation, competitive fees, seamless payouts, and tap-to-reconcile reports help cash-flow discipline. Registered merchants are also automatically enrolled in the Income Protection Coverage, which safeguards daily revenue against calamity-related disruptions. The rise of merchant QR acceptance and SoftPOS globally underscores the timing. The technology will mark its first pilot rollout in the country in Angeles City starting Q4 2025.
- Grab Merchant AI Assistant (BETA) is a built-in AI copilot that suggests actions from context (e.g., "run a rainy-day bundle," "reorder best-sellers"), and surfaces simple customer trends — with multi-language support to lower the learning curve.

Together, these tools lower entry barriers and speed time-to-impact for thin-margin entrepreneurs, helping merchants reach Grab's highly active user base.

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE ALIGNMENT**

Grab Asenso is a flagship public-private partnership program, designed as a Digital *Diskarte* Program to accelerate the digitalization of livelihoods and enterprises across the Philippines. Endorsed by agencies like the DICT and local governments, the program aligns with national priorities on digital entrepreneurship and inclusive growth — ensuring that MSMEs and traditional transport professionals gain both the skills and the tools to thrive in a fast-changing economy.

"Grab Asenso solidifies our covenant with government and communities: that progress in the digital economy must be shared, inclusive, and within reach of every entrepreneur, in every city," Lacsican adds.