



Lorenzo Shipping Corp. hikes authorized capital stock to P2B

LORENZO SHIPPING CORP. said it has received approval from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to increase its authorized capital stock to P2 billion.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange on Thursday, the company said the SEC approved its application to raise its authorized capital stock from P991.18 million, divided into 991.18 million common shares with a par value of P1 each, to two billion common shares with a par value of P1 each.

It added that 252.2 million common shares with a par value of P1 each, or a total of P252.2 million, have been subscribed by National Marine Corp. (NMC) Of this amount, P211.82 million has been paid.

"The transaction pertains to the subscription of NMC to the increase in authorized capital stock of the Company, subject to the approval of the Securities

and Exchange Commission to the increase," it said.

The company said proceeds from the subscription will be used to settle obligations to port operators, dry-docking shipyards, vessel and container repair service providers, suppliers of vessel parts and maintenance materials, trucking companies, container yard rentals, voyage service fees, vessel insurance premiums, and redundancy pay for employees.

The remaining balance will fund vessel repairs, payments to shipyards, port operators, and trucking service providers.

Lorenzo Shipping, established in 1972 to handle domestic inter-island cargo, shifted from break-bulk to containerized shipping.

It operates a fleet serving major ports in the Philippines and manages equipment, container yards, and warehouses. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

LOCAL AIRLINES are implementing additional flight suspensions and frequency reductions on select routes as they adjust operations amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

In separate advisories on Thursday, flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) and budget carrier Cebu Pacific (CEB) said they are adjusting their networks by suspending some routes and reducing flight frequencies.

PAL said it is adjusting parts of its flight schedule due to "changing conditions affecting global aviation."

"We understand that this may affect travel plans and sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. PAL is working to minimize disruption and will continue to review these routes as conditions improve," PAL said.

The airline has indefinitely suspended its Cebu-Guam flights starting April 16 and its Cebu-Ho Chi Minh City services beginning April 19, except on May 1, 3, 24, and 31.

PAL also suspended some domestic flights, including Clark-Siargao starting May 4, Cebu-Ozamiz starting May 5, and Cebu-Cabayog starting May 6, until further notice.

Cargo operations on affected routes are also disrupted, PAL said, adding that it is working with logistics partners to arrange alternative routing options.

Cebu Pacific has also canceled its flights to and from Dubai until April 20.

"Cebu Pacific continues to assess its flight operations to and from the Middle East amid the ongoing security situation in the region. As this remains a developing situation, further schedule adjustments may take place," it said.

The airline said passengers with Dubai flights scheduled until April

30, as well as those traveling to and from Riyadh until May 31, may avail of free rebooking or convert their tickets into travel funds.

Both airlines said the suspensions and frequency reductions reflect the impact of the Middle East conflict on fuel costs.

They added that they have enough jet fuel to sustain operations and are working to secure additional supply, following President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.'s statement that aircraft grounding may be possible amid tight fuel supply and prices nearing \$200 per barrel. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

ATI secures PSE approval for April 3 delisting

LISTED PORT OPERATOR Asian Terminals, Inc. (ATI) said it has secured approval from the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) to delist from the local bourse on April 3.

In a media release on Thursday, ATI said it received notice from the PSE approving its petition for voluntary delisting.

The approval followed the completion of a tender offer and the subsequent share crossing of tendered shares conducted

jointly with Maharlika Investment Corp. (MIC).

ATI and MIC, as proponents of the tender offer, acquired at least 95% of ATI's outstanding shares, in line with the PSE's ownership requirement for voluntary delisting.

The company's public shareholding has fallen below the minimum public float required under PSE rules. Trading of ATI shares has also been suspended as part of the process.

"With MIC's participation, ATI is poised to embark on a new chapter of sustained growth as it further expands its role in facilitating efficient and sustainable trade in support of industries, communities, and the broader Philippine economy," ATI said.

ATI said port and terminal operations will continue without changes. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

MPIF to hold marine conservation program nationwide on March 29

METRO PACIFIC Investments Foundation (MPIF) said it will hold Shore It Up! Weekend 2026, a marine conservation program to be implemented across eight sites nationwide.

In a statement, MPIF said the initiative will take place in Del Carmen in Surigao del Norte,

Alaminos City in Pangasinan, Puerto Galera in Oriental Mindoro, Medina in Misamis Oriental, Cordova in Cebu, Marinduque, Tubataba Reefs Natural Park, and Mabini in Batangas.

The program, now in its 18th year, will include coastal and underwater cleanups, as well

as mangrove planting activities scheduled for March 29.

MPIF said the activities will involve volunteers from local communities, schools, youth groups, civic organizations, and environmental groups.

Participating communities will also observe Earth Hour on

March 28 at 8:30 p.m., the foundation said.

"Shore It Up! has always been about bringing people together around a shared responsibility for our seas and our communities. These efforts may begin with a single weekend, but they reflect a much bigger commit-

ment—to be more mindful of how our actions affect our environment and to take part in protecting it in ways that are both practical and meaningful," MPIF President Melody del Rosario said.

She added that cleanup activities help raise awareness and sup-

port longer-term efforts such as mangrove restoration and marine conservation.

MPIF said the program aims to strengthen partnerships with local government units and communities while supporting coastal and marine conservation efforts. — **ALB**

From early detection to personalized treatment: Navigating breast cancer with care

The incidence of breast cancer in the Philippines continues to rise, positioning it as one of the most urgent health concerns among Filipino women today. In 2022, the World Health Organization Global Cancer Observatory recorded 33,079 new cases in the country, making it the most common cancer among women.

Despite these numbers, medical experts emphasize that the narrative around breast cancer is changing—from one being defined by fear to one increasingly shaped by early detection, precision medicine, and survivorship.

"Over the past decade, breast cancer awareness initiatives—led by healthcare institutions, advocacy groups, and both public and private sectors—have significantly improved the public's understanding of screening, early detection, timely consultation, and prompt treatment," Philippine Cancer Society President Dr. Corazon A. Ngelangel said. "More women now recognize the importance of breast self-examination, clinical breast examination, screening imaging via ultrasound/mammography, and prompt diagnostic biopsy consult."

"Particularly, with early detection, survival rates continue to improve," Dr. Ngelangel added. "And patients now have access to more personalized and evidence-based treatment strategies than ever before, aided by foundational tools in precision medicine."

For patients like Jocelyn Gesmundo, early detection is life-changing. A retired IT project manager at 60, Ms. Gesmundo had already built a disciplined routine around her health. She had undergone regular mammograms and ultrasounds for more than 15 years, motivated by a strong family history of cancer.

"When I became a mother, I made sure I did regular checkups," Ms. Gesmundo shared. "It was something I committed to."

It was during one of the routine screenings that doctors detected a change. A previously monitored lump had grown, and another appeared near her lymph node, prompting immediate biopsy.

"Two days after my ultrasound, the doctor called me back. That's when I



Dr. Emmeline Cua delos Santos

knew something was different."

She then was diagnosed early-stage breast cancer.

PERSONALIZED FOR PRECISION

Breast cancer diagnosis today relies on what clinicians call triple assessment: a combination of clinical examination, imaging (such as mammography or ultrasound), and biopsy confirmation.

Beyond diagnosis, the classification of breast cancer has also become more sophisticated. There are three major subtypes: hormone receptor-positive, HER2-positive, and triple-negative breast cancer, each requiring distinct treatment strategies.

"What's important now is that these types are much more treatable than before," surgical oncologist Dr. Emmeline Cua-delos Santos explains. "We have targeted therapies and better chemotherapy options."

This shift reflects a broader transformation in oncology: the move away from one-size-fits-all treatment towards personalized, evidence-based care.

As Dr. Jose Rhoel C. de Leon, one of the board of directors at the Philippine College of Surgeons Cancer Commission Foundation, highlights, "We are seeing firsthand how innovations, such as improved imaging techniques, minimally invasive biopsy procedures, de-escalation of radical procedures like breast conserving surgery and sentinel lymph node procedures, as well as precision diagnostics are helping patients receive more accurate diagnoses and tailored surgical management."



Dr. Frances Victoria Que

THE ROLE OF GENOMICS

At the heart of modern breast cancer care is a major shift: from standardized treatment protocols to highly individualized care.

"We're going towards the era of personalized medicine—looking at molecular components that determine what is best for a patient based on their DNA," said medical oncologist Dr. Frances Victoria Que.

Beyond confirming the presence of cancer, today's diagnostics aim to understand how a tumor behaves. This includes identifying mutations, protein expressions, and recurrence risks—factors that directly influence treatment planning.

"For every patient, we assess their risk over time," Dr. Que explains. "From there, we determine whether treatments like chemotherapy will actually provide benefit."

With this new approach, patients are now stratified into risk categories, allowing oncologists to de-escalate treatment accordingly.

Early breast cancer patients with small tumors that are hormone receptor positive can be tested if their genomic profile points to low risk. "If a patient is low-risk based on genomic testing, we can safely skip it and proceed with less aggressive treatment," Dr. Que emphasized. A healthy discussion with doctors is important.

In Ms. Gesmundo's case, genomic testing became a turning point in her cancer journey.

After her diagnosis, she underwent a precision genomic test, determining the likelihood of her cancer coming



Jocelyn Gesmundo

back. The results classified her as low risk, meaning she could safely avoid chemotherapy.

"That was very important to me," she recalled. "I saw how difficult chemotherapy was for my father. So, if there was something I could skip, I hope it would be that."

"A cancer diagnosis brings a lot of anxiety," Dr. Que said. "But when patients are given clear, personalized treatment plans, it helps reduce that uncertainty and gives them a sense of control."

That sense of reassurance extended beyond Ms. Gesmundo herself. She also underwent genetic testing to determine whether her cancer could be passed on to her children. The results came back negative.

NAVIGATING TREATMENTS

While genomics informs treatment decisions, doctors stress that care remains a collaborative process—one that integrates clinical expertise, patient preferences, and emotional readiness.

"It's no longer one-size-fits all," said Dr. de Los Santos. "We tailor-fit treatment based on the type of cancer, its stage, and what is best for the patient, even considering what gives them peace of mind."

This includes a wide range of options: from breast-conserving surgery to full mastectomy, as well as less invasive procedures such as sentinel lymph node biopsy. Advances in oncoplastic surgery now even allow patients with larger tumors to preserve their breasts while ensuring effective cancer control. Systemic

treatments are then layered onto this surgical foundation.

By investigating the individual's genomic profile, we can tailor fit the treatment.

AWARENESS, HESITANCY, AND MISINFORMATION

Despite these advancements, however, one of the biggest challenges in breast cancer care remains awareness. Misconceptions about breast cancer contributes to delays in screening and diagnosis, Dr. Que observed.

"There's still a lot of misinformation surrounding cancer," she explained. "Many people think it's a death sentence, when in reality, early-stage cancers are often very treatable—or even curable."

"The hesitancy or fear will not get you anywhere, it may even cost your life," she emphasized.

FROM SURVIVAL TO EMPOWERMENT

Ms. Gesmundo's cancer journey has reshaped her outlook in lasting ways.

"What you really have is the present," she reflected. "You learn to be kinder to others and to yourself."

Her days are now marked by intentional living: spending time with family and reconnecting with friends.

She also offers a reminder often forgotten in conversations about women's health: the importance of self-care.

"As women, especially mothers, we tend to take on everything," she said. "But you also need to take care of yourself. Because, when you do, you're better able to care for the people you love. You always have a choice in how you face it. Choose to see the positive—even if it's difficult."

Doctors reinforce this message by emphasizing that the convergence of early detection, advanced diagnostics, and personalized treatment has transformed the breast cancer landscape.

Ms. Gesmundo, for her part, leaves a message of urgency and hope.

"Make sure you get tested. The earlier this is detected, the better the prognosis."