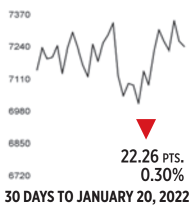
P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BusinessWorld

STOCK MARKET		
PSEi		
OPEN:	7,258.17	
HIGH:	7,281.56	
LOW:	7,218.68	
CLOSE:	7,239.28	▼ 22.26 PTS. 0.30%
VOL.:	2.569 B	
VAL(P):	6.150 B	



ASIAN MARKETS — JANUARY 20, 2022

	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225)	27,772.93	▲	305.70	1.11
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	24,952.35	▲	824.50	3.42
Taiwan (Weighted)	18,218.28	▼	-9.18	-0.05
Thailand (SET Index)	1,658.20	▼	-0.04	0.00
S.Korea (Kse Composite)	2,862.68	▲	20.40	0.72
Singapore (Straits Times)	3,292.84	▲	8.90	0.27
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	7,342.40	▲	9.90	0.14
Malaysia (Klse Composite)	1,527.75	▼	-2.58	-0.17

WORLD MARKETS — JANUARY 19, 2022

	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	35,028.650	▼	-339.820
NASDAQ	14,340.255	▼	-166.642
S&P 500	4,532.760	▼	-44.350
FTSE 100	7,589.660	▲	26.110
Euro Stoxx50	3,814.320	▲	11.830

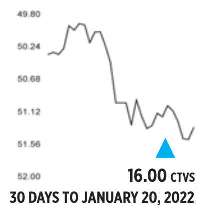
* CLOSING PRICES AS OF JAN. 14, 2022

PESO-DOLLAR RATES

FX	
OPEN	P51.450
HIGH	P51.340
LOW	P51.485
CLOSE	P51.340
W.AVE.	P51.428
VOL.	$858.95 M

▲ 16.00 CTVS

SOURCE : BAP



ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE — JANUARY 20, 2022

	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	114.190	▲	114.460
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.788	▲	7.792
Taiwan (NT dollar)	27.611	▼	27.610
Thailand (baht)	32.870	▲	33.030
S. Korea (won)	1,189.610	▲	1,189.620
Singapore (dollar)	1.346	▲	1.348
Indonesia (rupiah)	14,335	▲	14,360
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.187	▲	4.191

WORLD CURRENCIES — JANUARY 20, 2022

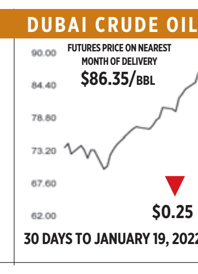
	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.3634	▲	1.3607
US$/Euro	1.1348	▲	1.1345
$/Aust dollar	0.7231	▲	0.7200
Canada dollar/US$	1.2489	▲	1.2480
Swiss Franc/US$	0.9145	▼	0.9151

DUBAI CRUDE OIL

FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY

$86.35/BBL

▼ $0.25



VOL. XXXV • ISSUE 129 | FRIDAY • JANUARY 21, 2022 • www.bworldonline.com | S1/1-10 • 2 SECTIONS, 14 PAGES

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JANUARY 20, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on *S1/2*; article on *S2/2*)

		Value			
AGI	P12.500	P1,310,782,420	-P0.300	▼	-2.344%
ALI	P34.100	P405,895,290	-P0.900	▼	-2.571%
ICT	P200.200	P279,474,254	-P4.200	▼	-2.055%
SPNEC	P1.600	P215,095,450	-P0.010	▼	-0.621%
MONDE	P16.240	P214,264,484	-P0.340	▼	-2.051%
CNVRG	P31.300	P198,668,940	-P0.450	▼	-1.417%
NIKL	P6.060	P174,079,501	P0.230	▲	3.945%
AC	P845.000	P149,262,410	-P5.000	▼	-0.588%
AP	P33.800	P146,365,805	P0.250	▲	0.745%
BDO	P129.300	P145,469,889	P1.400	▲	1.095%

Slower growth likely due to Omicron

THE PHILIPPINE gross domestic product (GDP) is likely to grow slower than previously expected this year as economic activity is impacted by the Omicron-driven surge in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections, Moody's Analytics said.

Moody's Analytics in a note on Thursday said it now expects the Philippine economy to grow by 5.6% this year, well below the government's 7-9% target

This is also lower than the 6.4% growth forecast given in October 2021.

"Domestic demand would be hurt first by any return to movement restrictions, and Google Mobility data indicate that this is beginning to be felt in the Philippines and in Thailand, where declines in mobility for retail and recreational purposes have fallen the most sharply in mid-January," Moody's Analytics Chief Asia-Pacific Economist Steven Cochrane said in a note.

Within the Asia-Pacific region, the Philippines and Australia are seeing the steep surges caused by the highly transmissible Omicron variant, he added.

Metro Manila and nearby areas are currently under a stricter Alert Level 3 as the number of COVID-19 cases remain elevated. The Department of Health (DoH) reported 31,173 new COVID-19 infections on Thursday, bringing the active cases to 275,364.

Economic managers earlier said the economy is estimated lose P3 billion a week in productivity contributions due to lower operational capacity for businesses under Alert Level 3.

"Risks of further domestic movement restrictions that could hobble near-term growth are focused in Indonesia and the Philippines, where public health services are less expansive and vaccination rates remain relatively low," Mr. Cochrane said.

Latest data from the DoH showed more than 56 million have completed their vaccine doses. Separately, data from the Johns Hopkins University showed 51.82% of the Philippine population is fully vaccinated.

The government now looks to fully vaccinate 77 million people against the virus by the end of March.

Stricter restrictions have also affected Philippine exports, Mr. Cochrane said. The country, alongside New Zealand, Vietnam, and Japan are outliers in the region where "exports have been a stable source of growth," he added.

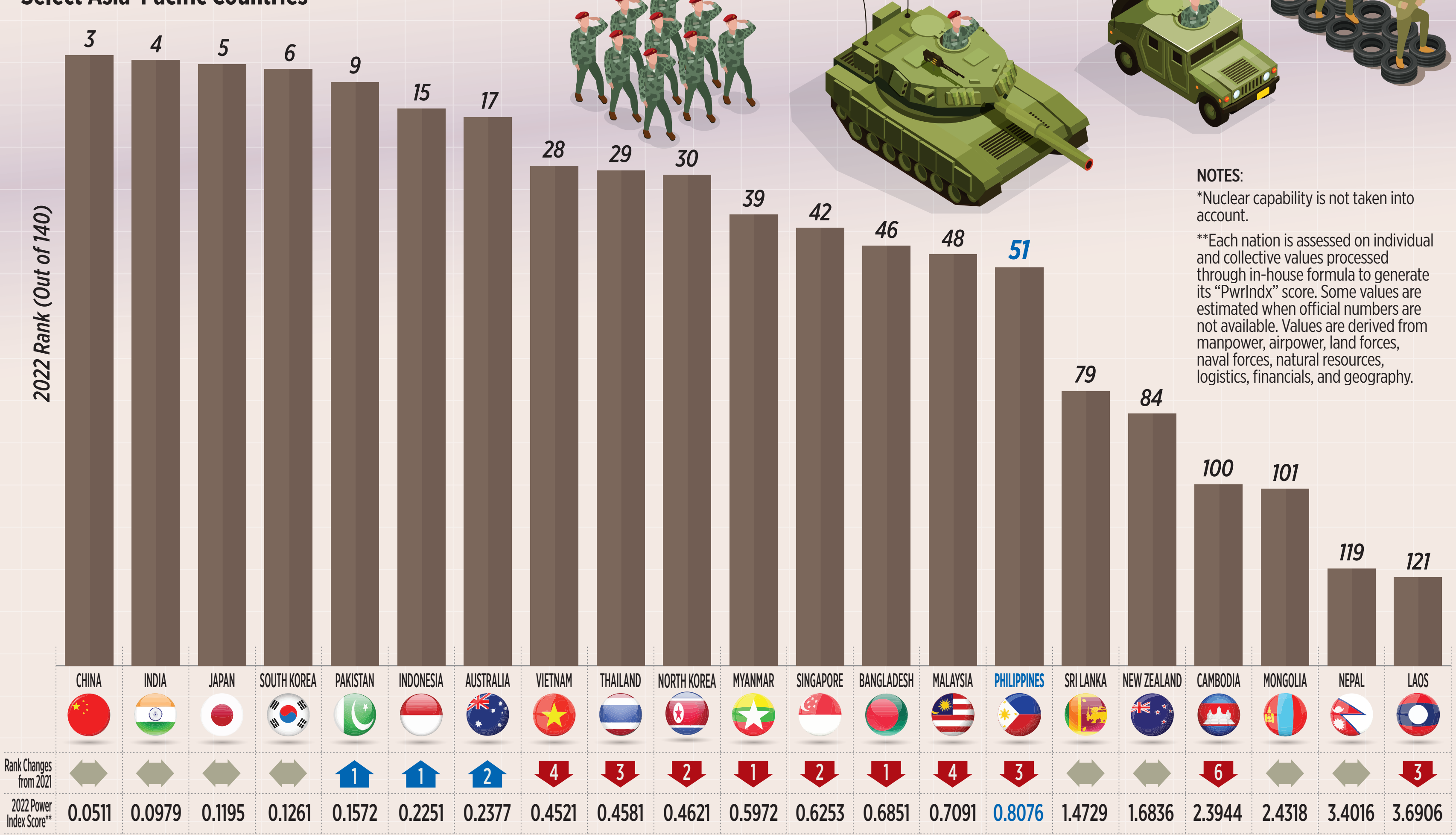
Moody's Analytics' base case assumption is that Omicron waves will likely be "strong but short-lived."

Omicron, S1/10

PHILIPPINES RANKS 51ST IN MILITARY STRENGTH LIST

The Global Firepower's Military Strength ranking evaluates 140 countries according to their modern military powers, collating data from more than 50 individual factors — covering war-making capability across land, sea and air fought by conventional means* — through a PowerIndex (PwrIndx) score. The smaller the value of the score, the more powerful a country's theoretical fighting capability is. In the 2022 edition, the Philippines places 51st globally, down by three notches, with a PwrIndx score of 0.8076.

Select Asia-Pacific Countries



NOTES:

*Nuclear capability is not taken into account.

**Each nation is assessed on individual and collective values processed through in-house formula to generate its "PwrIndx" score. Some values are estimated when official numbers are not available. Values are derived from manpower, airpower, land forces, naval forces, natural resources, logistics, financials, and geography.

Top 10

Country	2022 Rank	Rank Change from 2021	2022 Power Index Score*
United States	1	↔	0.0453
Russia	2	↔	0.0501
China	3	↔	0.0511
India	4	↔	0.0979
Japan	5	↔	0.1195
South Korea	6	↔	0.1261
France	7	↔	0.1283
United Kingdom	8	↔	0.1382
Pakistan	9	▲1	0.1572
Brazil	10	▼1	0.1695

Bottom 10

Country	2022 Rank	Rank Change from 2021	2022 Power Index Score*
Bhutan	140	↔	35.8958
Kosovo	139	↔	13.9136
Somalia	138	▼1	11.8854
Liberia	137	▲1	8.5213
Sierra Leone	136	↔	7.5206
Suriname	135	↔	7.4234
North Macedonia	134	▼1	5.7275
Central African Rep.	133	▼2	5.2184
Panama	132	▼2	5.0255
Montenegro	131	▼8	4.8015

SOURCE: 2022 MILITARY STRENGTH RANKING (GLOBAL FIREPOWER INDEX) (HTTPS://WWW.GLOBALFIREPOWER.COM/)
BUSINESSWORLD RESEARCH: ANA OLIVIA A. TIRONA and ABIGAIL MARIE P. YRAOLA
BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN

BIR to prioritize campaign against tax evasion this year

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) plans to prioritize its campaign against tax evasion and improve voluntary compliance as it seeks to boost revenue collections this year.

The BIR on Thursday said its enforcement and advocacy office plans to "emphasize the criminal nature of tax evasion, in order to have a maximum deterrent effect on taxpayers, thereby enhancing voluntary compliance and promoting public confidence in the tax system."

The BIR targets to collect P2.435 trillion in revenues, 17% higher than last year's P2.081 trillion goal.

Total BIR revenue collection in the 11 months to November stood at P1.9 trillion, up 7.17% from last year's figure.

BIR said that it plans to simplify taxpayer compliance by identifying unregistered businesses through the use of third-party information. The bureau will also intensify its audit and investigation program.

Through this, it aims to collect at least 3% of its total revenue goal from withholding tax on compensation income, tax remittance advice, withholding tax of local governments, special allotment release orders, and one-time transactions.

On the tax compliance monitoring front, BIR plans to give taxpayers additional venues to conduct one-time transactions, as well as use a taxpayer registration database to improve service delivery.

The BIR said it aims to speed up handling complaints and develop a platform for digital tax-filing that would provide a single source of taxpayer information.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III has ordered all agencies attached to the Finance department to implement digital transformation programs.

About 94% of tax returns were filed electronically in 2020, from 43% in 2015.

Meanwhile, the BIR wants to improve its own budget management and make its workplace more digital by using collaborative tools.

The bureau also plans to improve its integrity management program.

"Promote integrity, honesty and transparency throughout the revenue service by expediting preliminary investigations on complains/reports against bureau personnel," it said. "Act on administrative cases filed against erring revenue officials and employees."
— **J.P.Ibañez**

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Unemployment to persist after PHL economic rebound — ADB

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC will have long-term effects on Philippine employment even after the economy rebounds, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

Despite recent improvements in the jobs situation, ADB Senior Economist James P. Villafuerte said the unemployment rate is still above the long-term trend, leading many Filipinos to shift to informal and precarious work.

Unemployment, he said, has disproportionately affected young people, women, and low-skilled workers.

"Although the unemployment rate has eased since 2020, millions of workers are still jobless and working fewer hours and taking part-time jobs," he said at an online event on Thursday.

Preliminary data show that unemployment eased to 6.5% in November compared with 7.4% a month earlier. In absolute terms, there were 3.159 million unemployed Filipinos in November, down from 3.504 million in October.

This was the lowest jobless rate since the government started releasing data monthly in 2021. Including the quarterly releases, the November figure was the lowest since the 5.3% logged in January 2020.

The unemployment rate hit a record high of 17.6% in April 2020, when the government implemented the strictest lockdown to contain the pandemic.

The International Labour Organization projects Philippine unemployment to reach 1.1 million in 2022, or 10% higher than pre-pandemic levels. The organization said the impact of the pandemic on jobs could be even bigger after a large-scale exit from the labor force, which does not count as unemployment.

Although most sectors saw job losses, the shift to remote work meant that information technology, business, and professional services jobs were more resilient.

"This change in employment composition is actually expected to persist in the medium and long term. Many companies in the Philippines have been rapidly adopting technology in their business models," Mr. Villafuerte said.

However, the digital shift will require higher value-added skills that could increase the mismatch between expertise needed by employers and the skills of displaced workers.

"The longer these displaced workers and new labor market entrants are unable to find a job, the more likely that they will become less employable because of lost skills," Mr. Villafuerte said.

The ADB's COVID-19 Country Assessment Report - Southeast Asia suggested the government strengthen labor market programs to help workers and enterprises transition to higher value skills.

Rebound, S1/10