

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL																																																																				
PSEi OPEN: 7,281.45 HIGH: 7,293.44 LOW: 7,261.34 CLOSE: 7,261.34 0.63% VOL: 0.947 B 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 14, 2022 VOL(P): 5.797 B	JANUARY 14, 2022 <table border="1"> <tr><th>CLOSE</th><th>NET</th><th>%</th></tr> <tr><td>JAPAN (Nikkei 225)</td><td>28,124.28</td><td>-364.85 -1.28</td></tr> <tr><td>HONG KONG (Hang Seng)</td><td>24,383.32</td><td>-46.45 -0.19</td></tr> <tr><td>TAIWAN (Weighted)</td><td>18,403.33</td><td>-33.60 -0.18</td></tr> <tr><td>THAILAND (SET Index)</td><td>1,672.63</td><td>-7.39 -0.44</td></tr> <tr><td>S. KOREA (KSE Composite)</td><td>2,921.92</td><td>-40.17 -1.36</td></tr> <tr><td>SINGAPORE (Straits Times)</td><td>3,281.97</td><td>-24.67 -0.76</td></tr> <tr><td>SYDNEY (All Ordinaries)</td><td>7,393.90</td><td>-80.50 -1.08</td></tr> <tr><td>MALAYSIA (KLC Composite)</td><td>1,555.33</td><td>-14.18 -0.90</td></tr> </table>	CLOSE	NET	%	JAPAN (Nikkei 225)	28,124.28	-364.85 -1.28	HONG KONG (Hang Seng)	24,383.32	-46.45 -0.19	TAIWAN (Weighted)	18,403.33	-33.60 -0.18	THAILAND (SET Index)	1,672.63	-7.39 -0.44	S. KOREA (KSE Composite)	2,921.92	-40.17 -1.36	SINGAPORE (Straits Times)	3,281.97	-24.67 -0.76	SYDNEY (All Ordinaries)	7,393.90	-80.50 -1.08	MALAYSIA (KLC Composite)	1,555.33	-14.18 -0.90	JANUARY 14, 2022 <table border="1"> <tr><th>CLOSE</th><th>NET</th></tr> <tr><td>Dow Jones</td><td>35,911.810 ▼ -201.810</td></tr> <tr><td>NASDAQ</td><td>14,893.753 ▲ 86.941</td></tr> <tr><td>S&P 500</td><td>4,662.850 ▲ 3.820</td></tr> <tr><td>FTSE 100</td><td>7,542.950 ▼ -20.900</td></tr> <tr><td>Euro Stoxx50</td><td>3,798.520 ▼ -28.610</td></tr> </table>	CLOSE	NET	Dow Jones	35,911.810 ▼ -201.810	NASDAQ	14,893.753 ▲ 86.941	S&P 500	4,662.850 ▲ 3.820	FTSE 100	7,542.950 ▼ -20.900	Euro Stoxx50	3,798.520 ▼ -28.610	FX OPEN P51.140 HIGH P50.980 LOW P51.150 CLOSE P51.110 W.AVE. P51.070 VOL. \$760.50 M SOURCE: BAP	JANUARY 14, 2022 LATEST BID (0900GMT) <table border="1"> <tr><th>PREVIOUS</th></tr> <tr><td>JAPAN (YEN)</td><td>114.200 ▲ 114.550</td></tr> <tr><td>HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR)</td><td>7.785 ▲ 7.790</td></tr> <tr><td>TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR)</td><td>27.540 ▲ 595.000</td></tr> <tr><td>THAILAND (BAHT)</td><td>33.200 ▲ 33.210</td></tr> <tr><td>S. KOREA (WON)</td><td>1,190.070 ▲ 1,184.600</td></tr> <tr><td>SINGAPORE (DOLLAR)</td><td>1.347 ▼ 1.345</td></tr> <tr><td>INDONESIA (RUPIAH)</td><td>14,295 ▼ 14,290</td></tr> <tr><td>MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)</td><td>4.177 ▼ 4.174</td></tr> </table>	PREVIOUS	JAPAN (YEN)	114.200 ▲ 114.550	HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR)	7.785 ▲ 7.790	TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR)	27.540 ▲ 595.000	THAILAND (BAHT)	33.200 ▲ 33.210	S. KOREA (WON)	1,190.070 ▲ 1,184.600	SINGAPORE (DOLLAR)	1.347 ▼ 1.345	INDONESIA (RUPIAH)	14,295 ▼ 14,290	MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)	4.177 ▼ 4.174	JANUARY 14, 2022 <table border="1"> <tr><th>CLOSE</th><th>PREVIOUS</th></tr> <tr><td>US\$/UK POUND</td><td>1.3673 ▼ 1.3738</td></tr> <tr><td>US\$/EURO</td><td>1.1414 ▼ 1.3466</td></tr> <tr><td>\$/AUST DOLLAR</td><td>0.7206 ▼ 0.7305</td></tr> <tr><td>CANADA DOLLAR/US\$</td><td>1.2553 ▼ 1.2484</td></tr> <tr><td>SWISS FRANC/US\$</td><td>0.9139 ▲ 0.9128</td></tr> </table>	CLOSE	PREVIOUS	US\$/UK POUND	1.3673 ▼ 1.3738	US\$/EURO	1.1414 ▼ 1.3466	\$/AUST DOLLAR	0.7206 ▼ 0.7305	CANADA DOLLAR/US\$	1.2553 ▼ 1.2484	SWISS FRANC/US\$	0.9139 ▲ 0.9128	FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$83.74/BBL \$0.79 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 14, 2022
CLOSE	NET	%																																																																								
JAPAN (Nikkei 225)	28,124.28	-364.85 -1.28																																																																								
HONG KONG (Hang Seng)	24,383.32	-46.45 -0.19																																																																								
TAIWAN (Weighted)	18,403.33	-33.60 -0.18																																																																								
THAILAND (SET Index)	1,672.63	-7.39 -0.44																																																																								
S. KOREA (KSE Composite)	2,921.92	-40.17 -1.36																																																																								
SINGAPORE (Straits Times)	3,281.97	-24.67 -0.76																																																																								
SYDNEY (All Ordinaries)	7,393.90	-80.50 -1.08																																																																								
MALAYSIA (KLC Composite)	1,555.33	-14.18 -0.90																																																																								
CLOSE	NET																																																																									
Dow Jones	35,911.810 ▼ -201.810																																																																									
NASDAQ	14,893.753 ▲ 86.941																																																																									
S&P 500	4,662.850 ▲ 3.820																																																																									
FTSE 100	7,542.950 ▼ -20.900																																																																									
Euro Stoxx50	3,798.520 ▼ -28.610																																																																									
PREVIOUS																																																																										
JAPAN (YEN)	114.200 ▲ 114.550																																																																									
HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR)	7.785 ▲ 7.790																																																																									
TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR)	27.540 ▲ 595.000																																																																									
THAILAND (BAHT)	33.200 ▲ 33.210																																																																									
S. KOREA (WON)	1,190.070 ▲ 1,184.600																																																																									
SINGAPORE (DOLLAR)	1.347 ▼ 1.345																																																																									
INDONESIA (RUPIAH)	14,295 ▼ 14,290																																																																									
MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)	4.177 ▼ 4.174																																																																									
CLOSE	PREVIOUS																																																																									
US\$/UK POUND	1.3673 ▼ 1.3738																																																																									
US\$/EURO	1.1414 ▼ 1.3466																																																																									
\$/AUST DOLLAR	0.7206 ▼ 0.7305																																																																									
CANADA DOLLAR/US\$	1.2553 ▼ 1.2484																																																																									
SWISS FRANC/US\$	0.9139 ▲ 0.9128																																																																									

VOL. XXXV • ISSUE 125 MONDAY • JANUARY 17, 2022 • www.bworldonline.com S1/1-12 • 3 SECTIONS, 26 PAGES

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JANUARY 14, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

SPNEC P1.510 Value P522,289,470 P0.090 ▲ 6.338%	MBT P57.800 Value P394,273,343 -P1.400 ▼ -2.365%	MONDE P17.180 Value P269,586,508 P0.600 ▲ 3.619%	BDO P129.500 Value P229,116,936 -P0.200 ▼ -0.154%	ACEN P9.500 Value P201,553,648 -P0.020 ▼ -0.210%	PGOLD P37.300 Value P201,109,760 P0.150 ▲ 0.404%	TEL P1,897.000 Value P190,492,525 -P7.000 ▼ -0.368%	SM P947.000 Value P171,817,180 -P3.000 ▼ -0.316%	ALI P36.200 Value P155,779,390 P0.400 ▲ 1.177%	DITO P5.670 Value P153,794,325 -P0.310 ▼ -5.184%
---	--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--

Gross borrowings hit P2.78 trillion

Senate to focus on priority bills, RCEP

By Alyssa Nicole O. Tan
Reporter

THE SENATE is focusing on the approval of several priority measures and international agreements including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) within the next three weeks before Congress goes on a break on Feb. 4 for the upcoming elections.

Congress resumes session on Monday, with the Senate still yet to approve at least 12 bills that have already been passed on final reading by the House of Representatives.

"We urge the Senate to expedite the deliberations and approval of these measures so we can pass them into law before the campaign period," House Speaker Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco said in a statement.

Mr. Velasco said these measures include the Internet Transactions Act, and the Government Financial Institutions Unified Initiatives to Distressed Enterprises (GUIDE) Act.

Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel F. Zubiri said there will be

a caucus to determine the chamber's priorities on Monday.

"To be practical about it, these three weeks are really risky for major contentious bills," he said in a mix of English and Filipino via Viber.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin M. Drilon said Congress should "not allow election fever get in the way of legislation." The national and local elections are scheduled to be held on May 9.

Senator Mary Grace Natividad S. Poe-Llamanzares, who chairs the Public Services Committee, in a Viber message to *BusinessWorld*, said the Senate has been able to pass "almost all of its priority bills, so now all that is left to do is to ratify the bicameral versions."

"On my end, we are due to ratify the consolidated version of the Public Service Act (PSA) Amendments, SIM Card Registration Act, and the National Transportation Safety Board," she said.

The amendments to the PSA would allow 100% foreign ownership in telecommunications, air carriers, domestic shipping, railways and subways, and canals and irrigation.

RCEP, S1/11

BUSINESSWORLD's special end-of-2021 section seeks to provide answers to questions about the road ahead — How has the economy changed? How are businesses faring amid the pandemic? How the next President might influence — or upend — everyone's best-laid plans? (S3/7-8)

Diokno sees fuel prices stabilizing as OPEC increases production

THE DECISION of major oil producers to stick with their plans to raise crude production in February would likely bring down fuel prices, which in turn could keep inflation within target, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor (BSP) Benjamin E. Diokno said.

"Unlike in 2021, where the oil industry was in deficit position (demand exceeded supply), in 2022 the industry will be in surplus position (supply exceeds demand)," Mr. Diokno said in a Viber message.

A group of producers comprising the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies (OPEC+) are pushing through with a planned increase of 400,000 barrels per day for February. OPEC+ is scheduled to meet again on Feb. 2.

"The increase in production by OPEC will help temper fuel prices and enable the Philippines to dampen inflationary pressures moving forward," Department of Finance Chief Economist Gil S. Beltran said in a text message.

Mr. Diokno also noted demand for aviation fuel will likely drop as international travel takes a hit

from the ongoing Omicron-driven surge in coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections worldwide.

"Most advanced economies and many emerging economies are facing persistently elevated inflation; those with oil reserves — for example, US, UK and other countries — maybe compelled to release their oil reserves," he added.

Amid recent developments, the BSP chief said a hike in transport fares is "unlikely" as public transportation capacity will be raised alongside easing mobility curbs.

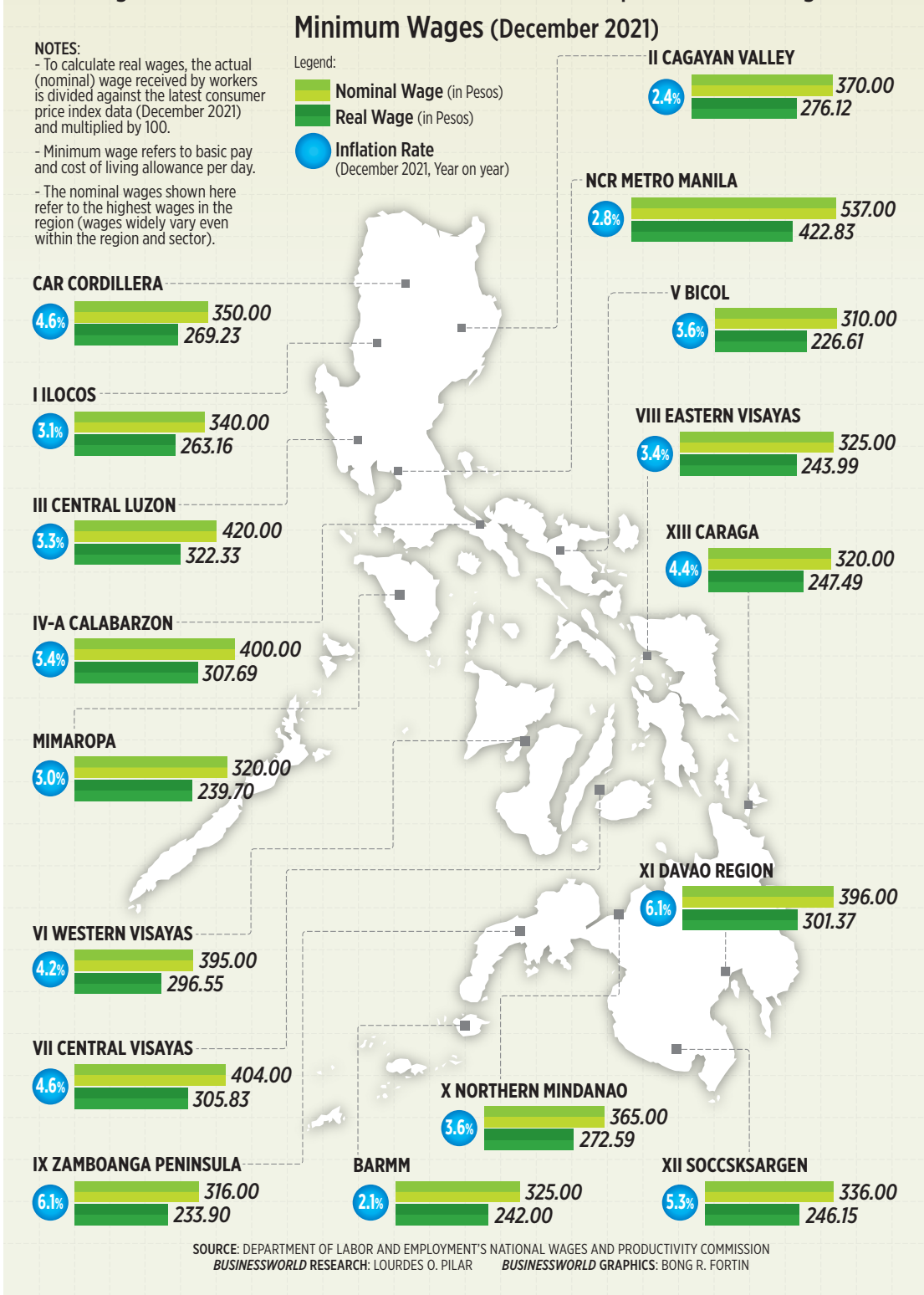
"By and large our inflation forecast will hold (threshold is \$95 a barrel for two years), hence no change in existing outlook. This does not mean that there will be no adjustment in the current accommodative monetary policy in the next two years. There might be, but it will be based on other factors, not higher oil prices," Mr. Diokno said.

In 2021, Philippine inflation averaged 4.5%, which is above the 2-4% target by the central bank and much faster than the 2.6% in 2020. The elevated inflation was attributed mainly to low supply of meat and higher global oil prices.

Fuel prices, S1/11

HOW DO MINIMUM WAGES COMPARE ACROSS REGIONS IN DECEMBER (AFTER ACCOUNTING FOR INFLATION THAT MONTH)?

The infographic compares the "nominal" minimum wages set by the country's Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board and the "real" minimum wages when adjusting for inflation rates as of December based on latest data by the Philippine Statistics Authority. While nominal minimum wages are determined at the regional level to account for factors such as firms' capacity to pay and costs of living, real wages are obtained when general price increases (i.e. inflation rates) are accounted for. Real wages are 21.3%-26.9% lower in December than their respective nominal wages.



GROSS BORROWINGS by the National Government reached P2.78 trillion as of end-November as it continued to source funding for the pandemic response, preliminary data from the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) showed.

In the first eleven months of 2021, gross borrowings declined by 8.9% from the P3.05 trillion raised in the same period in 2020.

In November alone, the Treasury borrowed P26.7 billion, down by 81.7% from the October figure.

Local borrowings, which accounted for the bulk of the total, stood at P16.6 billion, plunging by 87.6% compared with the P133.73 billion logged a month earlier.

There were a net redemption of Treasury bills worth P53.4 billion in November, while a total of P70 billion in Treasury bonds were sold.

The government logged P16.5 billion in net local borrowings after making P98 million in amortization payments.

Meanwhile, gross foreign borrowings reached P10.1 billion in November, slipping by 16.2% from the P12.05 billion a month earlier.

The November total consisted entirely of project loans, recording no foreign program loans.

With P6.95 billion in amortization payments, the government recorded P3.15 billion in net external borrowings.

For the 11-month period, gross domestic borrowings hit P2.25 trillion, or 8.83% lower than a year earlier.

Broken down, local borrowings consisted of P1.26 trillion in T-bonds, P463.32 billion in retail treasury bonds, and P540 billion in short-term borrowings from the central bank. The government also recorded the P97.33-billion redemption in T-bills.

Net local borrowings reached P2.19 trillion after the Treasury paid P53.58 billion in maturing obligations.

Meanwhile, gross external borrowings in the 11-month period reached a total of P528.8 billion, down by 9.39% from the same period a year earlier.

Borrowings, S1/11

Investors search for safe havens as Omicron takes hold

THE THREAT of the Omicron variant is becoming real for many of Asia's biggest countries just as it looks set to subside in some Western nations, and that's complicating investors' search for winning share bets in the region.

The problem is that Asian governments are carrying out widely diverging coronavirus policies, with strategies ranging from China's pursuit of COVID Zero to Australia's move to live with the virus, and almost everything in between. The speed of vaccinations and the strength of healthcare systems also vary greatly in the region.

It's another example of how COVID is forcing investors to face new challenges, though many remain positive about Asia's ability to weather the storm as its best-performing nations

kept deaths from the pandemic at levels far lower than elsewhere. Asian stocks have done better than their European and US counterparts so far this year, after underperforming both of them in 2021.

"Asia will be better braced to cope with Omicron waves, which may prove to be more short-lived," said Wai Ho Leong, a strategist at Modular Asset Management. "Markets that are better vaccinated and have timely social distancing curbs are also likely to recover faster from this wave."

That, he says, points to Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, China and Malaysia as potential winners, with India, Thailand and the Philippines just starting to see surges. Consumer discretionary, autos and banks are among the sectors to bet on, he said.

Western countries from Switzerland to Spain and the UK have suggested that the coronavirus pandemic may be shifting to an endemic phase. In Asia, the Omicron variant wave is starting to pounce, with cases surging in Australia, a jump in Tokyo infections prompting authorities to raise the COVID alert, and Hong Kong extending social restrictions.

'RICH-COUNTRY NARRATIVE'

Exhausted by lockdowns, European countries have largely eschewed a return to onerous curbs. Many countries in Asia are "refusing to buy into the rich-country Western narrative that it is milder and will have a lower net impact," wrote Jeffrey Halley, senior market analyst for Asia-Pacific at Oanda, in a Jan. 10 report.

The region's two largest markets are among them. For some, China's proven success in stamping out the virus when found means investors there have little to worry about from Omicron.

"While isolated lockdowns could disrupt a certain location temporarily, it is likely to have little impact on the economy as a whole," said Jian Shi Cortesi, investment director for China and Asia growth equities at GAM Investments in Zurich. "China's economy has adapted to zero-COVID measures, with most sectors operating normally. For most people it's life as usual." — *Bloomberg*

FULL STORY

Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link <bit.ly/Investors011722>



CORPORATE NEWS
DoE clears 147 firms to supply clean energy to DUs S1/2

WORLD SPORTS
Australian federal court upholds cancellation of Djokovic's visa S1/10

BANKING & FINANCE
Peso may strengthen ahead of BoP data S2/1



FOLLOW US ON:
facebook.com/bworldph
twitter.com/bworldph
anchor.fm/businessworld