P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BusinessWorld

STOCK MARKET	
PSEi	
OPEN:	7,279.05
HIGH:	7,369.94
LOW:	7,279.05
CLOSE:	7,361.65
VOL.:	1.282 B
VAL(P):	7.419 B
109.68 PTS.	1.51%

30 DAYS TO JANUARY 31, 2022

ASIAN MARKETS FEBRUARY 1, 2022	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225)	27,078.48	▲	76.50	0.28
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)***	23,802.26	▲	252.18	1.07
Taiwan (Weighted) *	17,674.40	▼	-26.72	-0.15
Thailand (SET Index)	1,662.66	▲	13.85	0.84
S.Korea (Kse Composite) **	2,663.34	▲	48.85	1.87
Singapore (Straits Times)***	3,249.59	▲	3.26	0.10
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	7,006.00	▲	34.40	0.49
Malaysia (Klse Composite)***	1,512.27	▼	-7.75	-0.51

CLOSING PRICE AS OF: *JAN. 26, 2022 ** JAN. 28, 2022 *** JAN. 31, 2022

WORLD MARKETS JANUARY 31, 2022	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	35,131.860	▲	406.390
NASDAQ	14,239.88	▲	469.3100
S&P 500	4,515.550	▲	83.700
FTSE 100	7,464.37	▼	-1.7000
Euro Stoxx50	3,747.52	▲	16.590

PESO-DOLLAR RATES	FX
OPEN	P51.200
HIGH	P50.950
LOW	P51.230
CLOSE	P50.950
W.AVE.	P51.135
VOL.	$980.79 M

28.00 CTVS

30 DAYS TO JANUARY 31, 2022 SOURCE : BAP

ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE FEBRUARY 1, 2022	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	114.750	▲	115.410
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.796	▲	7.799
Taiwan (NT dollar)	27.776	▲	27.811
Thailand (baht)	33.200	▲	33.280
S. Korea (won)	1,202.440	▲	1,209.030
Singapore (dollar)	1.349	▲	1.354
Indonesia (rupiah)	14,380	—	14,380
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.184	—	4.184

WORLD CURRENCIES FEBRUARY 1, 2022	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.3487	▲	1.3436
US$/Euro	1.1261	▲	1.1169
$/Aust dollar	0.7088	▲	0.7054
Canada dollar/US$	1.2665	▼	1.2728
Swiss Franc/US$	0.9225	▼	0.9317

DUBAI CRUDE OIL

FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY $88.37/BBL

$0.61

30 DAYS TO JANUARY 31, 2022

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JANUARY 31, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on S1/4; article on S2/2)

		Value		
BDO	P135.000	P458,633,957	P1.000 ▲	0.746%
GLO	P3,110.000	P457,943,750	-P130.000 ▼	-4.012%
ALI	P35.900	P366,879,665	P1.700 ▲	4.971%
AP	P35.300	P345,900,340	P1.500 ▲	4.438%
MONDE	P16.380	P329,677,018	P0.120 ▲	0.738%
MBT	P58.900	P287,136,752	P1.350 ▲	2.346%
SMPH	P35.100	P285,606,815	P0.900 ▲	2.632%
ICT	P200.000	P267,885,221	P2.500 ▲	1.266%
SECB	P107.200	P256,323,557	P1.900 ▲	1.804%
SM	P949.000	P246,621,035	P10.000 ▲	1.065%

PHL ends 2021 with P11.7-trillion debt

THE National Government (NG) recorded P11.73 trillion in outstanding debt as of end-December, pushing the debt-to-GDP ratio past the international threshold, preliminary data from the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) showed.

Government debt over the course of 12 months grew by nearly P2 trillion, or by 19.7% year on year.

The year-on-year debt growth was slower than the 26.7% expansion in 2020 due to better fiscal performance and lower financing requirements, the BTr said in a statement on Tuesday.

Month on month, the debt stock slipped by 1.7%, mostly because of the net redemption of domestic securities, BTr added.

The end-December debt figure meets the government's P11.73-trillion projection.

However, this meant the debt-to-GDP ratio is now at 60.5%, higher than the 54.6% a year earlier and slightly above the 60% threshold considered as manageable by multilateral lenders for developing economies. It is also the highest debt-to-GDP ratio since the 65.7% seen in 2005.

"(The ratio is) still within the accepted sustainable threshold as the economy continues to recover from the effects of the pandemic," the Treasury said.

The Philippine government has ramped up borrowings to finance its pandemic response, which included the purchase of coronavirus vaccines.

Domestic borrowings represented 69.7% of the debt total, while the rest was sourced from foreign creditors.

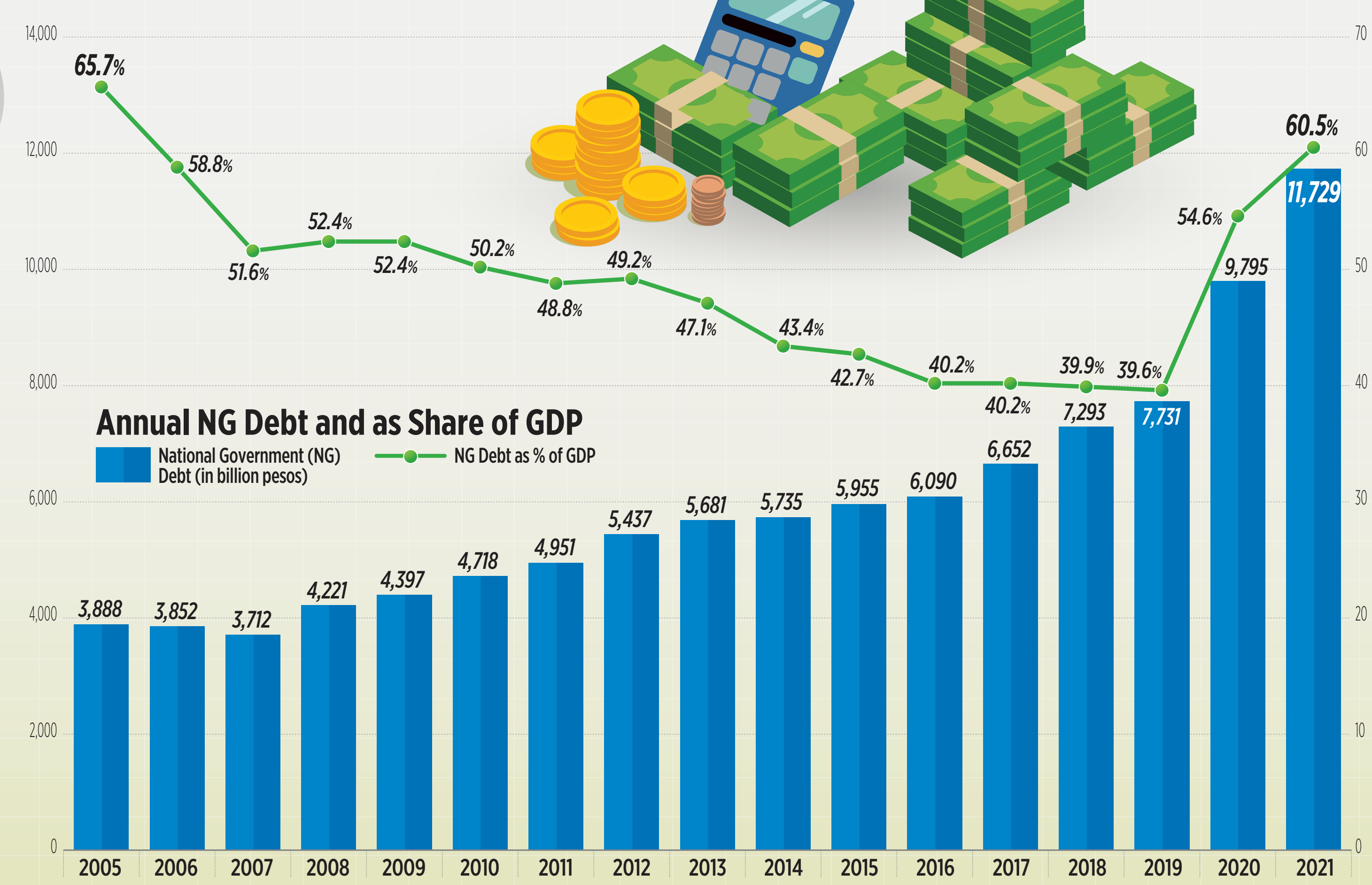
As of end-December, domestic debt fell by 3.2% to P8.17 trillion from the previous month, but grew by 22% year on year.

Debt, S1/3

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OUTSTANDING DEBT

As of end-December (in billion pesos)

	2020	2021
Domestic	**6,694.69**	**8,170.41**
Loans	0.95	0.16
NG Direct	0.16	0.16
Availed by Agencies	0.16	0.16
NG Other Domestic	0.16	0.16
BSP Repo Facility	0.00	0.00
Assumed Loans	0.79	0.00
Government Securities	6,693.74	8,170.26
External	**3,100.32**	**3,558.14**
Loans	1,311.89	1,574.25
NG Direct	1,311.89	1,574.25
Availed by Agencies	1,292.87	1,558.13
Relent to GOCCs	19.02	16.12
Assumed Loans	0.00	0.00
Government Securities	1,788.43	1,983.89
US Dollar Bonds/Notes	1,400.33	1,557.42
Euro Bonds	114.63	234.93
Japanese Yen Bonds	114.67	85.97
Chinese Yuan Bonds	29.13	20.00
Peso Global Bonds	129.68	85.57
Total	**9,795.01**	**11,728.55**



SOURCE: BUREAU OF THE TREASURY *BUSINESSWORLD* RESEARCH: BERNADETTE THERESE M. GADON *BUSINESSWORLD* GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN

Coronavirus alters college life as schools move online to stay afloat

By Jenina P. Ibañez *Senior Reporter*

HANNAH ANGELA E. NERI is studying to become a nurse and wants to be on the frontlines of a future pandemic.

"The country needs more health workers and I want to help," the freshman from the Central Philippine University in Iloilo City said in a Facebook Messenger chat.

Ms. Neri is one of many young Filipinos pursuing healthcare studies in the middle of a coronavirus pandemic, when applications for pre-medicine degrees such as Biology and Health Sciences have increased at some universities.

FOCUS

"Among applicants for school year 2021-2022, there was a surge in students who wanted to take pre-med courses," Jose Maria Edito K. Tirol, director of admissions at the Ateneo de Manila University, said in an e-mail. "I suspect they're inspired by the work of medical frontliners."

More students applied this school year at the Ateneo, which ended the previous school year early after the Philippine capital and nearby cities were locked down in mid-March 2020 to contain the pandemic, giving most students an automatic passing mark.

Mr. Tirol declined to provide numbers.

As lockdowns were extended, schools stopped physical classes and shifted to virtual ones.

This could worsen educational quality and cost the country P11 trillion in lost wages in the next four decades, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

When coronavirus cases declined toward the end of last year, Ateneo announced plans for a January return to campus at a limited capacity. This was postponed amid a fresh surge in infections spurred by the highly mutated Omicron variant.

The coronavirus has sickened 3.6 million and killed more than 50,000 people in the Philippines. Worldwide, more than 379 million have been infected and about 5.7 million people have died.

Jaime Noel J. Santos, president at business school Thames International in Quezon City, said they held online classes even before the pandemic, which helped boost enrollment when the global health crisis hit.

Schools that adapted more quickly took on the enrollees lost by colleges that failed to roll out online education fast enough, he said by telephone.

Across various schools, students also stopped enrolling because their parents lost their jobs during the pandemic.

"A lot of students really stopped, mainly because of financial issues," Mr. Santos said. "But then we were bouncing back, economy-wise, before the Omicron variant spread. Parents who lost their jobs found new ones. Students started coming back."

For some schools, the pandemic led to an initial decline in enrollment before student numbers bounced back.

Schools, S1/3

'Hot money' continued to exit in 2021

By Luz Wendy T. Noble *Reporter*

MORE FOREIGN FUNDS left than entered the Philippines in 2021, marking the third straight year of net outflows, as the country gradually recovered from the pandemic.

Foreign portfolio investments (FPIs) — also called "hot money" due to the ease by which these funds enter and leave an economy — saw a net outflow of $574.46 million last year, significantly smaller than the $4.24-billion net outflow in 2020.

This was the smallest since the $195.4-million net outflow in 2017. It also missed the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) $1.5-billion net inflow projection for the full year.

"Outflows were slimmer because 2021 was really a better year compared to 2020 with continuous vaccination and more relaxed restrictions," Asian Institute of Management (AIM) economist John Paolo R. Rivera said in a Viber message.

The government eased lockdown restrictions during the fourth quarter, allowing more businesses to reopen. The economy expanded by 5.6% in 2021 after the record 9.6% contraction in 2020 that was caused by stringent lockdowns.

The Philippines also made progress in vaccinating its population against the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), although it remained a laggard in the region.

In December alone, hot money posted a $4.38-million net outflow, much lower than the $523.86 million outflows seen in the prior year. However, it was a reversal from the $109.56-million net inflow in November.

"Net outflow may be due to the looming threat of the Omicron in December while other countries were already ending their surge," Mr. Rivera said.

While restrictions were loosened during the holidays, Metro Manila and other areas were once again placed under a stricter Alert Level 3 starting January due to an Omicron-driven surge in cases.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said the more hawkish tone from the US Fed-

'Hot money,' S1/3

National asset management plan released

ECONOMIC MANAGERS on Monday released a national asset management plan (NAMP) to maximize government funds as it invests in infrastructure projects.

The Department of Finance, Department of Budget and Management, and the National Economic and Development Authority in a Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2022-1 said that the government's two-year asset management plan will be used to spend the country's limited resources on assets that need funding most.

The NAMP, which covers fiscal years 2022-2023, provides information that can be used for timely infrastructure investment decisions by the government.

"Asset management essentially enables an organization to realize value from assets in the achievement of its organizational objectives," the plan said.

"Hence, the NAMP serves as a vital tool to help the government realize value from its various assets towards achieving its strategic and overall objectives."

Seen as the first of many plans, the NAMP will focus on assets that have a significant socioeconomic impact to the country, including schools, government buildings, roads, bridges, hospitals, dams, irrigation facilities, and treatment and welfare centers.

The NAMP focuses on challenges in urbanization, serving rural communities, dealing with population growth, and managing disaster risks. The plan is expected to guide decision making for urbanization investment priorities.

Analyzing the effects of population growth on infrastructure, the NAMP said older assets, such as those from the 1960s, may also need funding.

Natural disaster and pandemic-related risks would also prompt "prudent investment in infrastructure," it added.

"As infrastructure gets old, or growth exceeds its capacity to deliver, investment is required to meet the need. Hence, monitoring capacity and planning funding for this need is vital."

By managing assets, the plan aims to protect against wasted assets and make sure that government operations are efficient. — **Jenina P. Ibañez**