P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BusinessWorld

STOCK MARKET		
PSEi		
OPEN:	7,009.48	
HIGH:	7,047.49	
LOW:	7,009.15	
CLOSE:	7,037.74	▲ 41.63 PTS. 0.59%
VOL.:	0.989 B	
VAL(P):	5.205 B	

30 DAYS TO APRIL 19, 2022

ASIAN MARKETS — APRIL 19, 2022

	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225)	26,985.09	▲	185.38	0.69
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	21,027.76	▼	-490.32	-2.28
Taiwan (Weighted)	16,993.40	▲	94.53	0.56
Thailand (SET Index)	1,675.62	▲	7.56	0.45
S.Korea (Kse Composite)	2,718.89	▲	25.68	0.95
Singapore (Straits Times)	3,307.13	▲	4.06	0.12
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	7,565.20	▲	41.80	0.56
Malaysia (Klse Composite) *	1,581.14	▼	-7.87	-0.50

* CLOSING PRICE AS OF APRIL 18, 2022

WORLD MARKETS — APRIL 18, 2022

	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	34,411.690	▼	-39.540
NASDAQ	13,332.358	▼	-18.721
S&P 500	4,391.690	▼	-0.900
FTSE 100 *	7,616.380	▲	35.580
Euro Stoxx50 *	3,783.100	▲	21.790

* CLOSING PRICE AS OF APRIL 14, 2022

PESO-DOLLAR RATES — FX

OPEN	P52.350
HIGH	P52.310
LOW	P52.480
CLOSE	P52.460
W.AVE.	P52.381
VOL.	$1,087.36 M

▼ 19.00 CTVS
30 DAYS TO APRIL 19, 2022
SOURCE : BAP

ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE — APRIL 19, 2022

	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	128.380	▼	126.600
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.843	—	7.843
Taiwan (NT dollar)	29.251	▼	29.111
Thailand (baht)	33.730	▼	33.650
S. Korea (won)	1,238.310	▼	1234.720
Singapore (dollar)	1.365	▼	1.360
Indonesia (rupiah)	14,335	▲	14353
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.253	▼	4.250

WORLD CURRENCIES — APRIL 19, 2022

	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.3034	▲	1.3015
US$/Euro	1.0799	▲	1.0793
$/Aust dollar	0.7376	▲	0.7368
Canada dollar/US$	1.2593	▼	1.2635
Swiss Franc/US$	0.9456	▲	0.9435

DUBAI CRUDE OIL

FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY
$105.85/BBL
UNCHANGED $0.00
30 DAYS TO APRIL 18, 2022

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • APRIL 19, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on *S1/4*; article on *S2/2*)

		Value			
CNVRG	P30.600	P511,690,465	P0.450	▲	1.493%
SM	P871.500	P492,652,790	P6.500	▲	0.751%
TEL	P1,899.000	P360,867,320	P7.000	▲	0.370%
BDO	P129.800	P288,352,040	P0.400	▲	0.309%
ICT	P224.800	P209,667,022	P1.200	▲	0.537%
CTS	P0.980	P183,719,730	-P0.100	▼	-9.259%
GLO	P2,472.000	P173,363,980	P48.000	▲	1.980%
SMPH	P37.250	P168,733,470	P0.100	▲	0.269%
AC	P769.000	P154,812,635	P2.000	▲	0.261%
NIKL	P8.170	P149,533,265	P0.420	▲	5.419%

IMF sees faster PHL growth this year

THE International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects a faster expansion for the Philippine economy this year, but still below the government's growth target as the ongoing war in Ukraine clouds the global economic outlook.

In its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) released on Tuesday, the IMF raised its 2022 growth projection for the Philippines to 6.5% from 6.3% previously. This is lower than the government's 7-9% target for this year.

The IMF's growth projection for the Philippines is the fastest among five Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, followed by Vietnam (6%), Malaysia (5.6%), Indonesia (5.4%), and Thailand (3.3%).

The ASEAN-5 is estimated to expand by 5.3% this year, and by 5.9% in 2023. This is higher than the 3.4% growth in 2021.

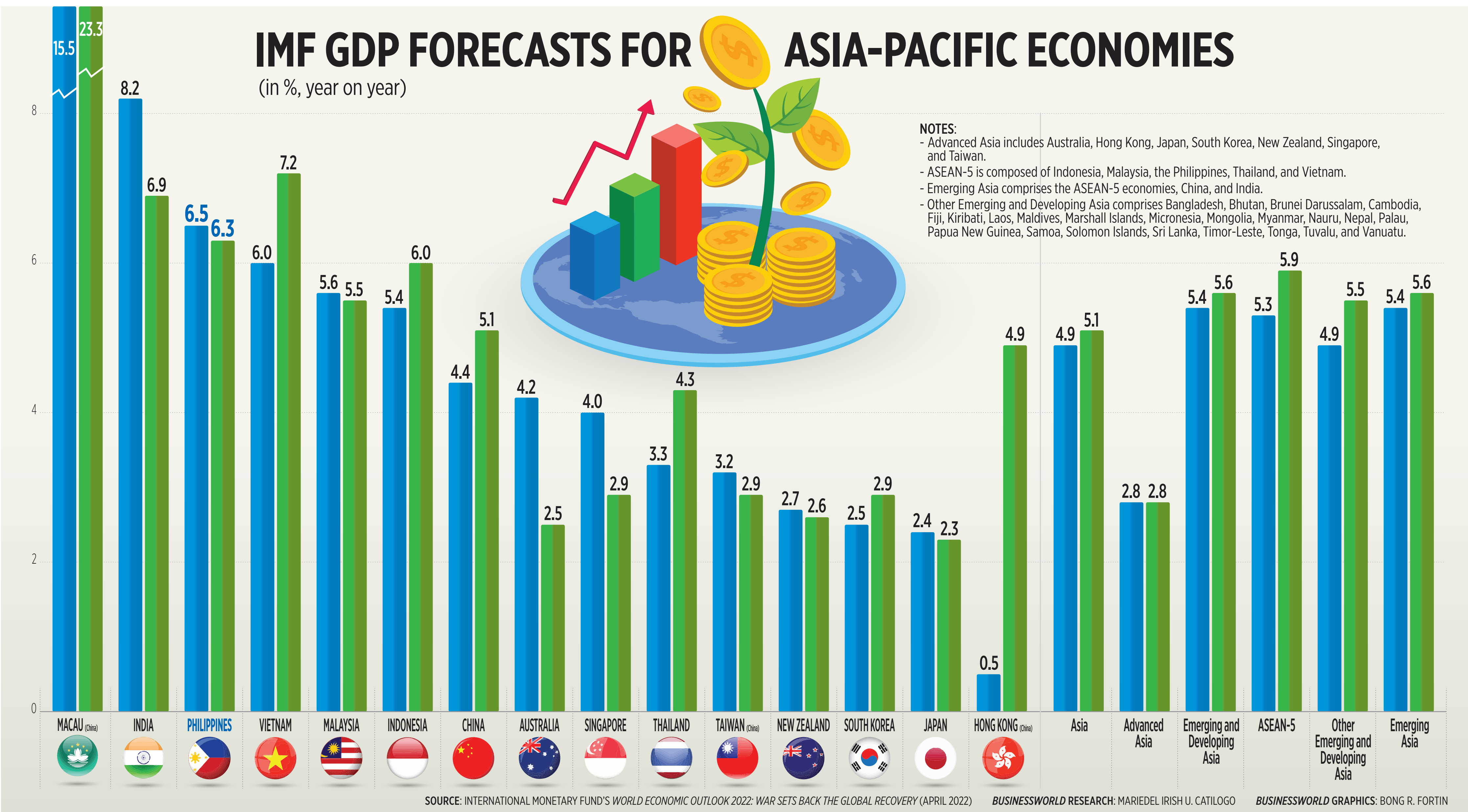
For 2023, the IMF expects the Philippine economic growth to slow to 6.3%. In January, IMF Representative to the Philippines Ragnar Gudmundsson has said they expect growth to "pick up close to 7%."

The Philippine economy grew by 5.7% last year, a turnaround from the record 9.6% contraction in 2020.

With many economies yet to fully recover from the pandemic, the IMF said the Russia-Ukraine war will severely set back global recovery, slow growth, and drive inflation faster.

The IMF slashed its global growth forecast for 2022 and 2023 to 3.6%, 0.8 and 0.2 percentage points lower, respectively,

IMF, S1/9



March BoP surplus biggest in 3 months

By Luz Wendy T. Noble
Reporter

THE Philippines' balance of payments (BoP) position swung to a surplus in March, driven by foreign currency deposits from the National Government and the central bank's investments abroad.

Data released by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on Tuesday showed that BoP recorded a $754-million surplus last month. This is a turnaround from the $73-million gap a year earlier, as well as the $157-million deficit in February.

This is also the biggest BoP surplus since the $991-million surfeit in December.

"The BoP surplus in March 2022 reflected inflows arising mainly from the National Government's (NG) net foreign currency deposits with the BSP and BSP's income from its investments abroad," the central bank said in a statement.

Last month's BoP surplus could be partly attributed to the global bond issuance by the government, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said in a Viber message.

The Bureau of the Treasury raised $2.25 billion through its maiden triple tranche dollar-denominated bond offering in March. The government will use the proceeds for the national budget and the sustainable finance program.

At its end-March level, the BoP reflects a final gross international reserve of $107.31 billion, down 0.5% from the $107.8 billion a month earlier.

This is enough to cover 7.1 times the country's short-term external debt based on original maturity and 5.3 times based on residual maturity. It also represents buffers equivalent to 9.5 months' worth of imports of goods and payments of services and primary income.

The BoP position posted a $495-million surplus in the first quarter of 2022, a reversal from the $2.844-billion deficit in the same period last year.

The BoP gives a glimpse into the country's transactions with the rest of the world. A deficit means more funds left the country, while a surplus shows that more money came in.

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine could complicate global and domestic recovery and affect the country's BoP this year, Security Bank Corp. Chief Economist Robert Dan J. Roces said.

BoP, S1/9

World Bank says war to cut global growth, boosts financing target

WASHINGTON — The World Bank is reducing its global growth forecast for 2022 by nearly a full percentage point, to 3.2% from 4.1%, due to the impacts from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, World Bank President David Malpass said on Monday.

Malpass told reporters on a conference call that the World Bank was responding to the added economic stresses from the war by proposing a new, 15-month crisis financing target of $170 billion, with a goal to commit about $50 billion of this financing over the next three months.

Malpass said the biggest component of the bank's growth forecast reduction was a 4.1% contraction in the Europe and Central Asia region — comprising Ukraine, Russia and surrounding countries. Forecasts also are being cut for advanced and many developing economies because of spikes in food and energy prices caused by war-related supply disruptions, Malpass said.

"We're preparing for a continued crisis response, given the multiple crises," Malpass said. "Over the next few weeks, I expect to discuss with our board, a new 15-month crisis response envelope of around $170 billion to cover April 2022 through June 2023."

The plan follows from a World Bank $160-billion COVID-19 financing program, of which Malpass said $157 billion was committed through June 2021.

Malpass said the financing partly will support countries that have taken in refugees from Ukraine and will also help address problems in countries affected by food shortages.

Malpass said World Bank and IMF member countries this week will be discussing new assistance for Ukraine, and expects specific commitments to be announced by a number of donor countries. — ***Reuters***

R&I keeps Philippines' investment grade rating

JAPAN-BASED Rating and Investment Information, Inc. (R&I) maintained the Philippines' credit rating at BBB+ with a stable outlook as the economy continues to recover from the pandemic.

However, the debt watcher warned that soaring crude oil prices will continue driving inflation higher.

"The Philippine economy has been demonstrating solid growth since the second quarter of 2021 despite the new wave of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections," R&I said in a statement on Monday.

The ratings agency last affirmed the Philippine sovereign rating in April 2021.

The Philippine economy grew by 5.7% in 2021, a turnaround from the record 9.6% contraction in 2020. This year, economic managers are aiming for a 7-9% growth.

"A surge in crude oil prices is anticipated to push inflation up, which is considered a short-term risk factor. Policy measures of the central bank of the Philippines (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) toward the second half of the year will draw attention," R&I added.

The BSP raised its inflation forecast for the year to 4.3%, citing the impact of the war on oil and commodity prices. Headline inflation in March already quickened to 4%, which matches the upper end of the BSP's 2-4% target range this year.

The central bank has signaled it will assess the need for a rate hike by the second half of the year when the economy is expected to return to its pre-pandemic level.

"The government debt ratio is expected to stabilize in the near-term in tandem with the country's economic recovery," R&I said.

The country's debt-to-GDP ratio hit a 16-year high of 60.5% last year. This is slightly above the 60% threshold considered manageable by multilateral lenders for developing economies.

Meanwhile, external debt-to-GDP slipped to 27% in 2021 from 27.2% in the prior year.

The ratings agency expects the current account deficit to widen this year as global oil prices surge due to the war in Ukraine. However, it said the country has "limited" risks associated with external position, supported by remittance and foreign direct investments.

The country's current account deficit is expected to widen to $16.3 billion this year, which is equivalent to 3.8% of the gross domestic product (GDP), based on central bank projection. If realized, this would be bigger than the $6.922-billion gap in 2021.

Rating, S1/9