P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BusinessWorld

STOCK MARKET		
PSEi		
OPEN:	6,996.01	
HIGH:	7,001.91	
LOW:	6,964.00	
CLOSE:	6,980.02	▼ 40.81 PTS. 0.58%
VOL.:	0.550 B	
VAL(P):	4.114 B	
30 DAYS TO APRIL 26, 2022		

ASIAN MARKETS — APRIL 26, 2022	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225)	26,700.11	▲	109.33	0.41
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	19,934.71	▲	65.37	0.33
Taiwan (Weighted)	16,644.79	▲	23.89	0.14
Thailand (SET Index)	1,670.67	▼	-4.66	-0.28
S.Korea (Kse Composite)	2,668.31	▲	11.18	0.42
Singapore (Straits Times)	3,330.85	▼	-8.74	-0.26
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	7,318.00	▼	-155.30	-2.08
Malaysia (Klse Composite)	1,596.68	▲	6.70	0.42

WORLD MARKETS — APRIL 25, 2022	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	34,049.460	▲	238.060
NASDAQ	13,004.852	▲	165.559
S&P 500	4,296.120	▲	24.340
FTSE 100	7,380.540	▼	-141.140
Euro Stoxx50	3,656.770	▼	-62.750

PESO-DOLLAR RATES — FX	
OPEN	P52.350
HIGH	P52.130
LOW	P52.370
CLOSE	P52.250
W.AVE.	P52.255
VOL.	$1,498.20 M

▲ 16.00 CTVS
30 DAYS TO APRIL 26, 2022
SOURCE : BAP

ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE — APRIL 26, 2022	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	127.700	▲	128.030
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.845	▲	7.847
Taiwan (NT dollar)	29.269	▲	29.349
Thailand (baht)	34.220	▼	34.020
S. Korea (won)	1,253.780	▼	1,250.400
Singapore (dollar)	1.373	▲	1.374
Indonesia (rupiah)	14,410	▲	14,455
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.354	▲	4.355

WORLD CURRENCIES — APRIL 26, 2022	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.2714	▼	1.2735
US$/Euro	1.0694	▼	1.0741
$/Aust dollar	0.7205	▲	0.7162
Canada dollar/US$	1.2741	▲	1.2729
Swiss Franc/US$	0.9583	▲	0.9581

DUBAI CRUDE OIL
FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY
$99.70/BBL
▼ $5.35
30 DAYS TO APRIL 25, 2022

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • APRIL 26, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on *S1/4*; article on *S2/2*)

		Value		
ICT	P223.000	P303,226,370	-P3.200 ▼	-1.415%
CNVRG	P29.400	P300,730,135	-P0.200 ▼	-0.676%
SCC	P28.300	P235,260,530	-P0.600 ▼	-2.076%
SM	P860.000	P211,596,840	-P25.000 ▼	-2.825%
ALI	P35.200	P164,442,975	P0.450 ▲	1.295%
BDO	P131.000	P146,805,698	-P2.000 ▼	-1.504%
BPI	P97.700	P146,245,799	-P0.500 ▼	-0.509%
TEL	P1,914.000	P142,664,215	P4.000 ▲	0.209%
AC	P758.000	P142,185,780	-P21.000 ▼	-2.696%
JFC	P220.200	P109,727,308	P2.600 ▲	1.195%

BSP may consider rate hike in June

THE PHILIPPINE central bank may consider a rate hike in June as economic recovery likely gained more traction in the first quarter, its governor said.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Benjamin E. Diokno said the May 19 policy meeting will already take into consideration the first-quarter gross domestic product (GDP) data that will be released on May 12.

"We will look at the new data and hopefully it will show the first-quarter growth, maybe around 6-7%," Mr. Diokno told Bloomberg TV on Monday.

"And so, on the basis of that, maybe we'll wait another cycle... We have another meeting in June. And maybe that's the time when we will consider the increase in policy rates," he added.

The BSP has maintained interest rates at a record low since November 2020 to support the Philippine economy's recovery from the pandemic.

Mr. Diokno's latest statement is a departure from the BSP's previous signals it will only begin policy rate adjustments in the second half once it sees signs of firmer economic recovery. Government officials expect GDP to get back to its pre-pandemic level within the second half of the year.

The BSP chief said there is still "no evidence of second-round effects [of inflation] from the demand side."

"I think we can afford to wait as to what will be the move of the Fed in the next two meetings," Mr. Diokno said.

The Fed's next policy review is on May 3 to 4. Fed Chairman Jerome H. Powell said they may increase rates by 50 basis points (50 bps) following the 25-bp hike in March.

Rate hike, S1/10

THINK TANK

MANILA SLIPS IN FINANCIAL CENTER RANKING

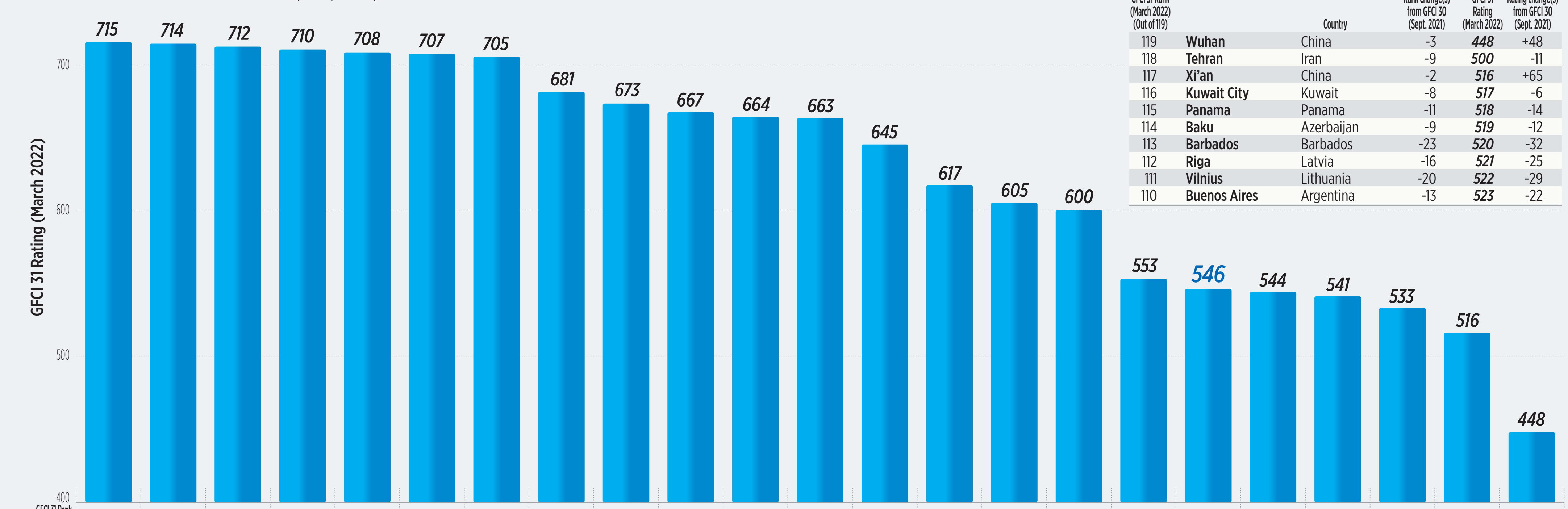
Manila slid five spots to 100th out of 119 global financial centers in the 31st edition of the biannual Global Financial Centers Index (GFCI) that assesses the competitiveness of financial centers around the world. The country's total GFCI rating also went down by a point to 546. A separate assessment on financial technology (fintech) ranked the Philippine capital at 77th out of 113 financial centers in terms of how respondents perceive the competitive environment and fintech offerings. Manila fell two spots from 75th place in September last year.

GFCI Ratings of Select East and Southeast Asia Financial Centers

NOTES:
- The GFCI is updated every March and September. The latest (31st) edition of the GFCI used 74,982 assessments from 11,934 respondents.
- The instrumental factors used in the GFCI are grouped into five "broad areas of competitiveness": Business Environment, Human Capital, Infrastructure, Financial Sector Development, and Reputation.
- Out of the 126 financial centers researched, 119 were included in the GFCI. According to the report, a financial center is only given a GFCI rating and ranking if it receives more than 150 assessments from people based in other centers over time in the online survey. On the other hand, those that do not receive 50 assessments in a 24-month period are removed and transferred to the "associate" list until the number of assessments increases.

Manila, Philippines Profile

Financial Center	Manila
GFCI Rank (out of 119)	100th
GFCI Rating	546
Fintech Rank (out of 113)	77th
Fintech Rating	570



GFCI 31 Rank (March 2022) (Out of 119)	Financial Center	Country	Rank change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)	Rating change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)
3	Hong Kong	China	0	-1
4	Shanghai	China	▲2	+2
6	Singapore	Singapore	▼2	-3
8	Beijing	China	0	-1
9	Tokyo	Japan	0	+2
10	Shenzhen	China	▲6	+8
12	Seoul	South Korea	▲1	+3
24	Guangzhou	China	▲8	+4
30	Busan	South Korea	▲3	-2
34	Osaka	Japan	▲12	+12
37	Chengdu	China	0	-6
38	Qingdao	China	0	-5
48	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	0	-4
61	Bangkok	Thailand	▼3	-4
66	Taipei	Taiwan	▲1	+1
69	Jakarta	Indonesia	▼3	-7
93	Hangzhou	China	▲18	+64
100	Manila	Philippines	▼5	-1
102	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam	New	New
105	Tianjin	China	▲7	+61
107	Nanjing	China	▲7	+71
117	Xi'an	China	▼2	+65
119	Wuhan	China	▼3	+48

Top 10 Financial Centers

GFCI 31 Rank (March 2022) (Out of 119)		Country	Rank change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)	GFCI 31 Rating (March 2022)	Rating change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)
1	New York	United States	0	759	-3
2	London	United Kingdom	0	726	-14
3	Hong Kong	China	0	715	-1
4	Shanghai	China	+2	714	+1
5	Los Angeles	United States	+2	713	+1
6	Singapore	Singapore	-2	712	-3
7	San Francisco	United States	-2	711	-3
8	Beijing	China	0	710	-1
9	Tokyo	Japan	0	708	+2
10	Shenzhen	China	+6	707	+8

Bottom 10 Financial Centers

GFCI 31 Rank (March 2022) (Out of 119)		Country	Rank change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)	GFCI 31 Rating (March 2022)	Rating change(s) from GFCI 30 (Sept. 2021)
119	Wuhan	China	-3	448	+48
118	Tehran	Iran	-9	500	-11
117	Xi'an	China	-2	516	+65
116	Kuwait City	Kuwait	-8	517	-6
115	Panama	Panama	-11	518	-14
114	Baku	Azerbaijan	-9	519	-12
113	Barbados	Barbados	-23	520	-32
112	Riga	Latvia	-16	521	-25
111	Vilnius	Lithuania	-20	522	-29
110	Buenos Aires	Argentina	-13	523	-22

SOURCE: ZYEN GROUP'S LONG FINANCE'S GLOBAL FINANCIAL CENTERS INDEX 31 (MARCH 2022) *BUSINESSWORLD* RESEARCH: ANA OLIVIA A. TIRONA *BUSINESSWORLD* GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN

PHL secures new P12-B loan from Japan

THE PHILIPPINES secured a new ¥30-billion (around P12.3-billion) loan from Japan, which will be used to fund programs to help the economy recover from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Department of Finance (DoF) said.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) President Tanaka Akihiko signed the agreement for the second phase of the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan (CCRESL 2) in Tokyo, Japan on Monday.

The DoF in a statement said the loan proceeds would support the Philippines' "plans in vaccinating its target population against COVID-19 and expanding the capability of its healthcare system to meet the challenges of possible public health emergencies in the future."

The loan package carries concessional lending terms of 0.01% fixed rate annually, with a repayment period of 15 years and a grace period of four years.

These are the same terms as the first phase of the CCRESL, which was worth ¥50 billion, signed in July 2021.

"JICA understands well the value of this program for our recovery and competitiveness in the new economy... The support continues with today's signing of this ¥30-billion loan agreement to aid the Philippine government's COVID-19 response measures, Mr. Dominguez was quoted as saying.

During the pandemic, Japan has provided the Philippines with over three million COVID-19 vaccines; budgetary support financing through the CCRESL and the second phase of the Post-Disaster Standby Loan worth a total of $867 million; and a COVID-19 grant aid worth $25.18 million.

Mr. Dominguez said that JICA remains the country's largest official development assistant (ODA) partner, citing ¥1 trillion worth of financing for the flagship infrastructure projects under the "Build, Build, Build" program.

Japan, S1/10

WHAT'S INSIDE

OPINION
Is this the end of the road for *Manong* (jeepney, bus, UV Express, taxi, and tricycle) Operator? *S1/7*

ARTS & LEISURE
'Fear of Freedom' tackles the Marcos loot *S2/4*

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Moody's Analytics lowers 2022 PHL growth outlook

By Luz Wendy T. Noble
Reporter

MOODY'S ANALYTICS trimmed its Philippine growth forecast for this year, citing the impact of slower global demand and faster inflation on the economy.

In a note titled "APAC Outlook: Economy Hits Rough Water," Moody's Analytics said Philippine gross domestic product (GDP) is likely to expand by 6.1% this year. This is lower than the 6.4% forecast it gave in March and well below the 7-9% government target.

The think tank also retained its 5.4% growth forecast for the Philippines in 2023.

Moody's Analytics Chief Asia-Pacific Economist Steven Cochrane said the slight easing of the 2022 GDP forecast for the Philippines is due to the anticipated global economic slowdown.

"The global economy generally will be hindered by rising inflation and higher interest rates as central banks, particularly the US Federal Reserve, accelerate their policy normalization. Thus, global demand for goods and services from the Philippines will continue to rise, but at a slower pace," he said in an e-mail.

Mr. Cochrane also cited the slowdown in China's economy due to weak domestic demand, policy changes affecting the property and technology sectors, as well as the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) lockdowns. This may also reduce demand for Philippine exports, he added.

The faster increase in commodity prices may also impact consumption in the Philippines, Mr. Cochrane said. Household spending accounts for 70% of the country's economy.

"Inflation is accelerating in the Philippines, as it is throughout the region, more quickly than we expected a month ago. This will reduce consumer spending slightly," he said.

The consumer price index rose by 4% in March from 3% in February, as the war in Ukraine caused oil and commodity prices to spike. The March inflation print matched the upper end of the 2-4% central bank target band, but still below the

Moody's, S1/10

IMF warns of 'stagflationary' risks in Asia region

THE ASIAN REGION faces a "stagflationary" outlook, a senior International Monetary Fund (IMF) official warned on Tuesday, citing the Ukraine war, spike in commodity costs and a slowdown in China as creating significant uncertainty.

While Asia's trade and financial exposures to Russia and Ukraine are limited, the region's economies will be affected by the crisis through higher commodity prices and slower growth in European trading partners, said Anne-Marie Gulde-Wolf, acting director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department.

Moreover, she noted that inflation in Asia is also starting to pick up at a time when China's economic slowdown is adding to pressure on regional growth.

"Therefore, the region faces a stagflationary outlook, with growth being lower than previously expected, and inflation being higher," she told an online news conference in Washington.

The headwinds to growth come at a time when policy space to respond is limited, Ms. Gulde-Wolf said, adding that Asian policy makers will face a difficult trade-off of responding to slowing growth and rising inflation.

"Monetary tightening will be needed in most countries, with the speed of tightening depending on domestic inflation developments and external pressures," she said.

The US Federal Reserve's expected steady interest rate hikes also present a challenge to Asian policy makers given the region's huge dollar-denominated debt, Ms. Gulde-Wolf said. — ***Reuters***