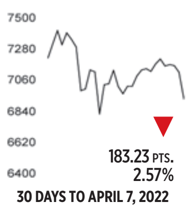
P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BusinessWorld

STOCK MARKET		
PSEi		
OPEN:	7,100.06	
HIGH:	7,120.82	
LOW:	6,926.03	
CLOSE:	6,926.03	
VOL.:	0.920 B	
VAL(P):	6.412 B	



ASIAN MARKETS — APRIL 7, 2022

	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225)	26,888.57	▼	-461.73	-1.69
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	21,808.98	▼	-271.54	-1.23
Taiwan (Weighted)	17,178.63	▼	-343.87	-1.96
Thailand (SET Index)	1,683.77	▼	-17.41	-1.02
S.Korea (Kse Composite)	2,695.86	▼	-39.17	-1.43
Singapore (Straits Times)	3,406.16	▼	-16.79	-0.49
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	7,442.80	▼	-47.30	-0.63
Malaysia (Klse Composite)	1,600.79	▼	-3.93	-0.24

WORLD MARKETS — APRIL 6, 2022

	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	34,496.510	▼	-144.670
NASDAQ	13,888.817	▼	-315.351
S&P 500	4,481.150	▼	-43.970
FTSE 100	7,587.700	▼	-26.020
Euro Stoxx50	3,737.980	▼	-44.610

PESO-DOLLAR RATES

FX	
OPEN	P51.370
HIGH	P51.330
LOW	P51.430
CLOSE	P51.420
W.AVE.	P51.385
VOL.	$885.50 M

SOURCE : BAP

ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE — APRIL 7, 2022

	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	123.710	▲	123.800
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.837	—	7.837
Taiwan (NT dollar)	28.812	▼	28.704
Thailand (baht)	33.520	▲	33.540
S. Korea (won)	1,219.870	▼	1,217.000
Singapore (dollar)	1.361	▼	1.359
Indonesia (rupiah)	14,358	▼	14,355
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.217	▼	4.213

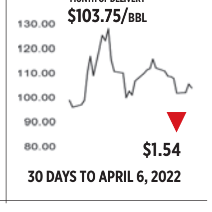
WORLD CURRENCIES — APRIL 7, 2022

	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.3062	▼	1.3099
US$/Euro	1.0864	▼	1.0908
$/Aust dollar	0.7477	▼	0.7582
Canada dollar/US$	1.2567	▲	1.2495
Swiss Franc/US$	0.9344	▲	0.9325

DUBAI CRUDE OIL

FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY

$103.75/BBL



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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • APRIL 7, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on *S1/4*; article on *S2/2*)

		Value			
BDO	P130.000	P575,477,005	-P3.400	▼	-2.549%
SM	P870.000	P436,504,725	-P12.000	▼	-1.361%
CNVRG	P27.850	P398,614,935	-P1.150	▼	-3.966%
ALI	P34.200	P284,683,575	-P0.600	▼	-1.724%
ICT	P218.000	P259,976,108	-P4.000	▼	-1.802%
SMPH	P36.300	P258,648,850	-P1.550	▼	-4.095%
TEL	P1,795.000	P203,374,780	-P45.000	▼	-2.446%
URC	P117.000	P202,848,384	-P5.900	▼	-4.801%
BPI	P96.500	P190,051,103	-P1.600	▼	-1.631%
AC	P770.000	P186,239,385	-P30.000	▼	-3.750%

Over 3M Filipinos jobless in February

By Ana Olivia A. Tirona
Researcher

THE PHILIPPINES' unemployment rate steadied on a monthly basis in February, but the number of jobless Filipinos increased to 3.126 million despite the gradual reopening of the economy, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Thursday.

The unemployment rate stood at 6.4% in February, unchanged from the previous month's jobless rate but smaller than the 8.8% in the same month of 2021, preliminary estimates from the agency's latest Labor Force Survey showed.

This was the lowest share of the unemployed to the total Filipino labor force in over two years or since the 5.3% in January 2020.

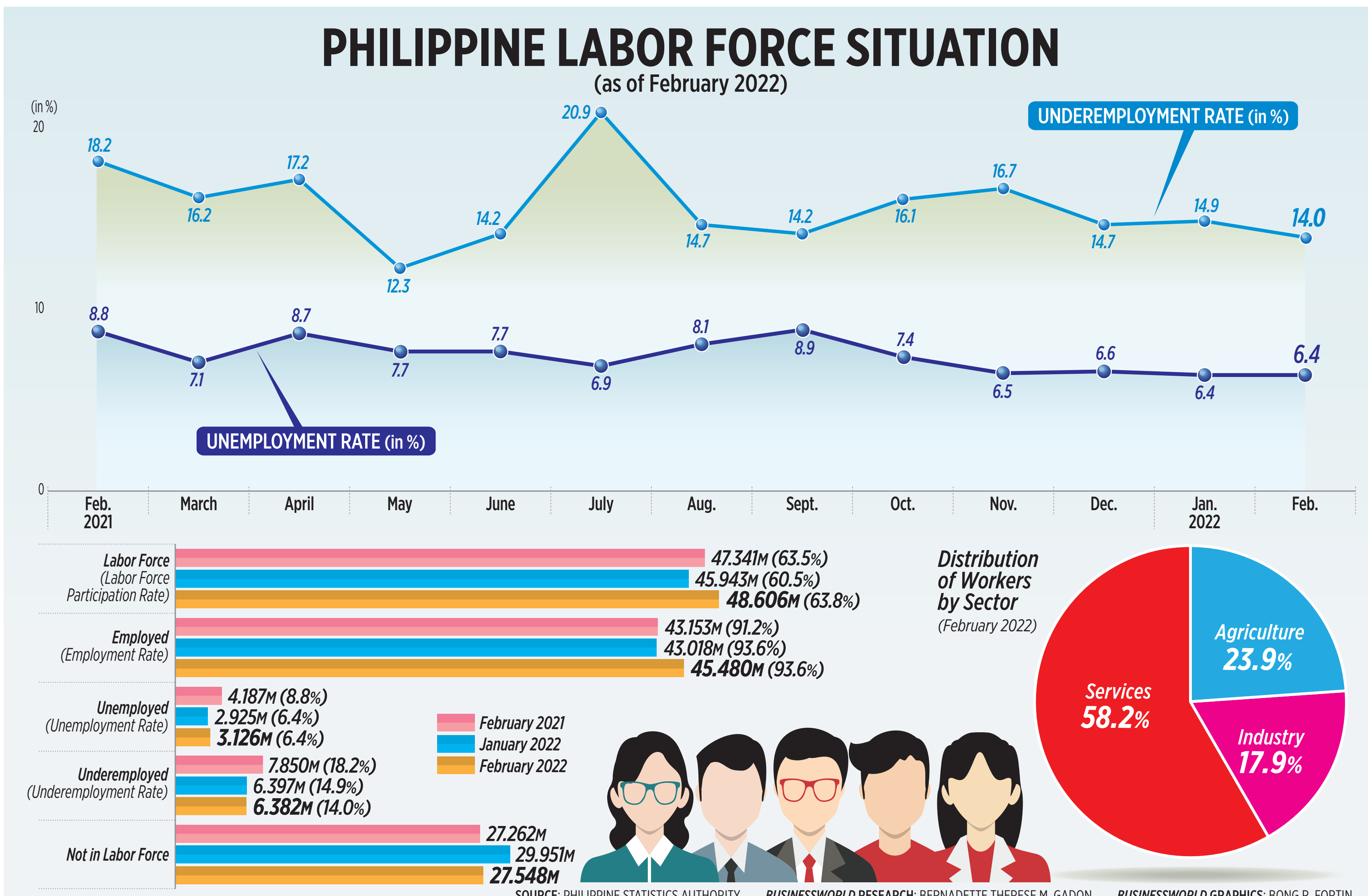
In absolute terms, the ranks of unemployed Filipinos picked up by 201,000 on a monthly basis to 3.126 million in February. This, however, was lower by 1.061 million from 4.187 million a year ago when tighter mobility restrictions were still implemented.

The size of the Filipino labor force, meanwhile, expanded by 2.462 million month on month to 48.606 million in February. It was 1.265 million higher than the 47.341 million a year ago.

This translated to a labor force participation rate (LFPR) — or the share of the workforce to the total working age population — of 63.8% that month, a two-month high since the 65.1% in December last year.

After the Alert Level 1 in January, Metro Manila and other areas were placed under a more relaxed Alert Level 2 starting February as the number of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections declined.

Jobless, S1/2



SOURCE: PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY *BUSINESSWORLD RESEARCH*: BERNADETTE THERESE M. GADON *BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS*: BONG R. FORTIN

Manufacturing bounces back as restrictions ease

By Mariedel Irish U. Catilogo

MANUFACTURING rose to its highest level in five months in February, thanks to favorable base effect and increased economic activity amid looser mobility curbs.

Factory output, as measured by volume of production index (VoPI), jumped by 84.3% year on year in February from the revised 17.1% in January, preliminary data from the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries showed.

This was a turnaround from the 43.9% decline recorded in February last year. It was also the highest year-on-year growth in five months or since the 122% surge in September last year.

February marked the 11th straight month that the manufacturing output was in positive territory.

In comparison, the Philippines' manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) reached a 3-year high in February with a 52.8 reading, from 50 in January. This was the highest PMI reading since the 53.2 reading posted in December 2018.

"The February data continues to benefit from base effects," ING Bank Senior Economist Nicholas Antonio T. Mapa said in an e-mail. "We can expect another month of gains for March but base effects wash out after that."

Federation of Philippine Industries Chairman Jesus L. Arranza attributed the strong factory growth due to the further reopening of the economy, which meant increased output and more work opportunities.

"Remember that as we open the economy, manufacturing requires workers to report to work," he said in a phone call. "But there will be a slowdown especially for coke and refined petroleum as people are conscious of prices."

In February, Metro Manila and other areas were under a more relaxed Alert Level 2, coming from a month-long Alert Level 3 in January amid an Omicron-driven surge in new coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections.

The PSA noted an expansion in the VoPI in the 19 out of 22 industry divisions in February, led by manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products which soared by 748.9% from 44.9% in January. This was followed by strong growth in the manufacture of furniture (90.3% from 7.4%) and manufacture of tobacco products (85.5% from 69.9%).

Meanwhile, contractions were seen for the manufacture of electrical equipment (-28.8% from -26.8%), followed by wearing apparel (-5.1% from -31.8%) and rubber and plastic products (-1.7% from -1.6%).

The capacity utilization — the extent to which industry resources are used in producing goods — averaged 69.0% in February, slightly higher than 68.3% in the previous month. Twenty-one out of 22 industry divisions reported capacity utilization rates of more than 50%.

Mr. Arranza expects the local manufacturing industry to grow moderately as the purchasing power of the people will increase in accordance with the election season.

"From April onwards we can expect growth but more likely at a more moderate pace as the economy gradually reopens after months of lockdowns," Mr. Mapa said.

The national elections will be held on May 9.

Philippines' 2021 GDP growth upgraded to 5.7%

THE PHILIPPINE economy grew slightly faster than it initially reported in 2021, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Thursday.

Gross domestic product (GDP) — the value of all finished goods and services produced in the country at a given period — rose by 5.7% last year, slightly higher than the 5.6% initially reported on Jan. 27.

Economic growth for the fourth quarter of 2021 accelerated to 7.8%, from the preliminary estimate of 7.7%. This was a reversal from the 8.2% contraction it logged in 2020.

On the other hand, last year's gross national income — the sum of the nation's GDP and net primary income from the rest of the world — was revised upwards to 1.7% from the earlier estimate of 1.6%.

The services sector for the entire 2021 grew 5.4%, from the previously reported 5.3%. Likewise, the industry sector improved to 8.5%, from the previous estimate of 8.2%.

Major upward revisions in the industry subsectors were observed in the following: construction (10.0% from 9.8% previously); manufacturing (8.8% from 8.6%), and mining and quarrying (5.0% from 2.6%).

The following services subsectors increased from their previous estimates: public administration and defense, compulsory social activities (5.7% from 5.2%), education (8.3% from 8.0%), financial and insurance activities (4.7% from 4.5%), and information and communication (9.2% from 9.1%).

Agriculture, meanwhile, was unchanged at a 0.3% decline.

On the expenditure side, growth in government spending increased to 7.1% last year from the preliminary 7%, while household consumption was unchanged at 4.2%.

GDP, S1/2

PHL central bank addresses FATF recommendations vs financial crimes

THE PHILIPPINE central bank is focusing on showcasing tighter regulations on registration of money transfer services and the effectiveness of targeted financial sanctions, as it aims to exit the "gray list" of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) by next year.

The country is hoping to convince the FATF it is effectively implementing tighter measures against money laundering and counter-terrorism financing, after the Philippines was included in the gray list in June 2021.

"The BSP is implementing measures to address the three action-plan items relating to implementing the new registration requirements for money or value transfer services, applying sanctions on unregistered and illegal money remittance operators, and enhancing the effectiveness of the targeted financial sanctions framework (TFS) for both terrorism financing and proliferation financing," the BSP said in its annual report.

"It [The BSP] will ensure that the remaining action plan items for BSP and BSFIs (BSP Supervised Financial Institution) will be adequately addressed, in line with the country's strong commitment to address all identified strategic deficiencies to exit from the gray list," the BSP added.

The FATF said in March the country is still part of jurisdictions under increased monitoring for "dirty money" risk, although it noted the country's progress in terms of policies related to sanctions against terrorism financing and increasing manpower of the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC).

The FATF said it will continue to monitor the country's anti-dirty money and counter-terrorism financing measures, particularly its progress in implementing registration requirements for money or value transfer services, as well as imposing sanctions against illegal operators.

For its part, the BSP said it has formed a group that tracks and collates actions and countermeasures seen in other jurisdictions. The central bank likewise said it catalogs incidents related to de-risking and correspondent banking, among others.

"The information gathered will be used in implementing appropriate policy responses and other necessary interventions," it said.

The BSP regulates money service businesses that are engaged in remittances, money transfers, and foreign exchange dealership, as well as those related to virtual assets.

There are more than 7,000 of these businesses that are registered with the BSP as of end-2021.

The government will submit its next progress report to the FATF in May. Officials hope the country will be removed from the gray list by January 2023. — **Luz Wendy T. Noble**

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