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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JUNE 29, 2022 (PSEi snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

P21.800 URC P108.000 P114.300 P36.100 **ICT** P195.900 P26.800 MONDE P13.180 P1.765.000 P628.000 SM P820.000 P469,636,190 P460,603,703 P326,742,283 Value P294,384,845 Value P293,298,248 Value P253,309,765 P205,577,484 Value P183,474,800 **Value** P144,414,140 **Value** P141,647,865 -P2.200 -P1.200 ▼ -3.217% P0.900 **0.462**% -P0.400 ▼ -1.471% P0.100 -P15.000 ▼ -0.843% **1.408**% **▼ -1.888**%

Peso sinks to 16-year low vs dollar

THE PESO sank to the P55-adollar level on Wednesday — its weakest in more than 16 years amid fears of a recession in the United States and after officials of the US Federal Reserve said they would try to bring inflation within target.

The local currency closed at P55.06 a dollar, weakening by 29 centavos from its P54.77 close on Tuesday, according to data from the Bankers Association of the Philippines posted on its website. It was its weakest level since it closed at P55.08 on Oct. 27, 2005.

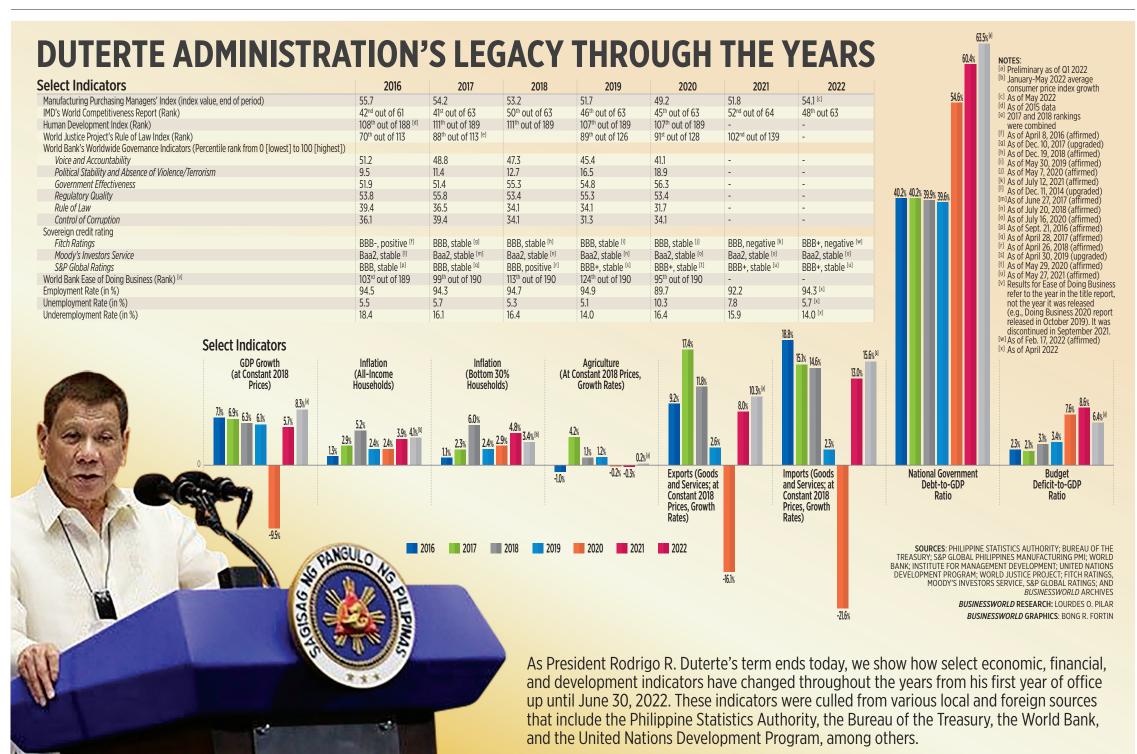
The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) might consider bigger interest rate hikes to support the peso, though it would not be obliged to match policy tightening by the US Fed, incoming Governor Felipe M. Medalla told a news briefing.

"If we see that the exchange rate is overshooting too much and that selling forex will not make the problem go away we would consider maybe increasing policy rates more than our planned 25-basispoint hike," he said.

The peso opened the session at P54.90 a dollar and weakened to as much as P55.10. It rose to as much as P54.88 a dollar during the day. Volume went down to \$1.27 billion from \$1.65 billion a day earlier.

Zeno Ronald R. Abenoja, managing director of the Philippine central bank's Department of Economic Research, traced the peso's weakening to normalized monetary policy rates in the US and other advanced economies.

Peso, S1/2



Gov't awards port projects in Palawan, Leyte, and Batangas

THE PHILIPPINE Ports Authority (PPA) has awarded more port projects, including the construction of a cruise ship port in Coron, Palawan province

southwest of the Philippine capital. PPA General Manager Jay Danie R. Santiago issued a notice of award on June 6 to Makati City-based Premium Megastructures, Inc. for the P418.15-million cruise ship port, documents from the agency's website showed.

PPA said the port projects are part of the Duterte government's goal of improving connectivity and mobility across the Philippine archipelago, mainly for trade, investment, tourism and economic

A notice of award was issued on the same day to Batangas-based Great Swiss Metal Builders Corp. for the P145.99million construction of a wharf and port in the town of San Juan, Batangas,

Meanwhile, Ormoc City-based MAC Builders got the contract for the



P127.09-million construction of the operational area of the Port of Guadalupe in Maasin City, Southern Leyte in central Philippines.

The agency also issued a notice to the Pasig City-based joint venture of GlobalPort Terminals, Inc. and GlobalPort Ozamis Terminal, Inc. to proceed with the management of Sasa Port in Davao. The management contract involves a concession fee of P8.64 billion.

Port, S1/10

Q2 office demand more than doubles

THE DEMAND for Philippine office spaces more than doubled to 255,000 square meters (sq.m.) this quarter from end-March, the highest since a coronavirus pandemic forced workers to stay and work from home in 2020, according to Leechiu Property Consultants.

"The office segment remains resilient," Mikail C. Barranda, director for commercial leasing at the property firm, told an online news briefing on Wednesday, "We have a healthy pipeline of live transactions of 451,000 sq.m."

Lease transactions have reached 379,000 sq.m this year, almost 70% of the full-year take-up in 2021, Leechiu said in a report.

Outsourcing companies drove the demand for office spaces this quarter, accounting for 42% or 107,000 sq.m., Mr. Barranda said.

A number of outsourcing companies shed office spaces at the height of the pandemic that has killed 6.4 million people worldwide, as workers shifted to working from home.

Office demand in 2020 sank to 381,000 sg.m. from 1.7 million in 2019 when the world

was still coronavirus-free, according to Leechiu spokesperson Jenni G. Arches. Last vear. it was 539.000 sa.m.

Leechiu earlier said office space demand would pick up as lockdown restrictions ease and many companies issue back-to-office orders.

The business process outsourcing industry was worth \$361 billion in 2020, according to the

World Bank. The sector contributes almost \$30 billion to

the economy each year, and about 1.3 million Office demand, S1/10

WB: More than half of Filipinos have bank accounts

MORE FILIPINOS opened their own bank accounts at the end of last year, as many of them were forced to pay for services online amid a coronavirus pandemic.

"The digital revolution has catalyzed increases in the access and use of financial services across the world, transforming ways in which people make and receive payments, borrow, and save," World Bank (WB) Group President David Malpass said in a statement on Wednesday.

Based on the multilateral bank's Global Findex 2021 database, 51% of Filipinos now have bank accounts, up from 34% in 2017.

Globally, 76 % of adults had an account at a financial institution or through a mobile money provider in 2021, up from 68% in 2017 and 51% in 2011.

"The pandemic has also led to an increased use of digital payments," according to the World Bank report. "In low and middle-income economies (excluding China), over 40% of adults who made merchant in-store or online payments using a card, phone, or the internet did so for the first time since the start of the pandemic." *Bank, S1/2*



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