

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
PSEI OPEN: 6,404.27 HIGH: 6,404.27 LOW: 6,306.81 CLOSE: 6,329.19 VOL.: 0.716 B VAL(P): 4.579 B 76.72 pts. 1.19% 30 DAYS TO AUGUST 14, 2023	AUGUST 14, 2023 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 32,059.91 ▲ -413.74 -1.27 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 18,773.55 ▼ -301.64 -1.58 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 16,393.66 ▼ -207.59 -1.25 THAILAND (SET INDEX) * 1,535.16 ▲ 1.75 0.11 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,570.87 ▼ -20.39 -0.79 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,247.70 ▼ -46.58 -1.41 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 7,277.00 ▼ -63.10 -0.86 MALAYSIA (KLSE COMPOSITE) 1,457.00 ▼ -0.16 -0.01 <small>* CLOSING PRICE AS OF AUGUST 11, 2023</small>	AUGUST 11, 2023 DOW JONES 35,281.400 ▲ 105.250 NASDAQ 13,644.849 ▲ -93.137 S&P 500 4,464.050 ▼ -4.780 FTSE 100 7,524.160 ▼ -94.440 EURO STOXX50 3,973.510 ▼ -40.320	FX OPEN P56.450 HIGH P56.450 LOW P56.990 CLOSE P56.780 W.AVE. P56.803 VOL. \$1,410.00 M SOURCE: BAP 46.50 ctyvs 30 DAYS TO AUGUST 14, 2023	AUGUST 14, 2023 LATEST BID (0900GMT) PREVIOUS JAPAN (YEN) 145.030 144.960 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.819 7.817 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 31.932 31.894 THAILAND (BAHT) 35.160 35.070 S. KOREA (WON) 1,333.990 1,330.300 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.354 1.352 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 15,310 15,210 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.615 4.585	AUGUST 14, 2023 US\$/UK POUND 1.2687 ▲ 1.2694 US\$/EURO 1.0945 ▲ 1.0944 US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR 0.6490 ▲ 0.6498 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3447 ▲ 1.3438 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.8769 ▲ 0.8767	DUBAI CRUDE OIL FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$87.85/BBL 30 DAYS TO AUGUST 11, 2023

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • AUGUST 14, 2023 (PSEi snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

Symbol	Value	Change	Symbol	Value	Change	Symbol	Value	Change	Symbol	Value	Change	Symbol	Value	Change	Symbol	Value	Change												
SMPH	P30.150	-P1.350 ▼ -4.286%	ALI	P29.050	P0.000 — 0.000%	ACEN	P5.150	P0.040 ▲ 0.783%	SCC	P31.000	P1.000 ▲ 3.333%	BPI	P113.900	P0.100 ▲ 0.088%	AC	P593.000	-P11.000 ▼ -1.821%	BDO	P141.800	-P1.700 ▼ -1.185%	SM	P867.000	-P15.500 ▼ -1.756%	MPI	P5.050	P0.050 ▲ 1.000%	JGS	P38.950	-P0.050 ▼ -0.128%

Households to still feel inflation pain

FILIPINO HOUSEHOLDS will still feel the pain from elevated inflation even as price increases continue to moderate in the next few months. BMI Country Risk and Industry Research projects that consumer spending in the Philippines will expand by 5.5% this year, but noted that elevated inflation, high

borrowing costs and an uptick in unemployment rates pose risks to the outlook in the near term. "While the rate of price changes is slowing, (inflation) remains higher than central banks' targets and higher than what consumers have grown accustomed to, especially over the past decade. The

impact will not be spread evenly across the different consumer spending segments, with the prices of some components, such as rent; services and some food items (e.g., meat and poultry), continuing to remain stickier and more elevated over (the second half)," BMI said in an Aug. 11 report.

The research firm said inflation will likely remain above the 2-4% target range of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and average 5.7% this year. "If nominal wages cannot keep up with these high rates of inflation, consumers will continue to see erosion in their

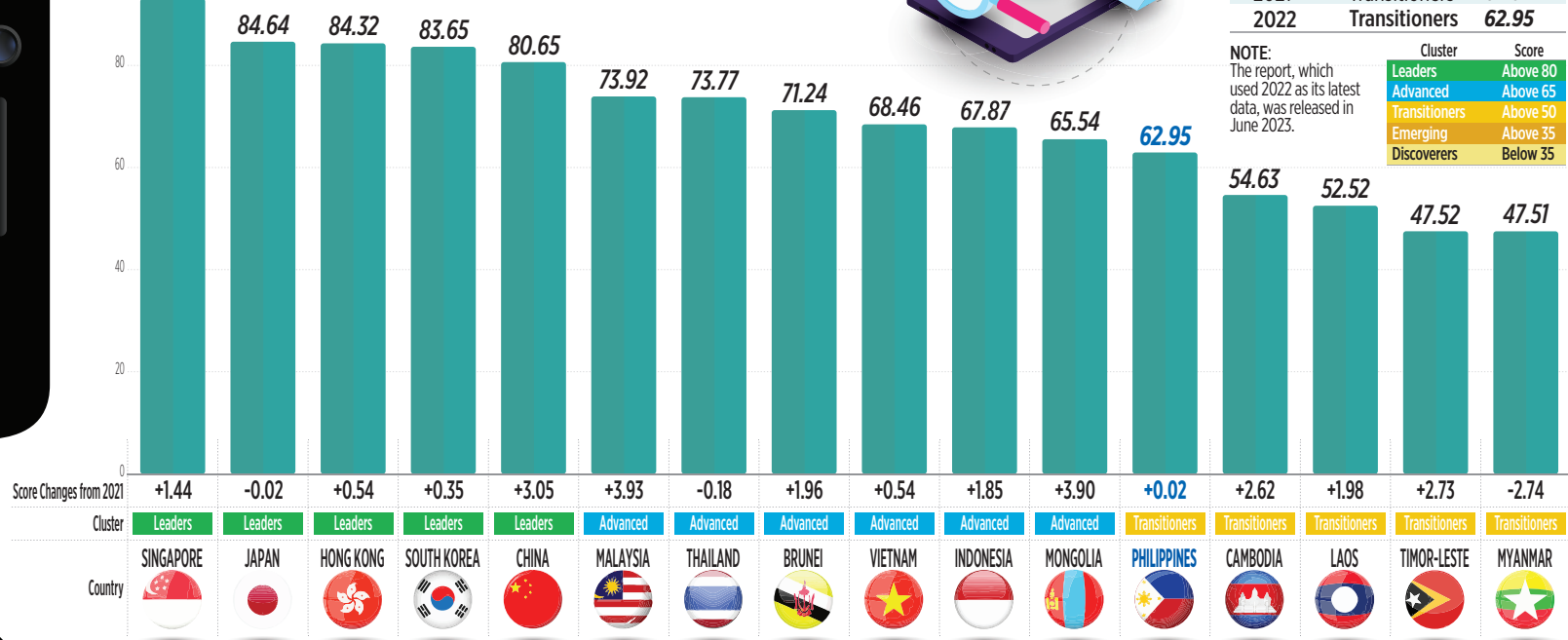
purchasing power," BMI said. "The uneven nature of price increases will mean that consumers will have to increasingly allocate more of their disposable income towards meeting basic necessities." Headline inflation slowed for a sixth straight month to 4.7% in

July from 5.4% in June. It marked the 16th straight month of inflation exceeding the BSP's 2-4% target band. From January to July, inflation averaged 6.8%. The BSP projects inflation to average 5.4% this year and 2.9% in 2024. *Households, S1/9*

PHILIPPINES SLIGHTLY IMPROVES IN GSMA MOBILE CONNECTIVITY INDEX

The Philippines' overall score improved by 0.02 point to 62.95 (out of 100) in the latest edition of the Mobile Connectivity Index (MCI) by nonprofit organization GSM Association (GSMA). The Index assesses and tracks the performance of countries against the equally weighted key enablers of mobile internet adoption, namely: infrastructure, affordability, consumer readiness, and content and services. A higher score means a more enabling environment for delivering mobile internet. The Philippines' overall score has been improving since the report's inaugural release in 2014. Despite this, the country has remained a "transitioner" for seven straight years and one of the lower-scoring countries in the region.

2022 Mobile Connectivity Index Scores of Select East and Southeast Asian Countries (Out of 100)



Philippines' Historical Performance

Year	Cluster	Index /100
2014	Emerging	46.09
2015	Emerging	49.13
2016	Transitioners	55.16
2017	Transitioners	58.54
2018	Transitioners	62.46
2019	Transitioners	62.05
2020	Transitioners	63.84
2021	Transitioners	62.94
2022	Transitioners	62.95

NOTE: The report, which used 2022 as its latest data, was released in June 2023.

Cluster	Score
Leaders	Above 80
Advanced	Above 65
Transitioners	Above 50
Emerging	Above 35
Discoverers	Below 35

Philippines' Performance (2022)

Enablers	Score /100
Overall index	62.95
Infrastructure (25%)	73.25
Affordability (25%)	47.01
Consumer Readiness (25%)	76.77
Content and Services (25%)	59.41

Countries with High Mobile Connectivity

Country	2022 Overall Index Score
Singapore	93.09
Switzerland	91.21
Denmark	90.89
Australia	90.62
Finland	90.49
Norway	90.45
United Arab Emirates	89.48
Ireland	88.90
United States of America	88.64
United Kingdom	87.89

Countries with Low Mobile Connectivity

Country	2022 Overall Index Score
South Sudan	8.83
Niger	22.60
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	22.94
Burundi	23.08
Central African Republic	23.28
Chad	23.67
Yemen	26.61
Comoros	28.30
Afghanistan	30.15
Burkina Faso	30.45

SOURCE: GSMA'S MOBILE CONNECTIVITY INDEX 2023 (HTTPS://WWW.MOBILECONNECTIVITYINDEX.COM/INDEX.HTML) BUSINESSWORLD RESEARCH: ABIGAIL MARIE P. YRAOLA BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN

P6.1-T infrastructure projects eyed in Luzon

THE GOVERNMENT is eyeing P6.1 trillion worth of flagship infrastructure projects in Luzon, Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said on Monday. During the Philippine economic briefing in Laoag City, Mr. Diokno said 132 of the Marcos administration's 194 flagship infrastructure projects will be located in Luzon. These include the Laoag International Airport Development Project, the Naga Airport Development Project, the elevated walkways along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, the Laguna Lakeshore Road Network Project, Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway

Extension Project, and the Ilocos Norte-Ilocos Sur-Abra Irrigation Project. "Improving road networks and increasing the capacity of our airports are important to revitalize the tourism industry, especially in places like Laoag which serves as the main gateway for other destinations in the region," Mr. Diokno said. The National Economic and Development Authority Board, chaired by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., approved 194 flagship infrastructure projects worth P9 trillion in March. Transportation Secretary Jaime J. Bautista said the depart-

ment is taking the lead in 71 out of the 194 infrastructure projects. "The major ones are in aviation, seaports, railways, and road projects. For the aviation sector, one of the biggest projects that will be implemented is the completion of the New Manila International Airport," he said. San Miguel Corp. is investing around P735 billion to build a new airport in Bulacan province. "This will support the growing traveling Filipino population and will support projects of the government in terms of improving the economy and increasing tourism," he said. *Infrastructure, S1/9*

FUEL PRICE TRACKER (week-on-week change)

Fuel Type	Aug. 1	Aug. 8	Aug. 15
GASOLINE	P2.10 ▲	P0.50 ▲	P1.90 ▲
DIESEL	P3.50 ▲	P4.00 ▲	P1.50 ▲
KEROSENE	P3.25 ▲	P2.75 ▲	P2.50 ▲

• Aug. 15, 12:01 a.m. — Caltex Philippines
 • Aug. 15, 6 a.m. — Petron Corp.; Phoenix Petroleum; Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.; PTT Philippines Corp.; Seaoil Philippines, Inc.
 • Aug. 15, 8:01 a.m. — Cleanfuel (Shaw Autogas, Inc.)

Gov't urged to consider uniform tariff structure

By Revin Mikhael D. Ochave
Reporter

THE MANAGEMENT Association of the Philippines (MAP) urged the government to keep tariffs low and uniform for agricultural and food products to keep food prices affordable for more Filipinos. The MAP said in a position statement that the government should consider a tariff structure that "reduces incentives and opportunities for corruption and smuggling by unifying the minimum access volume (MAV) and non-MAV tariff rates." It said that tariffs should be kept "relatively low and uniform across all goods with a maximum 10-15%" to ensure the affordability of food prices. The MAP issued the position paper as the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and Tariff Commission (TC) are moving to review and reform the tariff structure of the Philippines. "The removal of existing peaks and achieving low uniform rates in a tariff structure that provides equal incentives across domestic industries will encourage more and wider agricultural processing

and value-adding, help control inflation, and enhance the country's food security. We urge the TC and NEDA to move the Philippine economy in this direction," the MAP said in the paper signed by MAP President Benedicta Du-Baladad and MAP Governor-in-Charge for Resilience and Recovery Cluster and former NEDA Secretary Cielito F. Habito. The MAP noted that agricultural tariffs have remained high as these are generally excluded from tariff adjustments "with agricultural products deemed 'sensitive' levied the highest statutory rates of up to 65%." "This exceptional level of protection has dampened the impetus for government and agricultural producers to achieve higher levels of productivity, hence, lower costs and prices, to be comparable to and competitive with that of our neighbors," it said. The MAP recommended that agricultural commodities with high tariff rates should be reviewed for reduction. "Most of the agriculture commodities with very high tariffs are food products (sugar, meat, fish, rice) or inputs to local manufacturing and value addition (corn, *Tariff, S1/11*

Peso depreciation minimal, says Remolona

By Keisha B. Ta-asan
Reporter

THE DEPRECIATION of the peso against the dollar has only been minimal compared with other currencies in the region so far this year, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. said on Monday morning. The peso slumped to an eight-month low against the greenback on Monday, as market players expect the BSP to keep rates on hold at its Thursday meeting. The local currency closed at P56.78 versus the dollar, weakening by 46.50 centavos from

Friday's P56.315 finish, data from the Bankers Association of the Philippines' website showed. This was the peso's weakest close in over eight months or since its P56.94-a-dollar finish on Nov. 23, 2022 (Related story on S2/1). Mr. Remolona said the central bank is keeping a close eye on the exchange rate. "Compared to our neighbors, the peso has weakened only slightly," he said during the Philippine economic briefing in Laoag City. "Since the beginning of the year, the peso has depreciated by less than 1%. This depreciation is smaller than those of our neighbors."

He said that as of its P56.24 close on Aug. 8, the peso has depreciated by 0.86% from its P55.755 close on Dec. 29. This is smaller compared with the Thai baht (-1.09%), the Malaysian ringgit (-3.77%), the South Korean won (-4.24%) and the Japanese yen (-8.35%). Mr. Remolona said the peso has weakened against the greenback due to the US Federal Reserve's move to hike rates anew. He said the local currency has since appreciated from its record low of P59 against the dollar in October last year, thanks to the tools the BSP used to mitigate the volatility in the foreign exchange market. *Peso, S1/11*