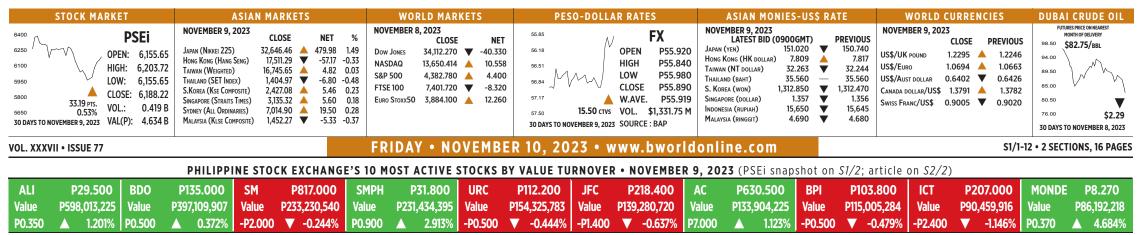
# P25 usinessWorld IANILA



# PHL economy up by 5.9% in Q3

# **BSP sees above-target** inflation in 2023, 2024

#### By Keisha B. Ta-asan Reporter

PHILIPPINE INFLATION may average 6.2% this year and 4.7% in 2024 based on the risk-adjusted forecasts of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

Monetary Board (MB) member Romeo L. Bernardo said the risk-adjusted inflation forecasts show above-target inflation for 2023 and 2024.

"For 2023, inflation is seen to settle at 6.2% from our previous September 21 baseline forecast of 5.8%, while average inflation in 2024 will likely reach 4.7% against the baseline of 3.5%," he said in an economic forum hosted by Security Bank Corp. on Thursday,

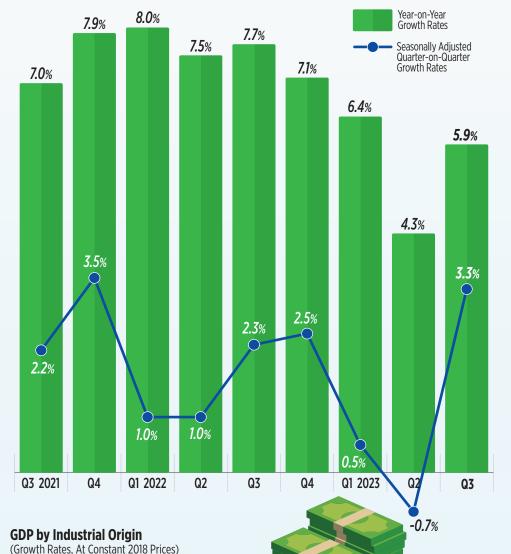
Mr. Bernardo delivered the speech on behalf of BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona Jr., who was out of the country.

Results of the BSP's survey of external forecasters showed analysts see inflation at 6.1% this year before easing to 4.1% in 2024, he said. The survey was conducted from Oct. 9 to 20, with 25 respondents.

"The latest risk-adjusted forecasts are higher than 2023 and 2024 compared with the baseline forecast in the Sept. 21, 2023 policy meeting due mainly to the higher-thanexpected inflation outturn in September, the higher inflation nowcast for October, the approved P1 provisional jeepney fare increase, and the estimated impact of the moderate El Niño conditions on prices," Mr. Bernardo said.

### **PHILIPPINES' QUARTERLY GDP PERFORMANCE**





#### By Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson Reporter

A RECOVERY in government spending helped the Philippine economy bounce back in the third quarter, putting it on track to post the fastest growth in Southeast Asia this year.

Preliminary data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 5.9% in July to September, faster than 4.3% in the second quarter but slower than 7.7% a vear earlier.

This also exceeded the 4.9% median estimate of 18 economists in a BusinessWorld poll last week.

The expansion in the third quarter also ended three consecutive quarters of slowing growth.

The Philippines' third-quarter GDP growth is the fastest among major emerging economies in Asia with available data, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan told a press briefing

With 5.9% GDP growth, the Philippines was ahead of Vietnam (5.3%), Indonesia and China (4.9%), and Malaysia (3.3%).

For the first nine months, economic growth averaged 5.5%, still below the government's 6-7% fullyear target.

"The economy will need to grow by 7.2% year on year in the fourth quarter of 2023 to attain at least the low end of the government's target," Mr. Balisacan said.

On a seasonally adjusted quarterly asis, Philippine GDP grew by 3.3%, a turnaround from the 0.7% contraction in the second quarter.

Inflation, S1/12

# Sept. manufacturing output grows by 9.1%

FACTORY OUTPUT rose in September – the fastest pace in 18 months – driven by sustained domestic demand and resilient exports, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Thursday

Preliminary results of the SA's latest Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries (MISSI) showed factory output, as measured by the volume of production index (VoPI), expanded by 9.1% year on year in September from 4.5% a year ago and the revised 6.8% in August. The September print was the fastest growth since 346% in March 2022.

ces, senior assistant vice-president and chief economist at Security Bank Corp., said in an e-mail.

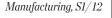
On a month-on-month seasonally adjusted basis, the manufacturing sector's VoPI eased to 1.5% from the 2.7% growth in August.

Year to date, factory output

"Several factors contributed to this robust expansion, including good domestic demand, resilient exports, and ongoing infrastructure projects," Robert Dan J. Ro-

averaged 5.7%, lower than 19.8% a year earlier.

"One of the biggest contributors to this improvement (in September) was the manufacturing of electrical equipment, the Philippines' largest export. Supporting this was the fact that the [peso] was relatively weak against the US dollar in September, which helped make Philippine exports more competitive abroad," HSBC economist for ASEAN Aris Dacanay said in an e-mail.



## Meralco rates go up in Nov.

**RESIDENTIAL** customers in areas served by Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) are set to pay higher bills this month due to an increase in transmission charges.

In a statement on Thursday, Meralco said the overall rate for a typical household went up by P0.23 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to P12.05 per kWh in November from P11.82 last month.

Households that consume 200 kWh can expect to pay about P47 more in their monthly electricity bills, Meralco said.

Residential customers that consume 300 kWh, 400 kWh, and 500 kWh will see their bills go up by P70, P94, and P117, respectively.

Meralco said the transmission charge rose by P0.12 per kWh

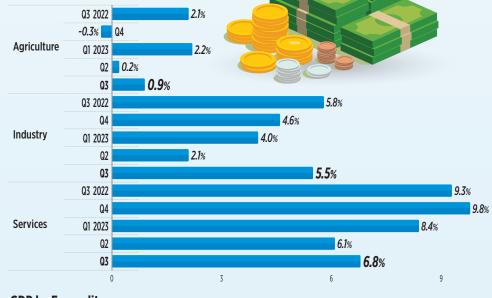
due to higher ancillary service charge.

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines' (NGCP) ancillary service charge surged to P91.35 per kilowatt (kW) from P23.17 per kW.

In October, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) approved an additional 257.78 megawatts worth of regulating reserves for ancillary service procurement agreements. This accounted for 76.5% of total ancillary service charges.

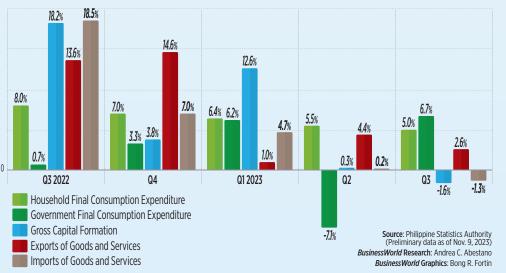
Regulating reserve refers to the available and dispatchable generating capacity allocated to correct any deviations triggered by "unpredicted variations in demand or generation output."

Meralco, S1/10





(Growth Rates, At Constant 2018 Prices)



The Philippines' third-quarter economic performance was driven by a recovery in government spending, which helped offset weaker household consumption.

Government spending jumped by 6.7%, faster than 0.7% a year ago and a turnaround from the 7.1% contraction in the second quarter.

Mr. Balisacan said government agencies' catch-up plans helped ramp up spending last quarter.

The PSA said state expenditures contributed 2.1 percentage points to GDP growth, equivalent to 36%.

Household consumption, which accounted for about three-fourths of the economy, grew by 5% in the third quarter – the weakest in two years. This was also slower than 8% a year ago and 5.5% in the previous quarter.

"The domestic demand slowdown is primarily because of the higher uptick in inflation. Now that we are succeeding in reducing that inflation, we believe that domestic demand will improve this quarter and in the quarters ahead," Mr. Balisacan said.

An uptick in inflation was seen in August and September, as prices of food and fuel spiked. In September, headline inflation accelerated to 6.1% from 5.3% in August.

Economy, S1/8

## Diokno rejects proposal for state banks' staggered contributions to MIF

ALLOWING state banks to contribute to the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF) on a staggered basis is not an option because this might send mixed signals to investors, Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said

"I think that's not going to work because we want to send a strong message to foreign investors that we're serious. It's not an option to make a downpayment. We need stable capitalization. I think that's the big picture," Mr. Diokno told BusinessWorld on the sidelines of a Senate plenary hearing on Wednesday.

This after the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) recommended that its contribution to the MIF be remitted on an "as-needed" basis.

Under the law creating the country's first sovereign wealth fund, the DBP and Land Bank of the Philippines (LANDBANK) must remit P25 billion and P50 billion, respectively, for the initial funding of the MIF. Both banks remitted

their contributions in September.

The DBP also said it had filed a request to the Bureau of the Treasury seeking the return of its P25-billion contribution until the suspension of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the MIF law are lifted.

In October, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. ordered the suspension of the Maharlika Investment Fund Act's IRR pending review. This week, Mr. Marcos said the review has been finalized. *MIF, S1/10*