

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
PSEi OPEN: 6,655.99 HIGH: 6,695.41 LOW: 6,650.41 CLOSE: 6,680.45 VOL.: 0.461 B VAL(P): 5.819 B 37.27 pts. 0.56% 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 15, 2024	JANUARY 15, 2024 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 35,901.79 ▲ 324.68 0.91 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 16,216.33 ▼ -28.25 -0.17 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 17,546.82 ▲ 33.99 0.19 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,407.83 ▼ -5.70 -0.40 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,525.99 ▲ 0.94 0.04 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,196.71 ▲ 4.99 0.16 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 7,496.30 ▼ -2.00 -0.03 MALAYSIA (KLSE COMPOSITE) 1,501.11 ▲ 13.77 0.93	JANUARY 12, 2024 Dow Jones 37,592.980 ▼ -118.040 NASDAQ 14,972.760 ▲ 2.575 S&P 500 4,783.830 ▲ 3.590 FTSE 100 7,624.930 ▲ 48.340 Euro Stoxx50 4,095.450 ▲ 34.250	FX OPEN P55.850 HIGH P55.770 LOW P55.950 CLOSE P55.770 W.AVE. P55.881 VOL. \$1,305.38 M 14.10 CTSV 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 15, 2024 SOURCE: BAP	JANUARY 15, 2024 LATEST BID (0900GMT) PREVIOUS JAPAN (YEN) 145.520 ▼ 144.900 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.821 — 7.821 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 31.194 — 31.099 THAILAND (BAHT) 34.910 ▼ 34.860 S. KOREA (WON) 1,319.880 ▼ 1,313.220 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.333 — 1.331 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 15,550 ▼ 15,545 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.667 ▼ 4.645	JANUARY 15, 2024 US\$/UK POUND 1.2733 ▲ 1.2751 US\$/EURO 1.0953 ▲ 1.0949 US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR 0.6665 ▼ 0.6685 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3404 ▲ 1.3408 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.8532 ▲ 0.8522	FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$79.05/BBL ▲ 1.75 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 12, 2024

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JANUARY 15, 2024 (PSEi snapshot on S1/4; article on S2/2)

SEVN P75.000 Value P630,070,082 -P1.250 ▼ -1.639%	BDO P139.000 Value P507,740,092 PO.000 — 0.000%	AC P680.500 Value P389,048,810 PO.000 — 0.000%	ICT P251.200 Value P334,912,524 P5.400 ▲ 2.197%	JFC P266.800 Value P304,282,448 P1.800 ▲ 0.679%	ALI P34.000 Value P219,221,305 -P0.050 ▼ -0.147%	GLO P1,790.000 Value P207,517,770 P78.000 ▲ 4.556%	GTAP P626.500 Value P200,323,640 P8.500 ▲ 1.375%	BPI P109.000 Value P189,591,190 P2.000 ▲ 1.869%	SM P905.000 Value P180,830,510 P3.000 ▲ 0.333%
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Nov. cash remittances sink to six-month low

By Keisha B. Ta-asan
Reporter

MONEY SENT HOME by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) reached \$2.719 billion in November — the lowest in six months — amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and a stronger peso against the dollar. Cash remittances grew by 2.8% from \$2.644 billion a year earlier, according to data released by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on Monday. The growth in cash remittances was the slowest annual pace since the 2.6% in September.

The amount of money sent by OFWs to the Philippines was also the lowest since \$2.494 billion in May 2023. Month on month, remittances declined by 9.3% from \$2.998 billion in October. In a statement, the BSP attributed the year-on-year growth in cash remittances to higher receipts from land- and sea-based workers. Cash remittances from land-based OFWs jumped by an annual 2.9% to \$2.14 billion in November, while inflows from sea-based workers increased by 2.6% to \$579.747 million. Union Bank of the Philippines, Inc. Chief Economist

Ruben Carlo O. Asuncion said migrant workers typically send more cash remittances in the fourth quarter. “October, November and December are peak remittance months, and we see that OFWs send more usually for the holiday celebrations and spending for their recipients,” he said. China Banking Corp. Chief Economist Domini S. Velasquez said the month-on-month slowdown in cash remittances was due to reduced inflows from the United States, the country’s main source of remittances. Based on BSP data, cash remittances from the US stood

at \$1.041 billion, 13.3% lower than \$1.2 billion in October. “Remittances from the Middle East also stalled, possibly due to the challenging conditions faced by OFWs amid escalating tensions in the region,” Ms. Velasquez said. The Middle East has been on high alert amid fears of a wider conflict since Hamas militants launched a surprise attack on Israel in October 2023. “The lower dollar-peso exchange rate in the latter part of November might have dissuaded Filipinos from sending money back home,” Ms. Velasquez said.

Remittances, S1/9

Philippine-China tensions over South China Sea may have wider implications for region — Moody’s

THE DISPUTE between the Philippines and China over the South China Sea could have more widespread effects on the Asia-Pacific region, Moody’s Investors Service said. “Greater strains in China’s relationship with the Philippines over competing claims in the South China Sea over the past year could have more widespread implications for the region,” it said in a report dated Jan. 15. Tensions between the Philippines and China have increased under the Marcos administration. The Philippines has cited incursions by Chinese vessels around South China Sea features closest to the Southeast Asian nation. The situation has worsened after the Chinese Coast Guard last month fired water cannons to block Manila’s attempt to deliver food and other supplies to troops stationed at BRP Sierra Madre, a World War II-era warship intentionally grounded to stake the Philippines’ claim on the waterway. A United Nations-backed tribunal in 2016 said China’s claim to nearly the entire South China Sea has no legal basis, but Beijing has largely ignored the ruling and continued its island-building activities. Moody’s noted several geopolitical risks in the region such as a possible escalation of hostilities between North and South Korea, as well as the upcoming elections in Indonesia and India. “We expect relative domestic political stability to provide some space for reform in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand,” it said.

DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION Meanwhile, Moody’s noted stable domestic consumption in the Philippines would likely mitigate the impact of China’s slowdown, weak external demand and tight funding conditions globally. It said Asia-Pacific economies would continue to face heightened liquidity strains, currency depreciation pressures and shifts in geopolitics this year. “Stable domestic consumption, underpinned by robust labor markets and the provision of limited targeted fiscal support, will mitigate such factors to varying degrees, particularly in large emerging markets such as India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam,” it said. The government is targeting 6-7% gross domestic product (GDP) growth this year and 6.5-7.5% next year. The economy expanded by 5.9% in the third quarter. GDP needs to grow by 7.2% in the fourth quarter to reach the lower end of the government’s goal. Household consumption grew by 5% in the third quarter, slower than 8% a year ago and 5.5% in the previous quarter. It was also the weakest rise in consumption in two years. The country’s unemployment rate fell to a fresh record low in November, easing to 3.6% from 4.2% in the previous month and in November 2022, based on the latest data from the local statistics agency. Meanwhile, Moody’s said GDP for 25 rated sovereigns in the Asia-Pacific region would decelerate to 3.6% in 2024 from a likely 4.2% growth in 2023.

South China Sea, S1/9

Recto officially takes over DoF

FORMER CONGRESSMAN and Senator Ralph G. Recto on Monday officially took over the Department of Finance (DoF) from Benjamin E. Diokno, at a time when the government needs to ramp up its fiscal consolidation efforts. “Our task is to actualize the President’s vision articulated in the national development plan. There will be many obstacles for sure,” Mr. Recto said during the turnover ceremony at the DoF on Monday. “But I am highly confident that through increased effort and sincere dedication, and by rethinking the way we do things and innovating on the way we govern, we can make significant progress towards approximating this vision,” he added. Mr. Recto has retained the department’s undersecretaries, while designating Finance Undersecretary Maria Luwalhati C. Dorotan-Tiuseco as his chief of staff. Ms. Dorotan-Tiuseco in a Viber message said she has been tapped as chief of staff, adding that there have been “no other changes” to date. She was the undersecretary in charge of the Information Management Service, Political and Legislative Liaison Group and Climate Finance Policy Group. At a briefing after his oath-taking ceremony on Friday, Mr. Recto said a reshuffle of the department officials is unlikely. “I don’t expect to. You know when I entered the National Economic and Development Authority, I only brought one person with me,” he said.

Recto, S1/5

FUEL PRICE TRACKER
(week-on-week change)

GASOLINE	
Jan. 2	P0.10 ▼
Jan. 9	P0.10 ▲
Jan. 16	P0.30 ▲
DIESEL	
Jan. 2	P0.35 ▼
Jan. 9	P0.10 ▲
Jan. 16	P0.90 ▲
KEROSENE	
Jan. 2	P1.40 ▼
Jan. 9	P0.10 ▲
Jan. 16	P0.90 ▲

• Jan. 16, 12:01 a.m. — Caltex Philippines
 • Jan. 16, 6 a.m. — Petron Corp.; Phoenix Petroleum; Philipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.; PTT Philippines Corp.; Seaoil Philippines, Inc.
 • Jan. 16, 8:01 a.m. — Cleanfuel (Shaw Autogas, Inc.)

‘Precarious’ year ahead for world economy, Davos survey predicts

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY faces a year of subdued growth prospects and uncertainty stemming from geopolitical strife, tight financing conditions and the disruptive impact of artificial intelligence (AI), a survey of top economists released on Monday found. Conducted each year ahead of the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) annual meeting in the Swiss resort of Davos, the survey of 60-plus chief economists drawn globally from the private and public sectors attempts to sketch priorities for policy makers and business leaders.

About 56% of those surveyed expect overall global economic conditions to weaken this year, with a high degree of regional divergence. While the majority saw moderate or stronger growth in China and the United States, there was broad consensus that Europe would muster only weak or very weak growth. The outlook for South Asia and East Asia and Pacific was more positive, with a very high majority expecting at least moderate growth in 2024.

Reflecting commentary from the world’s top central banks suggesting that interest rates have peaked, a full 70% of those surveyed nonetheless expected financial conditions to loosen as inflation ebbs and current tightness in labor markets eases. AI was seen making an unequal mark on the world economy: while 94% expected AI to significantly boost productivity in high-income economies over the next five years, just 53% predicted the same for low-income economies.

Davos, S1/9

ERNST & YOUNG PHILIPPINES IMPROVES IN RE ATTRACTIVENESS

The Philippines went up a notch to 32nd out of 40 markets in the 62nd edition of the biannual Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index (RECAI) by Ernst & Young (EY). The index ranks the attractiveness of a country in renewable energy (RE) investment and deployment opportunities. With a score of 56.1 (out of a possible 100), the Philippines remained the third lowest amongst its peers in the East and Southeast Asia region, only ahead of Vietnam and Thailand.

Philippines' Profile	RECAI 61	RECAI 62
Technology-Specific Scores		
Rank (Out of 40)	33	32
Overall Score	56.1	56.1
Onshore Wind	41.9	42.6
Offshore Wind	20.8	20.5
Solar PV	47.4	47.4
Solar CSP	20.0	19.9
Biomass	40.0	40.2
Geothermal	43.1	44.0
Hydro	41.8	41.7
Marine	20.2	21.2

RECAI 62 Score (Out of 100)	RECAI 62 Rank (Out of 40)	Rank Change(s) from RECAI 61	Score Change(s) from RECAI 61 (Out of 100)
71.4	3	0	-0.7
63.3	13	3	+0.6
59.1	24	2	-1.3
57.3	27	2	+0.7
56.1	32	1	0.0
56.0	33	3	-1.6
54.2	38	0	-1.3

Market	RECAI 62 Rank (Out of 40)	RECAI 62 Score (Out of 100)	Rank Change(s) from RECAI 61	Score Change(s) from RECAI 61 (Out of 100)
US	1	73.9	0	+1.0
Germany	2	71.4	0	-0.9
China Mainland	3	71.4	0	+0.7
France	4	70.6	1	+1.0
Australia	5	70.2	2	+1.5

Market	RECAI 62 Rank (Out of 40)	RECAI 62 Score (Out of 100)	Rank Change(s) from RECAI 61	Score Change(s) from RECAI 61 (Out of 100)
Saudi Arabia	40	53.7	1	+0.8
Romania	39	53.9	5	—
Thailand	38	54.2	0	+1.3
South Africa	37	54.3	0	-0.1
Kazakhstan	36	55.4	4	-0.8

Source: EY’s RECAI 62nd Edition: Are the global winds of change sending offshore in a new direction? BusinessWorld Research: Bernadette Therese M. Gadon BusinessWorld Graphics: Bong R. Fortin