

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
<b>PSEi</b> OPEN: 6,859.28 HIGH: 6,878.23 LOW: 6,838.05 CLOSE: 6,876.52 VOL.: 0.379 B VAL(P): 4.727 B 15.85 PTS. 0.23% 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 28, 2024	<b>FEBRUARY 28, 2024</b> JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 39,208.03 ▼ -31.49 -0.08 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 16,536.85 ▼ -253.95 -1.51 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) * 18,854.41 ▼ -93.64 -0.49 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,382.05 ▼ -11.65 -0.84 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,652.29 ▼ 27.24 1.04 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,138.93 ▼ -18.39 -0.58 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 7,660.40 ▼ -2.60 -0.03 MALAYSIA (KLCSE COMPOSITE) 1,545.59 ▼ -13.21 -0.85 * CLOSING PRICE AS OF FEB. 27, 2024	<b>FEBRUARY 27, 2024</b> Dow JONES 38,972.410 ▼ -96.820 NASDAQ 16,035.300 ▲ 59.049 S&P 500 5,078.180 ▲ 8.650 FTSE 100 7,683.020 ▼ -1.280 Euro Stoxx50 4,299.920 ▲ 8.200	<b>FX</b> OPEN P56.140 HIGH P56.120 LOW P56.280 CLOSE P56.250 W.AVE. P56.187 VOL. \$1,117.50 M 17.00 CTVS 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 28, 2024 SOURCE: BAP	<b>FEBRUARY 28, 2024</b> LATEST BID (0900GMT) PREVIOUS JAPAN (YEN) 150.700 ▼ 150.200 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.827 ▼ 7.824 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 31.701 ▼ 31.585 THAILAND (BAHT) 36.030 ▼ 35.790 S. KOREA (WON) 1,336.580 ▼ 1,330.110 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.346 ▼ 1.343 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 15,680 ▼ 15,635 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.767 ▼ 4.758	<b>FEBRUARY 28, 2024</b> CLOSE PREVIOUS US\$/UK POUND 1.2626 ▼ 1.2682 US\$/EURO 1.0799 ▼ 1.0854 US\$/AUST DOLLAR 0.6494 ▼ 0.6556 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3578 ▲ 1.3492 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.8807 ▲ 0.8790	<b>DUBAI CRUDE OIL</b> FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY <b>\$82.05/BBL</b> \$1.66 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 27, 2024

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • FEBRUARY 28, 2024 (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												
BDO	P148,000	▲	AC	P688,000	▼	ICT	P285,000	▼	ALI	P35,100	—	TEL	P1,297,000	▲	JFC	P272,000	▲												
Value	P480,418,201		Value	P401,096,345		Value	P337,568,296		Value	P286,039,415		Value	P276,172,545		Value	P272,136,916		Value	P238,422,444		Value	P226,601,093		Value	P224,885,365		Value	P212,408,230	
P4.200	▲ 2.921%		-P4,000	▼ -0.578%	-P3,000	▼ -1.042%	P0.000	— 0.000%	P10,000	▲ 0.777%	P0.200	▲ 0.074%	-P0.700	▼ -0.574%	P1,000	▲ 1.614%	P0.200	▲ 0.619%	-P8,000	▼ -0.869%									

# PSEi poised for rebound this year

By Revin Mikhael D. Ochave  
Reporter



THE LOCAL stock market is positioned for a rebound this year amid expectations of interest rate cuts and easing inflation, industry stakeholders said.

“Beyond the risks, everything seems to be in place for the PSE index (PSEi) to reach the targets of banks and brokerages ranging from the low

of 7,500 to 8,300,” Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon S. Monzon said in his keynote speech during *BusinessWorld's* Stock Market Outlook 2024 forum in Makati City on Tuesday.

The PSEi ended 2023 at 6,450.04, down by 1.8% from its 6,566.39 close in 2022.

“The stock market has been languishing for quite some time. It is only now that we have started to see the market somewhat recovering,” he added.

Mr. Monzon said the Philippine economy's performance will help boost the stock market this year. The government is targeting 6.5% to 7.5% gross domestic product (GDP) growth this year.

“The country's economic indicators remain strong. GDP grew by 5.6% in 2023. Nevertheless, it still outpaced major economies in Asia such as China, Vietnam, and Malaysia,” Mr. Monzon said.

Michael Gerard D. Enriquez, Sun Life Investment Management and Trust Corp. president, said his base case projection for the PSEi is at 7,200 this year,

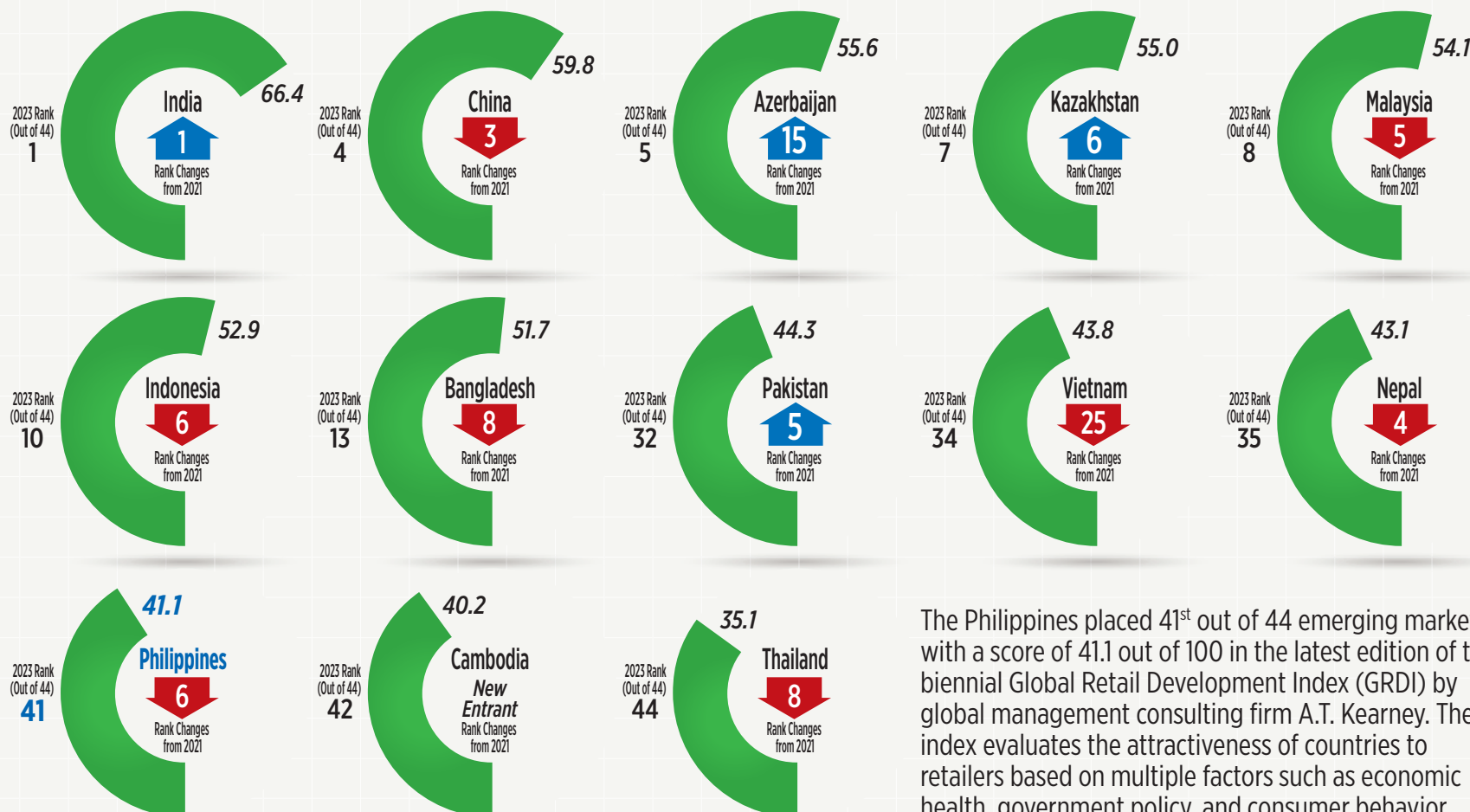
while the bull case projection is closer to the 8,000 level.

“The investors are looking beyond inflation. They're starting to pick up the market slowly. The local investors are really adding up to their position in the local equity market,” Mr. Enriquez said during the panel discussion at the same event.

PSEi, S1/9

## PHILIPPINES LAGS IN 2023 GLOBAL RETAIL DEVELOPMENT INDEX

2023 GRDI Scores of Select Asian Emerging Markets (out of 100)



**Philippines**  
(Variable Scores, 2023)

Final Score	41.1
Time Pressure	78.1
Country Risk	52.2
Market Attractiveness	36.0
Market Saturation	19.5

**Philippines' Historical Performance**

Year	Rank	Final Score
2017	18/30	46.8
2019	20/30	44.5
2021	35/35	38.2
2023	41/44	41.1

**Top 5**

2023 Rank (Out of 44)	Economy	2023 Final Score (Out of 100)
1	India	66.4
2	Dominican Republic	65.0
3	Saudi Arabia	62.7
4	China	59.8
5	Azerbaijan	55.6

**Bottom 5**

2023 Rank (Out of 44)	Economy	2023 Final Score (Out of 100)
44	Thailand	35.1
43	Angola	35.8
42	Cambodia	40.2
41	Philippines	41.1
40	Ecuador	41.8

The Philippines placed 41<sup>st</sup> out of 44 emerging markets with a score of 41.1 out of 100 in the latest edition of the biennial Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) by global management consulting firm A.T. Kearney. The index evaluates the attractiveness of countries to retailers based on multiple factors such as economic health, government policy, and consumer behavior.

Notes:  
- The index shortlisted 44 markets and ranked them based on the following criteria: country risk, population size, retail area, retail sales, and wealth.  
- A lower GRDI score doesn't necessarily imply a less enticing retail landscape; rather, it suggests that other markets under consideration might offer retailers a better shot at success based on available data.

## Rate cuts to spur loan demand this year — UBS

THE PHILIPPINE banking industry may likely see double-digit credit growth this year on strong demand for loans amid a robust economy, better asset quality, and expectations of benchmark interest rate cuts, UBS Global Research and Evidence Lab said.

Philippine credit growth may hit above 10% this year, Grace Lim, an economist from UBS, told reporters in a webinar on Wednesday.

“Increasing GDP (gross domestic product) growth as well as solid nominal GDP growth is the reason. We don't see any evidence of asset quality risk. And as rates come down a little bit, that could spur demand for loan growth,” she said.

Based on the latest Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) data, outstanding loans issued by universal and commercial banks rose by 7% to P11.701 trillion as of December 2023 from P10.931 trillion a year ago.

Credit growth slowed for most of 2023, reflecting the impact of the BSP's aggressive rate hikes.

Ms. Lim said UBS is also positive on asset quality in the Philippine banking sector.

Banks' nonperforming loan (NPL) ratio slid to 3.23% as of

end-December from 3.41% at end-November. It was the lowest since the 3.16% recorded at end-December 2022.

Soured loans stood at P446.99 billion as of December, rising by 12.09% from a year earlier but down by 1.6% from end-November.

Ms. Lim also said that planned public-private partnership (PPP) projects could also spur demand for loans, likely towards the second half.

“Big-ticket PPPs, if they do come through, could be another source of growth,” she said.

The research firm earlier raised its 2024 Philippine GDP growth forecast to 5.7% from 5.3% previously. It also hiked its 2025 projection to 6% from 5.8%.

However, both forecasts are below the government's growth targets of 6.5-7.5% for this year and 6.5-8% for 2025.

“We are quite cautiously optimistic,” Ms. Lim said. “We expect robust growth of 5.7% in 2024 with some upside risk to consumption if inflation falls quickly enough.”

She said private consumption is expected to remain resilient this year as the jobs market remains strong and inflation eases.

UBS, S1/9

## More airport, road projects added to flagship program

THE MARCOS administration has added more airport, road and climate and disaster risk-reduction projects to its infrastructure flagship program.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) on Wednesday identified the 23 new projects that the NEDA Board had added to the list of infrastructure flagship projects (IFPs).

The list now includes the upgrade and expansion of the Bohol-Panglao International Airport, as well as the construction of airports in Baguio and Cagayancillo.

Fifteen road projects were added to the flagship program including the Aritao-Quirino Road, Capas-Botolan Road, Luzon Eastern Seaboard Road Network, Donsol-Pilar-Castilla-Sorsogon City Tourism Highway, Iligan City Coastal Bypass Road, Consolacion-Liloan Bypass Road, Cagayan de Oro-Diversion Road Extension, Cagayan de Oro-Opol-El Salvador-Alubijid-Laguindingan Airport Mountain Diversion Road, the Cagayan de Oro Coastal Road (Puerto-Gusa Section), and the Subic Bay (Redondo-Ilanin) Bridge.

— **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocoson**

**FULL STORY**



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link [tinyurl.com/2y6gaqyz](http://tinyurl.com/2y6gaqyz)

## Legislated wage hike won't benefit 80% of workforce — business groups

INFORMAL WORKERS, which make up around 80% of the total workforce, are unlikely to benefit from the proposed P100 national wage hike, business groups said.

In a letter dated Feb. 26 to House Committee on Labor and Employment Chairperson Juan Fidel Felipe F. Nograles, four business groups led by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) said that workers in the public and informal sectors will not benefit from the wage adjustment.

“If the proposed legislated wage hike is enacted into law, more than eight out of 10 workers in the government and the informal sector will not receive any adjustment,” the groups said.

“In fact, only the roughly four million workers receiving minimum wages will receive the P100/day wage increase, while the other employees in the formal sector will likely receive token wage distortion adjustments.”

Informal sector workers are typically self-employed, working in microenterprises or involved in home-based work, small-scale agriculture, *sari-sari* stores and domestic labor.

“Definitely, the informal sector workers will, instead of getting wage adjustments, possibly experience job losses, reduced work hours, and a widening income gap between the two sectors,” the business groups said.

Last year, 16 Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards (RTWPPBs) granted another round of daily wage hikes.

“The year just ended. The mandate is for the RTWPPBs to review minimum wages every year. In the absence of a public consultation with key stakeholders, as in Senate Bill

(SB) No. 2534, we believe that the proposed measure would lead to devastating effects, particularly to the informal sector workers,” the business groups said.

The Senate has already approved on third and final reading SB No. 2534 which proposes a P100 increase in the daily minimum wage of workers in the private sector.

The business groups said a legislated wage hike will result in higher inflation, which will be felt by the majority of Filipinos.

“Micro and small businesses, and informal sector enterprises, which operate on thin profit margins, will struggle to afford the higher wages. As a result, they may be forced to reduce their workforce, lay off employees, shut down operations, or pass on these increased expenses to consumers in the form of higher prices for goods and services,” they said.

Business groups noted that some businesses may opt for informal work arrangements to avoid paying proper wages, which can lead to a lack of job security, inadequate benefits, and the exploitation of workers.

“We strongly suggest that there must be an all-of-government and an all-of-society approach to reduce the cost of putting food on the table and implement complementary measures to support informal businesses,” the business groups said.

Aside from the PCCI, the letter was also signed by the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), the Alliance of Workers in the Informal Economy/Sector, and the Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc. (Philexport).

Wage hike, S1/9