

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
PSEi OPEN: 6,432.10 HIGH: 6,497.82 LOW: 6,424.81 CLOSE: 6,450.04 VOL.: 0.595 B VAL(P): 5.894 B 45.07 PTS. 0.7% 30 DAYS TO APRIL 17, 2024	APRIL 17, 2024 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 37,961.80 ▲ -509.40 -1.32 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 16,251.84 ▲ 2.87 0.02 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 20,213.33 ▲ 311.37 1.56 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,366.88 ▼ -29.50 -2.11 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,584.18 ▼ -25.45 -0.98 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,164.42 ▲ 19.66 0.63 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 7,605.60 ▼ -6.90 -0.09 MALAYSIA (KLCSE COMPOSITE) 1,540.42 ▲ 5.42 0.35	APRIL 16, 2024 DOW JONES 37,798.970 ▲ 63.860 NASDAQ 15,865.251 ▼ -19.768 S&P 500 5,051.410 ▼ -10.410 FTSE 100 7,820.360 ▼ -145.170 EURO STOXX50 4,326.950 ▼ -63.080	FX OPEN P57.100 HIGH P57.100 LOW P57.333 CLOSE P57.180 W.AVE. P57.203 VOL. \$1,922.80 M SOURCE : BAP 18.00 CTVS 30 DAYS TO APRIL 17, 2024	APRIL 17, 2024 LATEST BID (0900GMT) PREVIOUS JAPAN (YEN) 154.540 ▼ 154.500 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.831 ▼ 7.830 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 32.434 ▼ 32.516 THAILAND (BAHT) 36.760 ▼ 36.630 S. KOREA (WON) 1,382.850 ▼ 1,392.730 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.362 ▼ 1.364 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 16.215 ▼ 16.170 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.790 ▼ 4.790	APRIL 17, 2024 US\$/UK POUND 1.2472 ▲ 1.2442 US\$/EURO 1.0644 ▲ 1.0620 US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR 0.6426 ▲ 0.6417 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3804 ▲ 1.3793 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.9103 ▼ 0.9131	FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTHLY DELIVERY \$90.26/BBL 30 DAYS TO APRIL 16, 2024

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • APRIL 17, 2024 (PSEi snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

SM	P938.000	ALI	P26.950	ICT	P315.000	AC	P593.500	BDO	P150.000	SMPH	P28.250	BPI	P118.000	JFC	P223.600	GTCAP	P590.000	MBT	P66.000
Value	P599,054,780	Value	P483,067,130	Value	P390,222,866	Value	P365,905,200	Value	P331,367,884	Value	P314,570,110	Value	P279,506,889	Value	P270,869,902	Value	P262,007,395	Value	P251,577,706
P6.000	▲ 0.644%	-P0.250	▼ -0.919%	P0.800	▲ 0.255%	P8.500	▲ 1.453%	P3.600	▲ 2.459%	-P1.050	▼ -3.584%	P2.500	▲ 2.165%	P2.600	▲ 1.176%	-P35.000	▼ -5.600%	P1.700	▲ 2.644%

Peso won't derail rate cuts in Q4

Slowing PHL remittances may weaken consumption

By Beatriz Marie D. Cruz
Reporter

PHILIPPINE domestic demand could ease this year as remittance inflows are muted by reduced overseas hiring, Pantheon Macroeconomics said.

"Domestic demand in the Philippines is continuing to struggle, reflecting in large part the oppressive headwinds facing consumers," Pantheon Macroeconomics Chief Emerging Asia Economist Miguel Chanco and Senior Asia Economist Moorthy Krshnan said in a report.

It noted that remittances, which have slowed this year, might fail to boost domestic demand in the coming months.

"Remittances have saved the day in the past, such as in 2022, when they helped to fuel the post-pandemic release of pent-up demand," according to the report.

Filipino consumers, who have been battling rising prices of com-

modities such as rice, meat and oil, rely heavily on remittances sent home by relatives abroad.

"We see no prospect of this savior making a comeback in 2024, if the first two months of the year are anything to go by," Pantheon said.

Cash remittances in February rose by 3% to \$2.65 billion from a year earlier. It fell by 6.7% month on month.

"The year-over-year increase — in local-currency terms — would fall back into the red in the middle of this year if this rate of growth persists," it said.

Pantheon also noted that overseas placements, which slowed to 28% year on year in January and have dropped since early 2021, could also affect remittance flows.

Borrowing remains a driver of household spending, as consumer credit remained above average since late 2022, Pantheon said. It jumped to 25.2% in February, as credit card and motor vehicle loans rose by 30.1% and 19.1%, respectively.

Remittances, S1/5

Visayas under red alert; yellow raised over Luzon

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera
Reporter

THE VISAYAS GRID was again placed on red and yellow alerts on Wednesday, while the Luzon grid was put under yellow alert, with more than 30 power plants still either on forced outage or operating at limited capacity, according to the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP).

In a statement, the NGCP said that as of 6:47 p.m. on Wednesday, a red alert had been raised over the Visayas grid from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. due to the reduced output of the Mindanao-Visayas interconnection project after two power plants with a total capacity of 273 megawatts (MW) tripped.

Earlier in the day, the NGCP said the Luzon grid was under the yellow alert status from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. on April 17. During this period, available capacity was 13,607 MW, while peak demand was 12,874 MW.

"Eighteen power plants are on forced outage, while three others are running on derated capacities, for a total of 1,969.3 MW unavailable to the grid," the grid operator said.

In the Visayas, the yellow alert was raised from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. as 13 power plants went on forced outage, while five others were running at limited capacity, bringing the total unavailable capacity to 698 MW.

Peak demand was at 2,523 MW, nearly outpacing the available capacity at 2,713 MW.

Yellow alerts are issued when the supply available to the grid falls below a safety threshold. If the supply-demand balance deteriorates further, a red alert is declared.

On Tuesday, both red and yellow alerts were declared as 42 power plant units went on forced outage or were derated, losing a total capacity of over 3,000 MW.

Manual load dropping or rotational power interruptions were implemented in some parts of Luzon.

Red and yellow alerts were first lifted in the Visayas at 9:01 p.m. and 11:01 p.m., respectively on Tuesday.

NGCP lifted the red and yellow alerts over Luzon at 11:01 p.m. on Tuesday and 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday.

The Southwest Luzon Power Generation Corp. unit 2 with 150 MW and Sta. Rita 40 of First Gen Corp. with 264 MW had gone back online as of 3:03 a.m. on April 17.

In a separate statement, the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association, Inc. (PIPPA) said majority of the 19 power plants in the Luzon grid that were on outage were hydropower plants with low water levels.

"The PIPPA member-generators have submitted the reports required in instances of unplanned outage and continue to prioritize efforts in further strengthening the resilience of their generation assets," the group said.

Gerry C. Arances, convener of the People for Power Coalition, said the incident should be a wakeup call to transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy.

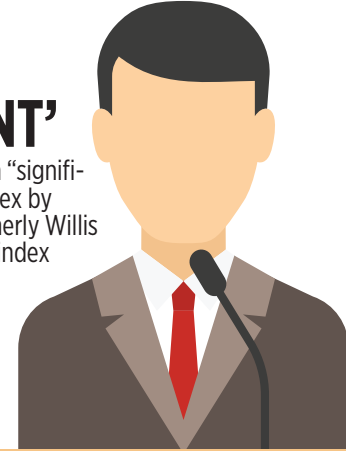
"The government needs to wake up and get on with the program," he said in an e-mailed statement. "Fossil fuel dependence leads to costly and undependable energy."

"The long-term solution is obvious to anyone not blinded by fumes from fossil fuels. Transitioning to renewable energy is the only solution," he added.

Red alert, S1/5

PHILIPPINES' POLITICAL RISK REMAINS 'SIGNIFICANT'

The Philippines has an overall rating of 59 (out of 100) with a "significant" risk temperature level in the quarterly Political Risk Index by global advisory, broking, and solutions company WTW (formerly Willis Towers Watson) in collaboration with Oxford Analytica. The index analyzes patterns in the world's most vulnerable countries, covering key political perils such as expropriation, currency inconvertibility and political violence. The Philippines placed fourth among the most politically at-risk countries in the East and Southeast Asian region, behind Myanmar (78 out of 100), Laos (64), and Cambodia (63).



By Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson
Reporter

THE Philippine central bank would cut its key rate as early as the fourth quarter despite the peso's slide to a 17-month low, according to Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr.

The Monetary Board might still cut policy rates in the fourth quarter, he told a news briefing on Wednesday. "If things are worse than we think, that might be postponed to the first quarter of 2025."

The peso and other regional currencies have weakened in recent days as markets bet against the odds of early rate cuts around the world.

The peso depreciated past the closely watched P57-a-dollar level on Tuesday before closing at P57 flat — the weakest since P57.375 on Nov. 22, 2022 — due to expectations that the US Federal Reserve would delay cutting interest rates.

It continued to weaken on Wednesday, closing at P57.18 against the greenback.

Mr. Remolona said the peso's depreciation has not been big enough to affect inflation expectations and monetary policy.

"I wouldn't say it's performing poorly," he said. "I would say it's adjusting to some events. It initially weakened, along with other emerging market currencies, by the way, because of what's going on in the Middle East."

Markets were rattled after Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles against Israel at the weekend in retaliation for an alleged airstrike by Israel on the Iranian consulate in Syria earlier this month.

But the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) chief sees no threat from the conflict. "In fact, the price of Brent oil and Dubai oil initially went up, but now has settled back down," he said. "So, the sense of the oil market is that hostilities will not escalate. I hope it stays that way."

Brent futures for June fell by 0.44% or 40 cents to \$89.62 a barrel by 6:32 a.m. GMT, while US crude futures for May fell by 0.56% or 48 cents to \$84.88 a barrel, Reuters reported.

Mr. Remolona said the peso's recent drop had been due to signals of rate cut delays by the Fed.

Peso, S1/5

Philippines in talks with OceanX for marine research

By Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza
Reporter

SINGAPORE — US-based exploration startup OceanX on Wednesday said it is in talks with the Philippine government to conduct marine research in its waters to help harness the potential of its blue economy.

Its flagship vessel *OceanXplorer*, which carries four deep sea vehicles and four labs, would probably conduct research and exploration activities in Philippine waters next year, science program director Mattie Rodrigue told *BusinessWorld* during a media tour of the ship on the sidelines of the Asia Philanthropy Summit here.

"We've just started discussions about a collaboration... with the Philippine government to bring *OceanXplorer* and conduct scientific work in the area," she said. "We're hoping that after our mission is completed in Malaysia and our talks progress successfully with the Philippine government, then we'll be able to get the vessel in as early as next year."

OceanX, S1/5

