BUISINES VOIL SINCES VOIL SINC



33rd EJAP-AYALA Business urnalism Awards The 2023 Business lews Source of the Year Award

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
OPSEI OPEN: 6,492.87 HIGH: 6,492.87 LOW: 6,343.10 CLOSE: 6,343.10 CLOSE: 6,343.10 CLOSE: 6,343.10 CLOSE: 6,343.10 CLOSE: 0.807 B ODAYS TO JANUARY 13, 2025 VAL(P): 4.961 B	JANUARY 13, 2025 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225)* 39,190.40 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 18,874.14 ▼ -190.15 -1.00 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 22,488.33 ▼ -523.53 -2.28 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,357.00 ▼ -10.99 -0.80 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 2,489.56 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 3,781.05 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 8,191.90 ▼ -102.20 -1.25 MALAYSIA (KLSE COMPOSITE) 1,585.59 *CLOSING PRICE AS OF JANUARY 10, 2024	DANUARY 10, 2025 CLOSE NET	57.80 FX 57.99 OPEN P58.525 HIGH P58.700 LOW P58.700 CLOSE P58.700 W.AVE. P58.663 99.55 34.00 CTVS VOL. \$1,354.50 M 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 13, 2025 SOURCE : BAP	JANUARY 13, 2025 LATEST BID (0900GMT) JAPAN (YEN) 157.310 157.690 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.786 7.787 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 33.124 ▼ 33.091 THAILAND (BAHT) 34.810 ▼ 34.550 S. KOREA (WON) 1,472.620 1,473.080 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.375 ▼ 1.371 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 16,270 ▼ 16,180 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.508 ▼ 4.493	JANUARY 13, 2025 US\$/UK POUND US\$/EURO US\$/Aust dollar CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.4426 Swiss Franc/US\$ CLOSE PREVIOUS 1.2107 ▼ 1.2204 1.0244 US\$/Aust dollar 0.6139 ▼ 0.6145 1.4422 Swiss Franc/US\$ 0.9178 0.9164	FUTURES PRICE ON HEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$77.95/BBL 78.90 78.90 72.10 \$2.84 30 DAYS TO JANUARY 10, 2025
VOL. XXXVIII • ISSUE 120		TUESDAY • JANUAR	Y 14, 2025 • www.bworld	lonline.com	S1/1-1	2 • 2 SECTIONS, 16 PAGE

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • JANUARY 13, 2025 (PSEi snapshot on S1/4; article on S2/2)

	BDO	P146.700	ALI	P25.250	SM	P834.000	SMPH	P23.800	ICT	P392.200	AC	P583.000	BPI	P118.100	JFC	P255.000	MBT	P71.100	AREIT	P41.650
Va	alue	P472,727,399	Value	P337,264,880	Value	P307,436,545	Value	P300,504,115	Value	P243,582,636	Value	P225,708,775	Value	P218,704,358	Value	P213,292,628	Value	P166,556,264	Value	P165,895,810
-1	P0.800	▼ -0.542%	-P1.250	▼ -4.717 %	-P36.00	0 ▼ -4.138%	-P0.300	▼ -1.245%	-P6.800	▼ -1.704 %	-P30.00	00 ▼ -4.894 %	-P2.800	▼ -2.316%	-P7.400	▼ -2.820 %	-P2.200	▼ -3.001%	P0.850	2.083 %

Meralco lowers power rates for Jan.

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera Reporter

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS in areas served by Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) will see a reduction in their electricity bills this month, mainly due to

lower generation charges for the period.

The overall rate will go down by P0.2189 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to P11.7428 per kWh in January from P11.9617 per kWh in December, the power distributor said in a statement on Monday

This will translate to a downward adjustment of around P44

Philippines' 2024 Profile

in the total electricity bill of residential customers consuming 200 kWh. Those consuming 300 kWh, 400 kWh, and 500 kWh will see a reduction of P66, P89, and P112, respectively, in this month's bills.

Meralco said it slashed power rates after the generation charge declined by P0.1313 per kWh to P6.8358 per kWh primarily due to lower costs from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) and independent power producers (IPPs).

WESM charges decreased by P0.8840 perkWh due to the improved supply situation in the Luzon grid as both average peak demand and average capacity on outage went down.

Charges from IPPs declined by P0.1593 per kWh because of

the peso appreciation, which affected 97% of the costs that were dollar denominated. The lower cost of fuel and higher dispatch of the First Gas-Sta. Rita plant also contributed to the decrease.

The peso closed at P57.845 on Dec. 27, appreciating by P0.775 from its P58.62 finish on Nov. 29.

"These reductions tempered the P0.5638 per kWh increase in charges from power supply agreements (PSAs) due to lower plant dispatch," the company said.

WESM, IPPs, and PSAs accounted for 34%, 30%, and 36%, respectively, of Meralco's total energy requirement for the period.

Meralco, S1/8

FUEL PRICE TRACKER (week-on-week change) GASOLINE

_		
		OLINE
	Dec. 31	▼ P0.30
	Jan. 7	▲ P1.00
	Jan. 14	▲ P0.80
	DI	ESEL
T	Dec. 31	▼ P0.30
1	Jan. 7	▲ P1.40
/ 🗾	Jan. 14	▲ P0.90
	KER	OSENE
	Dec. 31	▼ P0.90
\ 7	Jan. 7	▲ P1.00
	Jan. 14	▲ P0.80

- Jan. 14, 12:01 a.m. Caltex Philippines
- Jan. 14, 6 a.m. Petron Corp.; Phoenix Petroleum; Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.; PTT Philippines Corp.; Seaoil Philippines. Inc.
- Jan. 14, 8:01 a.m. Cleanfuel (Shaw Autogas, Inc.)

Philippine bond bourse to start forward contracts in reform push

PHILIPPINE REGULATORS have given the green light for market structure services firm PDS Group to offer trading of government bond forward contracts as the nation works to deepen its capital market.

A market framework and infrastructure for the instruments was approved by the country's Securities and Exchange Commission on Jan. 2, said Antonino A. Nakpil, president of Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp. (PDEx).

PDEx, the trading-services arm of PDS, operates Manila's bond exchange and will run the new mechanism.

The bond forward contracts — which set a fixed price for a debt security on a future date and allow market participants to hedge interest rate risks — will be traded, cleared and settled through the PDEx fixed-income market. The forward buyer and seller may choose to settle obligations by offsetting their purchase and sales contracts.

"We made it non-deliverable so you can just keep rolling," Mr. Nakpil said in an interview at a central bank event on Friday.

He said the mechanism will use a bilateral netting system — a legally enforceable arrangement between a bank and counterparty — rather than central clearing the

way the US and some other markets do.

This will be the first Philippine peso interest rate hedge that mimics bond futures contracts, which trade on exchanges and are settled daily, Mr. Nakpil said. PDS is looking to launch it next month, he added, and trading will be in lots of P50 million (\$853,000).

The Philippines is looking to bolster its capital market, preparing for increased demand in an economy posting one of Asia's fastest growth rates. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) last year expanded the list of derivatives products that banks may transact in to include forward contracts and any financial derivatives traded in an organized market.

The launch of the bond forward contracts will come just months after the Bankers Association of the Philippines, backed by the BSP, introduced a peso interest rate swap facility. Bond forwards will complement those to help firms manage rate risks, Mr. Nakpil said.

"The pieces of the puzzle are in place" for the capital market to develop, he said.

— *Bloomberg*

DAVAO 8th, MANILA 14th WORST IN TOMTOM TRAFFIC INDEX

Davao City ranked the eighth-most congested city in the world out of 500 cities and was the most congested city in the Philippines, based on the latest edition of the TomTom Traffic Index. The index assesses cities and metropolitan areas across 62 countries by their congestion and travel times, and how many hours commuters have lost stuck in traffic. Commuters in Davao take nearly 33 minutes to travel 10 kilometers, on average. The city had the worst performance among Southeast Asian countries in the index. Meanwhile, Manila ranked 14th globally, with slightly quicker travel times of 32 minutes.

		[Davao City	Manila	Caloocan		
World Rank	(Out of 500)		8	14	26		
Congestion	Rank (Out of 500)		3	27	39		
Congestion	Level		0.49	0.42	0.41		
Worst Day		Feb. 5 (40 min 9 s)		Nov. 15 (39 min 37 s)	Aug. 30 (37 min)		
Best Time t	o Avoid	Friday 5 PM (46 min 57 s)		Wednesday 6 PM (45 min 20 s)	Friday 5 PM (42 min 16 s)		
Time Lost in Rush Hour (Per Year)		5 Days 16 Hours		5 Days 7 Hours	4 Days 15 Hours		
World Rank (Out of 500 Cities)	City/ Country	Change(s) from 2023					
8	Davao City, Philippines	- 30 s	32 min 59 s				
12	Bandung, Indonesia	+30s	32 min 37 s				
14	Manila, Philippines	- 30 s	32 min 10 s				
15	Medan, Indonesia	+10 s	32 min 3 s				

14	Manila, Philippines	- 30 s	<i>32 min 10 s</i>					
15	Medan, Indonesia	+10 s	32 min 3 s					
26	Caloocan, Philippines	-20 s	30 min 44 s					
29	Ha Noi, Vietnam	+ 30 s	30 min 28 s					
32	Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam	+ 40 s	30 min 14 s					
53	Palembang, Indonesia	+ 30 s	27 min 55 s					
70	Surabaya, Indonesia	+10 s	26 min 59 s					
73	George Town, Malaysia	+10 s	26 min 36 s					
90	Jakarta, Indonesia	+10 s	25 min 31 s					
102	Hat Yai, Thailand	+ 20 s	24 min 12 s	(2				
116	Chiang Mai, Thailand	+ 30 s	23 min 31 s		N.			
139	Kota Bharu, Malaysia	- 20 s	22 min 30 s					
145	Khon Kaen, Thailand	No Change	22 min 19 s					
161	Bangkok, Thailand	+ 20 s	21 min 51 s					
164	lpoh, Malaysia	+10 s	21 min 48 s			4 Averag	je	
184	Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand	No Change	20 min 57 s			el Time 10 Kilom	eters	
206	Singapore, Singapore	+10 s	20 min 16 s		(Select	Southeast As	sian Cities)	
215	Johor Bahru, Malaysia	No Change	19 min 58 s					
285	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	- 10 s	17 min 26 s		J. T. T.			
385	Seberang Perai, Malaysia	No Change	14 min 30 s					
399	Da Nang, Vietnam	+ 50 s	14 min 7 s		The state of the s			
421	Klang, Malaysia	-10 s	13 min 9 s					
437	Kajang, Malaysia	+10 s	12 min 33 s					

		UMIN	SMINS	IUMINS	ismins zumins	Z5MINS 50	mins 55m
Most Traffi	ic-Congested Citie	S		Least Traff	fic-Congested Cit	ies	
World Rank (Out of 500 Cities)			Change from 2023	World Rank (Out of 500 Cities)	City/Country	Average Time Per 10 km	Change from 2023
1	Barranquilla, Colombia	36 min 6 s	- 20 s	500	Thousand Oaks, CA, USA	8 min 36 s	no change
2	Kolkata, India	34 min 33 s	+ 10 s	499	Little Rock, AR, USA	9 min 20 s	no change
3	Bengaluru, India	34 min 10 s	+50s	498	Mesa, AZ, USA	9 min 39 s	no change
4	Pune, India	33 min 22 s	-1min	497	Amersfoort, Netherlands	9 min 48 s	+10 s
5	London, United Kingdom	33 min 17 s	+ 40 s	496	Newark, DE, USA	9 min 49 s	+10 s
6	Kyoto, Japan	33 min 16 s	+ 20 s	495	Richmond, VA, USA	9 min 54 s	no change
7	Lima, Peru	33 min 12 s	+1 min 30 s	494	Oklahoma City, OK, USA	10 min	no change
8	Davao City, Philippines	32 min 59 s	- 30 s	493	Ventura, CA, USA	10 min 4 s	+10 s
9	Trujillo, Peru	32 min 56 s	+ 30 s	492	High Point, NC, USA	10 min 5 s	no change
10	Dublin, Ireland	32 min 45 s	+ 40 s	491	Sabah AL Salem, Kuwait	10 min 8 s	+10 s
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Filipinos battle addiction amid online gambling boom

By Aubrey Rose A. Inosante Reporter

MARK (name has been changed), a 38-year-old finance executive, is counting losses in personal relationships and still paying off debts worth P5 million after going on an online casino spree in 2020.

What started as a casual pastime during the coronavi-

time during the coronavirus pandemic quickly spiraled into a high-stakes habit, in which he wagered as much as half-amillion pesos on a single card game.

"I started playing at online casinos when the pandemic hit in 2020," he told *BusinessWorld*. "Back then, local operators weren't available yet, so I had to use online casinos from offshore operators in countries such as Cyprus, Malta and Curacao."

With a convenient work-fromhome setup, he could play all day.

His gambling problem started five years earlier, in 2015, when he dabbled with physical casinos, burning P5,000 every Friday after a taxing week at work.

"My online casino bets started to get higher and higher as I got more addicted," he said. "At the peak of my addiction, I would spend as much as P200,000 a

card games, and P5,000 per spin on a slot machine. Despite the exit of Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators

tinues to grow.

(POGO) and a ban on online cockfighting, state revenue from online gambling con-

He would wager as much as

P500,000 when he was winning in

The sector has been posting "triple-digit growth almost every month," the state-controlled Philippine Amuse-

ment and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) said in an e-mailed reply to questions.

In September alone, PAGCOR breached its P100-billion gross gaming revenue target for the e-gamer and e-bingo sector for 2024, it said.

"This remarkable achievement gives us confidence that we can easily meet our P150-billion gross gaming revenue target for electronic and online games by 2025," the government-owned company said.

Online gambling, S1/8

Trump policies may force central banks to keep rates elevated

By Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson Reporter

INTEREST RATES may need to be kept higher for longer as US President-elect Donald J. Trump's policies could delay the US Federal Reserve's rate cuts and forcing other central banks to do the same, analysts said.

"The inflation problem in the US is likely to last a little longer and be persistent, therefore really the Fed cannot lower interest rates as quickly as Mr. Trump would like it to," University of the Philippines (UP) School of Economics Professor Maria Socorro Gochoco-Bautista said at a forum on Monday.

"(This) means that all the rest of us also have to more or less toe the line and keep interest rates high," she added.

Economies around the world are bracing for potential inflationary pressures arising from Mr. Trump's proposals of import tariffs, tax cuts and tighter immigration measures. He is set to assume the presidency on Jan. 20.

"The dominance of the United States and the US dollar may be threatened by increased uncertainty, perceived erosion of the rule of law and credibility of institutions, an anticipated larger budget deficit and expected higher inflation that will necessitate higher interest rates," Asian Financial Regulatory Committee Chair Martin Young said at the

The US central bank began its rate-cutting cycle in September, slashing rates by a cumulative 100 basis points (bps) last year.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), which cut ahead of the Fed in August, delivered a total of 75 bps worth of rate cuts last year.

The Monetary Board cut rates for three straight meetings, bringing the benchmark to 5.75%. BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. has said the current policy rate is still in "restrictive territory."

"As we can see, the dollar is appreciating. Studies have shown that whenever the US dollar appreciates, there are negative effects on the rest of the world," Ms. Gochoco-Bautista said.

Trump, S1/8