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STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL																																																																																																			
<div><p>PSEI OPEN: 6,126.77 HIGH: 6,126.77 LOW: 6,050.29 CLOSE: 6,066.63 53.25 PTS. 0.87% VOL.: 1.197 B 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 20, 2025 VAL(P): 5.724 B</p></div>	<div><p>FEBRUARY 20, 2025</p><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>CLOSE</th><th>NET</th><th>%</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>JAPAN (NIKKEI 225)</td><td>38,678.04</td><td>▼ -486.57</td><td>-1.24</td></tr><tr><td>HONG KONG (HANG SENG)</td><td>22,576.98</td><td>▼ -367.26</td><td>-1.60</td></tr><tr><td>TAIWAN (TAIEX)</td><td>23,487.46</td><td>▼ -116.62</td><td>-0.49</td></tr><tr><td>THAILAND (SET INDEX)</td><td>1,247.63</td><td>▼ -14.64</td><td>-1.16</td></tr><tr><td>S. KOREA (KOSPI)</td><td>2,654.06</td><td>▼ -17.46</td><td>-0.65</td></tr><tr><td>SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES)</td><td>3,929.16</td><td>▼ -4.88</td><td>-0.12</td></tr><tr><td>SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES)</td><td>8,322.80</td><td>▼ -96.40</td><td>-1.15</td></tr><tr><td>MALAYSIA (KLCSE COMPOSITE)</td><td>1,577.67</td><td>▼ -3.21</td><td>-0.20</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		CLOSE	NET	%	JAPAN (NIKKEI 225)	38,678.04	▼ -486.57	-1.24	HONG KONG (HANG SENG)	22,576.98	▼ -367.26	-1.60	TAIWAN (TAIEX)	23,487.46	▼ -116.62	-0.49	THAILAND (SET INDEX)	1,247.63	▼ -14.64	-1.16	S. KOREA (KOSPI)	2,654.06	▼ -17.46	-0.65	SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES)	3,929.16	▼ -4.88	-0.12	SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES)	8,322.80	▼ -96.40	-1.15	MALAYSIA (KLCSE COMPOSITE)	1,577.67	▼ -3.21	-0.20	<div><p>FEBRUARY 19, 2025</p><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>CLOSE</th><th>NET</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>DOW JONES</td><td>44,627.590</td><td>▲ 71.250</td></tr><tr><td>NASDAQ</td><td>20,056.253</td><td>▲ 14.992</td></tr><tr><td>S&P 500</td><td>6,144.150</td><td>▲ 14.570</td></tr><tr><td>FTSE 100</td><td>8,712.530</td><td>▼ -54.200</td></tr><tr><td>EURO STOXX50</td><td>4,708.770</td><td>▼ -32.020</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		CLOSE	NET	DOW JONES	44,627.590	▲ 71.250	NASDAQ	20,056.253	▲ 14.992	S&P 500	6,144.150	▲ 14.570	FTSE 100	8,712.530	▼ -54.200	EURO STOXX50	4,708.770	▼ -32.020	<div><p>FX OPEN P58.030 HIGH P57.915 LOW P58.050 CLOSE P57.940 W.AVE. P57.992 VOL. \$1,412.30 M 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 20, 2025 SOURCE : BAP</p></div>	<div><p>FEBRUARY 20, 2025 LATEST BID (0900GMT)</p><table><thead><tr><th></th><th></th><th>PREVIOUS</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>JAPAN (YEN)</td><td>150.310</td><td>▲ 151.690</td></tr><tr><td>HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR)</td><td>7.778</td><td>▲ 7.776</td></tr><tr><td>TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR)</td><td>32.759</td><td>▲ 32.766</td></tr><tr><td>THAILAND (BAHT)</td><td>33.630</td><td>▲ 33.660</td></tr><tr><td>S. KOREA (WON)</td><td>1,439.520</td><td>▲ 1,439.790</td></tr><tr><td>SINGAPORE (DOLLAR)</td><td>1.339</td><td>▲ 1.342</td></tr><tr><td>INDONESIA (RUPIAH)</td><td>16,325</td><td>▲ 16,330</td></tr><tr><td>MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)</td><td>4.425</td><td>▲ 4.440</td></tr></tbody></table></div>			PREVIOUS	JAPAN (YEN)	150.310	▲ 151.690	HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR)	7.778	▲ 7.776	TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR)	32.759	▲ 32.766	THAILAND (BAHT)	33.630	▲ 33.660	S. KOREA (WON)	1,439.520	▲ 1,439.790	SINGAPORE (DOLLAR)	1.339	▲ 1.342	INDONESIA (RUPIAH)	16,325	▲ 16,330	MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)	4.425	▲ 4.440	<div><p>FEBRUARY 20, 2025</p><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>CLOSE</th><th>PREVIOUS</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>US\$/UK POUND</td><td>1.2609</td><td>▼ 1.2615</td></tr><tr><td>US\$/EURO</td><td>1.0432</td><td>▼ 1.0441</td></tr><tr><td>US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR</td><td>0.6375</td><td>▲ 0.6361</td></tr><tr><td>CANADA DOLLAR/US\$</td><td>1.4212</td><td>▲ 1.4190</td></tr><tr><td>SWISS FRANC/US\$</td><td>0.9022</td><td>▼ 0.9043</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		CLOSE	PREVIOUS	US\$/UK POUND	1.2609	▼ 1.2615	US\$/EURO	1.0432	▼ 1.0441	US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR	0.6375	▲ 0.6361	CANADA DOLLAR/US\$	1.4212	▲ 1.4190	SWISS FRANC/US\$	0.9022	▼ 0.9043	<div><p>DUBAI CRUDE OIL FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$79.38/BBL ▲ \$1.50 30 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 19, 2025</p></div>
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S1/1-12 • 3 SECTIONS, 22 PAGES

ALI	P22.800	SEVN	P57.750	ICT	P346.000	BDO	P142.000	MBT	P72.000	BPI	P129.800	SM	P780.000	PLUS	P36.950	SMPH	P23.050	PX	P4.990
Value	P720,332,515	Value	P564,912,458	Value	P442,199,368	Value	P401,700,917	Value	P353,215,106	Value	P304,122,995	Value	P293,737,480	Value	P177,256,615	Value	P168,012,015	Value	P132,495,238
-P2.000	▼ -8.065%	P0.950	▲ 1.673%	-P1.000	▼ -0.288%	P0.100	▲ 0.070%	P0.450	▲ 0.629%	P2.200	▲ 1.724%	-P15.000	▼ -1.887%	P1.650	▲ 4.674%	-P0.100	▼ -0.432%	-P0.080	▼ -1.578%

January BoP gap widest in 11 years

PHILIPPINES SLIPS TO 53RD IN SOFT POWER INDEX 2025

The Philippines fell a notch to 53rd out of 193 nations in the 2025 edition of the annual Global Soft Power Index by brand valuation consultancy firm Brand Finance. The Philippines had an overall score of 39.9 out of 100, a tad higher than a year earlier. The index measures “soft power” — the ability of a nation to influence others through persuasion and attraction. The stronger a nation’s soft power, the greater its ability to attract investments, market its products and services, promote tourism, and invite talent.



Nation	2025 Rank (Out of 193)	2025 Index Score (Out of 100)
China	2	72.8
Japan	4	71.5
South Korea	12	60.2
Singapore	21	55.6
Malaysia	36	46.1
Thailand	39	45.4
Indonesia	45	42.9
Vietnam	52	39.9
Philippines	53	39.9
North Korea	75	36.5
Mongolia	108	32.4
Cambodia	113	31.9
Brunei	118	31.4
Laos	143	29.4
Myanmar	152	27.6
Timor-Leste	180	23.5

Top 5

2025 Rank (Out of 193)	Nation	Rank Change(s) from 2024	2025 Index Score (Out of 100)
1	United States	0	79.5
2	China	1	72.8
3	United Kingdom	1	72.4
4	Japan	0	71.5
5	Germany	0	70.1

Bottom 5

2025 Rank (Out of 193)	Nation	Rank Change(s) from 2024	2025 Index Score (Out of 100)
193	Kiribati	0	18.8
192	Vanuatu	1	19.3
191	Tuvalu	5	20.0
190	Micronesia	2	20.1
189	Palau	6	20.1

Philippines’ Historical Ranks and Scores

Year	Rank	Score (Out of 100)
2020	42/60	32.5
2021	53/105	33.4
2022	60/120	33.2
2023	61/121	38.7
2024	52/193	39.8
2025	53/193	39.9

Source: Brand Finance’s Global Soft Power Index 2025 (<https://brandirectory.com/softpower>)
BusinessWorld Research: Kenneth H. Hernandez and Abigail Marie P. Yraola
BusinessWorld Graphics: Bong R. Fortin

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

THE PHILIPPINES in January posted its biggest balance of payments (BoP) deficit in over a decade, preliminary data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed.

The BoP deficit stood at \$4.1 billion in January, ballooning from the \$740-million gap in the same month a year ago.

It was also nearly triple the \$1.5-billion deficit posted in December.

This marked the widest BoP deficit in 11 years or since the \$4.48-billion shortfall in January 2014.

The BoP summarizes the country’s transactions with the rest of the world. A deficit means more funds left the country, while a surplus shows that more money came in.

“The BoP deficit in January 2025 reflected the BSP’s net foreign exchange operations and drawdowns by the National Government (NG) on its foreign currency deposits with the BSP to meet its external debt obligations,” the central bank said.

Latest data from the Bureau of the Treasury showed the NG’s outstanding debt hit P16.05 trillion at the end of 2024, up by 9.8% from P14.62 trillion at end-2023.

Earlier BSP data showed the country’s outstanding external debt hit a record high of \$139.64 billion as of end-September. This brought the external debt-to-GDP ratio to 30.6% at the end of the third quarter.

The external debt service burden jumped by 14% to \$15.735 billion in the 11-month period, according to the latest central bank data.

Michael L. Ricafort, chief economist at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said the wider BoP deficit was also due to the recent peso volatility.

BoP, S1/9

Carmakers set 500,000 sales target for 2025

By **Justine Irish D. Tabile**
Reporter

PHILIPPINE AUTOMOTIVE sales are expected to reach 500,000 units in 2025, according to the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines, Inc. (CAMPI).

A joint report by CAMPI and Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) on Thursday showed vehicle sales jumped by 10.4% to 37,604 units in January from a year ago’s 34,060 units.

Month on month, sales fell by 10.6% from 42,044 units sold in December when demand is typically higher.

“With yet another good performance in January 2025 sales, CAMPI is projecting to hit 500,000-unit sales for the year,” said CAMPI President Rommel R. Gutierrez in a statement on Thursday.

“Newly rolled out models and the anticipated introduction of new models are some of the factors that will contribute to achieving this target,” he added.

Carmakers, S1/11

PHL unlikely to see big impact from Trump tariffs

THE PHILIPPINES is unlikely to be impacted by US President Donald J. Trump’s tariff plans, S&P Global Ratings said, but warned this could change if service exports are also targeted.

“Thankfully for the Philippines, the export component of the economy is not large. The Philippines’ economy is mostly domestic and driven by consumption as well. So, largely, any impact will not be big,” S&P Global Ratings Director and Lead Analyst Ivan Tan said in a webinar on Thursday.

Tariffs, S1/11

Saudi’s Aramco returns to PHL market via 25% stake in Unioil

By **Sheldeen Joy Talavera** Reporter

SAUDI ARABIA’S Aramco is returning to the Philippine market as it is set to acquire a 25% equity stake in Unioil Petroleum Philippines, Inc.

In separate statements, the Saudi oil giant and Unioil said they signed a definitive agreement, which is subject to certain conditions including regulatory approvals.

No financial details of the transaction were provided.

“This investment represents another step forward in our global strategy to expand Aramco’s retail network, and we look forward to

introducing Aramco’s high-quality products and services to customers in the Philippines,” Yasser Mufti, Aramco’s executive vice-president of products and customers, said in a statement.

The deal comes 17 years after Aramco, widely considered the world’s largest oil producer, exited the Philippines after it sold its 40% stake in Petron Corp. In 1994, Aramco had invested in Petron when it was privatized by the Philippine government.

Aramco, the national oil company of Saudi Arabia, said in a statement that it aims to “capitalize on anticipated growth of the high-value fuels market in the Philippines.”

Aramco, S1/9