P25 IN METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES

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BusinessWorld

33rd EJAP-AYALA Business Journalism Awards
The 2023 Business News Source of the Year Award

STOCK MARKET

PSEi

OPEN:	6,268.53
HIGH:	6,285.98
LOW:	6,223.75
CLOSE:	6,252.19
VOL.:	0.623 B
VAL(P):	4.879 B

▲ 2.69 PTS. 0.04%

30 DAYS TO APRIL 29, 2025

ASIAN MARKETS

APRIL 29, 2025

	CLOSE		NET	%
Japan (Nikkei 225) *	35,839.99	▲	134.25	0.38
Hong Kong (Hang Seng)	22,008.11	▲	36.15	0.16
Taiwan (Weighted)	20,232.63	▲	198.22	0.99
Thailand (SET Index)	1,166.51	▲	6.98	0.60
S.Korea (Kse Composite)	2,565.42	▲	16.56	0.65
Singapore (Straits Times)	3,815.30	▲	3.50	0.09
Sydney (All Ordinaries)	8,070.60	▲	73.50	0.92
Malaysia (Klse Composite)	1,515.56	▼	-6.03	-0.40

* CLOSING PRICE AS OF APRIL 28, 2025

WORLD MARKETS

APRIL 28, 2025

	CLOSE		NET
Dow Jones	40,227.590	▲	114.090
NASDAQ	17,366.133	▼	-16.806
S&P 500	5,528.750	▲	3.540
FTSE 100	8,417.340	▲	2.090
Euro Stoxx50	4,379.000	▲	30.400

PESO-DOLLAR RATES

FX

OPEN	P56.333
HIGH	P56.100
LOW	P56.350
CLOSE	P56.145
W.AVE.	P56.252
VOL.	$1,781.84 M

SOURCE : BAP

▲ 27.50 CTVS

30 DAYS TO APRIL 29, 2025

ASIAN MONIES-US$ RATE

APRIL 29, 2025

	LATEST BID (0900GMT)		PREVIOUS
Japan (yen)	142.620	▲	143.460
Hong Kong (HK dollar)	7.759	▼	7.757
Taiwan (NT dollar)	32.223	▲	32.475
Thailand (baht)	33.360	▲	33.650
S. Korea (won)	1,433.510	▲	1,443.260
Singapore (dollar)	1.309	▲	1.314
Indonesia (rupiah)	16,755	▲	16,850
Malaysia (ringgit)	4.325	▲	4.363

WORLD CURRENCIES

APRIL 29, 2025

	CLOSE		PREVIOUS
US$/UK pound	1.3407	▲	1.3340
US$/Euro	1.1391	▲	1.1343
US$/Aust dollar	0.6415	▲	0.6387
Canada dollar/US$	1.3834	▼	1.3876
Swiss Franc/US$	0.8247	▼	0.8299

DUBAI CRUDE OIL

FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY

$66.85/BBL

▼ $0.35

30 DAYS TO APRIL 28, 2025

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S1/1-12 • 2 SECTIONS, 18 PAGES

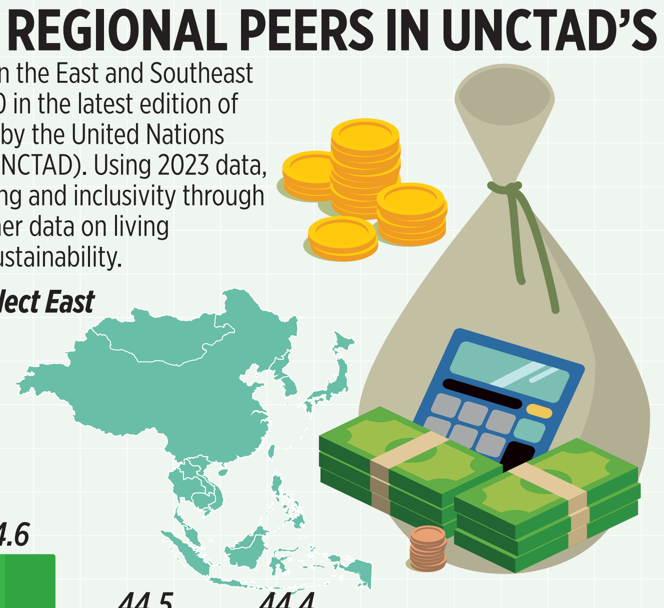
PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • APRIL 29, 2025 (PSEi snapshot on *S1/2*; article on *S2/2*)

Stock	Price	Value	Change		%
URC	P84.700	P664,560,452	P4.200	▲	5.217%
BDO	P160.700	P451,225,133	P5.200	▲	3.344%
ICT	P350.000	P325,080,690	-P10.000	▼	-2.778%
ALI	P24.200	P316,685,390	-P0.750	▼	-3.006%
SM	P855.000	P237,329,185	P5.000	▲	0.588%
BLOOM	P3.400	P218,617,980	-P0.140	▼	-3.955%
MER	P569.000	P193,303,845	P21.000	▲	3.832%
BPI	P133.000	P184,158,876	-P0.300	▼	-0.225%
SMPH	P22.900	P177,910,910	-P0.300	▼	-1.293%
PLUS	P39.000	P143,544,040	P1.000	▲	2.632%

Fitch Ratings affirms PHL 'BBB' rating

PHILIPPINES TRAILS REGIONAL PEERS IN UNCTAD'S INCLUSIVE GROWTH INDEX

The Philippines was among the laggards in the East and Southeast Asian region after it scored 34.3 out of 100 in the latest edition of the Inclusive Growth Index (IGI), released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Using 2023 data, the index assesses an economy's well-being and inclusivity through its gross domestic product (GDP) with other data on living conditions, equality, and environmental sustainability.



Top 10

Economy	Overall Index Score (Out of 100)
Luxembourg	91.0
Norway	79.8
Denmark	79.7
Switzerland	79.6
Ireland	79.3
Singapore	76.1
Sweden	73.8
The Netherlands	72.8
United Kingdom	69.9
Finland	69.7

Bottom 10

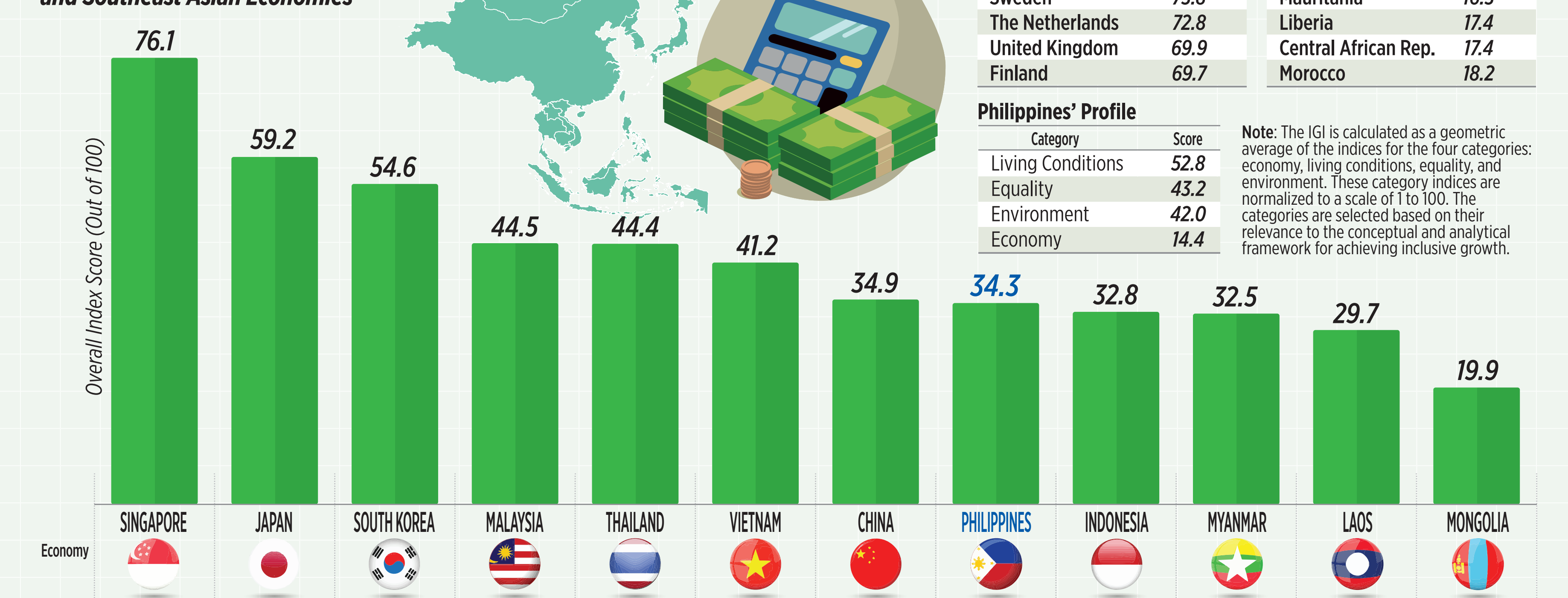
Economy	Overall Index Score (Out of 100)
Sudan	5.3
Iran	9.7
Niger	10.7
Zimbabwe	15.0
Burkina Faso	16.0
Chad	16.1
Mauritania	16.3
Liberia	17.4
Central African Rep.	17.4
Morocco	18.2

Philippines' Profile

Category	Score
Living Conditions	52.8
Equality	43.2
Environment	42.0
Economy	14.4

Note: The IGI is calculated as a geometric average of the indices for the four categories: economy, living conditions, equality, and environment. These category indices are normalized to a scale of 1 to 100. The categories are selected based on their relevance to the conceptual and analytical framework for achieving inclusive growth.

Inclusive Growth Index Scores of Select East and Southeast Asian Economies



Source: UNCTAD's Inclusive Growth Index (*https://unctad.org/news/beyond-gdp-new-data-reveals-persistent-gaps-progress-inclusive-growth*) ***BusinessWorld* Research**: Pierce Oel A. Montalvo ***BusinessWorld* Graphics**: Bong R. Fortin

By Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson *Senior Reporter*

FITCH RATINGS affirmed the Philippines' investment grade rating and kept its "stable" outlook amid the country's strong growth prospects and minimal exposure to trade tensions.

In a rating action commentary on Tuesday, the credit rater said it affirmed the Philippines' long-term foreign currency issuer default rating at "BBB," which indicates low default risk and reflects the economy's adequate capacity to pay debt.

The debt watcher also kept the outlook on the rating at "stable," which means it is likely to be maintained rather than lowered or upgraded over the next 18-24 months.

"The 'BBB' rating and 'stable' outlook reflect the Philippines' strong medium-term growth, which supports a gradual reduction in government debt-to-GDP, and the large size of the economy relative to 'BBB' peers," it said.

However, Fitch said this is "constrained by low GDP (gross domestic product) per head, despite an upward trend. Governance standards are weaker than those of 'BBB' peers, though Fitch believes World Bank Governance Indicator (WBGI) scores somewhat overstate this."

Fitch expects the Philippines' GDP to grow by 5.6% this year, below the government's 6-8% target.

It noted Philippine economic growth is being driven by "large public investments in infrastructure, services exports and remittance-funded private consumption."

"Private demand should be supported by easing inflation and interest rates. However, domestic political uncertainty could affect investment, while global trade tensions will likely drag on growth, in particular indirectly through weaker global demand," it added.

Real GDP growth is still expected to expand to over 6% in the medium term, Fitch said.

"Our forecast reflects a payoff from investments in infrastructure and a series of structural reforms in recent years to liberalize the economy and foster trade and investment, including through public-private partnerships."

Fitch, S1/5

Modest growth in farm output seen in 1st quarter

THE PHILIPPINES' agricultural output may have posted modest annual growth in the first quarter, as the crops sector benefited from favorable weather conditions, analysts said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. on Tuesday said he is expecting to see growth in all farm sectors except for hogs in the first quarter.

"Growth except in pork. For chicken, slight (growth). For rice, slight (growth)," he told reporters.

Mr. Laurel did not elaborate, although the hog industry continues to be impacted by the African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak.

Farm production in the January-to-March period could have expanded by around 1% year on year, former Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said in a Viber message.

"It could have been better," he added.

If realized, this would be an improvement from the 0.05% growth in the first quarter of 2024, and a turnaround from the 2.2% contraction in the fourth quarter of 2024.

In 2024, agricultural and fisheries output shrank by 2.2%, reflecting the impact of the El Niño weather pattern.

Federation of Free Farmers Raul Q. Montemayor said in a Viber message that the volume of agricultural production likely improved since it came from a low base.

"Value wise, (it) will be lower due to drop in palay prices... Many farmers were discouraged by the drop in palay prices and may temper production in the second semester/wet season," Mr. Montemayor said.

Jayson H. Cainglet of the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura noted that farmgate prices of palay have declined to P16-P17 per kilo from a year ago.

In the first quarter, Mr. Dar said the crops sector likely saw a turnaround due to the good weather conditions and government assistance.

Crops production contracted by 0.3% in the first quarter and slumped by 4.2% for the full year.

Farm output, S1/5

DoF withdraws proposal to hike capital gains tax

By Kenneth Christiane L. Basilio *Reporter*

FINANCE Secretary Ralph G. Recto has withdrawn the Department of Finance's (DoF) proposal to increase capital gains tax, donor's tax and estate tax, citing higher revenue collections in the first quarter.

At the same time, Mr. Recto in a statement on Tuesday said that the government is not seeking to impose new taxes or revenue measures amid the government's "robust fiscal position."

"The government is properly managing its finances, ensuring that public needs are met without burdening the citizenry with new taxes," he said. "At the same time, the DoF will continue to explore and strengthen nontax revenue sources to meet the revenue targets."

In a letter to House Ways and Means Committee Chairperson and Albay Rep. Jose Ma. Clemente S. Salceda, Mr. Recto said the DoF is no longer pushing for the proposed amendments to the Capital Markets Efficiency Promotion Act (CMEPA) "which primarily sought to introduce measures that would secure our path to fiscal consolidation."

"The Department respectfully requests to withdraw consideration thereof in view of the better-than-accepted revenue performance during the first quarter of the year," he said.

Mr. Salceda's office provided a copy of the letter to the media.

The DoF had previously urged legislators to replace the CMEPA with the Government Revenues Optimization through Wealth Tax Harmonization (GROWTH) bill.

Under its draft GROWTH bill, the DoF proposed to temporarily increase the rates of capital gains tax on real property, donor's tax, and estate tax to 10% from 2025 to 2030. These rates will be reduced to 6% starting 2031.

The DoF had estimated this could yield around P300 billion in revenues.

In the letter to Mr. Salceda, Mr. Recto said the proposed tax hikes were only intended as a buffer for higher government spending during "times of crisis and to provide the government with fiscal space in the worst-case scenario."

"With double-digit growth in tax collection, the government is well on track in meeting its fiscal consolidation goals," Mr. Recto said.

According to the DoF, total tax collections jumped by 13.55% to P931.5 billion in the first three months of 2025, citing stronger tax administration and enforcement.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue's (BIR) collections jumped by 16.67% to P690.4 billion as of end-March. Revenues generated by the Bureau of Customs (BoC) rose by 5.72% to P231.4 billion.

DoF, S1/5

Philippines' IT-BPM sector to cross $40B in revenues this year

By Justine Irish D. Tabile *Reporter*

THE Philippine information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) sector is projected to generate over $40 billion in revenues this year amid sustained global demand, according to an industry group.

"We should cross $40 billion by the end of the year," Information Technology and Business Process Association of the Philippines (IBPAP) President and Chief Executive Officer Jonathan R. Madrid told reporters on Monday.

Growth will be driven by global demand, especially for banking, financial, and healthcare services, he said.

Mr. Madrid said demand is still mostly from North America.

"[What] we should be scared about is not being skilled enough. That's the only thing I am concerned about. Because the demand is there, we have the brand. The Philippines is very strong; we are a world leader," he said.

He said that the Philippines should ensure that its graduates will have the relevant skills for new work types.

"[This is] not just because of artificial intelligence. The nature of work always changes, and so we must adapt and make sure that we give our students and seekers a chance to continue to compete," he said.

Mr. Madrid said the industry is hoping to employ around two million in the next two years.

"We're already at 1.82 million digital workers. We want to cross two million soon... If your question is when we will cross two million, I would say in the next 12 to 18 months," he added.

IT-BPM, S1/5

Partnering for Muslim-friendly accommodations

ROBINSONS HOTELS AND RESORTS (RHR) and the Department of Tourism agree to designate all RHR properties as "Muslim-Friendly Accommodations" in a partnership formalized by (front, from left) RHR Director of Sales and Marketing Joy de Mesa, RHR Senior Vice-President and Business General Manager Barun Jolly, Tourism Secretary Christina G. Frasco, and Philippine Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Alfonso Ferdinand A. Ver during the Arabian Travel Market event in Dubai.