



BusinessWorld



33rd EJAP-AYALA Business Journalism Awards

The 2023 Business News Source of the Year Award

STOCK MARKET	ASIAN MARKETS	WORLD MARKETS	PESO-DOLLAR RATES	ASIAN MONIES-US\$ RATE	WORLD CURRENCIES	DUBAI CRUDE OIL
6305 6174 6043 5912 5781 5650 ▲ 19.40 PTS. 0.32% 30 DAYS TO OCTOBER 28, 2025 PSEi OPEN: 5,934.39 HIGH: 5,961.49 LOW: 5,926.54 CLOSE: 5,953.16 VOL.: 1.176 B VAL(P): 4.635 B	OCTOBER 28, 2025 JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 50,219.18 ▼ -293.14 -0.58 HONG KONG (HANG SENG) 26,346.14 ▼ -87.56 -0.33 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED) 27,949.11 ▼ -44.52 -0.16 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,315.21 ▼ -8.31 -0.63 S.KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE) 4,010.41 ▼ -32.42 -0.80 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES) 4,455.25 ▲ 14.95 0.34 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES) 9,012.50 ▼ -43.10 -0.48 MALAYSIA (KLSE COMPOSITE) 1,613.56 ▼ -4.82 -0.30	OCTOBER 27, 2025 CLOSE 47,544.590 ▲ 337.470 NET 23,637.456 ▲ 432.589 Dow Jones 6,875.160 ▲ 83.470 NASDAQ 9,653.820 ▲ 8.200 S&P 500 4,800.450 ▲ 16.710 FTSE 100 Euro Stoxx50	56.60 57.38 58.16 58.94 59.72 60.50 ▼ 23.00 CTS 30 DAYS TO OCTOBER 28, 2025 FX OPEN P58.900 HIGH P58.900 LOW P59.200 CLOSE P59.130 W.AVE. P59.104 VOL. \$1,751.10 SOURCE : BAP	OCTOBER 28, 2025 LATEST BID (0900GMT) 152.0500 ▲ 152.7600 JAPAN (YEN) 7.7694 ▼ 7.7669 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 30.6140 ▼ 30.6800 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 32.4500 ▼ 32.7000 THAILAND (BAHT) 1,436.7200 ▼ 1,432.6300 S. KOREA (WON) 1.2951 ▲ 1.2966 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 16,600.000 ▲ 16,610.000 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 4.1970 ▲ 4.2110 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT)	OCTOBER 28, 2025 CLOSE 1.3305 ▼ 1.3332 PREVIOUS 1.1652 ▲ 1.1633 US\$/UK POUND 0.6549 ▲ 0.6550 US\$/EURO 1.4000 ▲ 1.3974 US\$/AUST DOLLAR 0.7936 ▼ 0.7961 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ SWISS FRANC/US\$	FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY \$67.66/ BBL 73.50 69.40 65.30 61.20 57.10 53.00 ▼ \$1.09 30 DAYS TO OCTOBER 27, 2025

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • OCTOBER 28, 2025 (PSEi snapshot on S1/2; article on S2/2)

BDO	P134.500	ALI	P20.700	BPI	P104.000	ICT	P540.000	MER	P570.000	AC	P456.000	MBT	P68.800	SM	P730.000	SMPH	P22.900	JGS	P24.800
Value	P577,827,628	Value	P429,185,685	Value	P330,903,618	Value	P303,686,395	Value	P264,382,540	Value	P197,059,468	Value	P184,537,483	Value	P140,581,070	Value	P129,083,030	Value	P101,094,445
P3.500	▲ 2.672%	-P0.200	▼ -0.957%	P1.500	▲ 1.463%	P5.000	▲ 0.935%	-P5.000	▼ -0.870%	P1.000	▲ 0.220%	-P0.200	▼ -0.290%	P0.000	— 0.000%	P0.000	— 0.000%	P0.200	▲ 0.813%

Peso slumps to new all-time low

Philippines edges up in rule of law, still behind region

The Philippines inched up three places to 97th out of 143 countries and jurisdictions in the 2025 edition of the World Justice Project's (WJP) Rule of Law Index. It was the country's best ranking in five years. However, it remained one of the laggards in the region.

Philippines' Historical Scores and Ranks

Year	Rank	Overall Score
2020	91/128	0.47
2021	102/139	0.46
2022	97/140	0.47
2023	100/142	0.46
2024	99/142	0.46
2025	97/143	0.46



Philippines' Profile (2025)

Factor	Rank (Out of 143)	Factor Score
Open Government	81	0.46
Absence of Corruption	84	0.43
Constraints on Government Powers	85	0.49
Regulatory Enforcement	88	0.46
Order and Security	93	0.68
Civil Justice	106	0.44
Fundamental Rights	118	0.42
Criminal Justice	119	0.37

Source: World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2025 (<https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/>)
BusinessWorld Research: Heather Caitlin P. Manago
BusinessWorld Graphics: Bong R. Fortin

THE PHILIPPINE PESO breached the P59-per-dollar level for the first time on Tuesday, amid market concerns of slowing economic growth and expectations of further monetary easing.

At the same time, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said it will allow market forces to determine the peso-dollar exchange rate.

The local unit closed at P59.13 versus the greenback, sinking by 23 centavos from its P58.90 finish on Monday, Bankers Association of the Philippines data showed.

This was a new all-time low for the peso, eclipsing the previous record of P59 logged on Dec. 19, 2024.

Year to date, the peso has depreciated by P1.285 or 2.17% from its P57.845 finish on Dec. 27, 2024.

The peso opened Tuesday's session steady at P58.90 versus the dollar, which was already its intraday best. Its worst showing was at P59.20 against the greenback.

Dollars exchanged rose to \$1.75 billion on Tuesday from \$1.6 billion on Monday.

"The recent peso depreciation may reflect market concerns over a potential moderation in economic growth due in part to the infrastructure spending controversy, as well as expectations of additional monetary policy easing by the BSP," the central bank said.

On Monday, Monetary Board member Benjamin E. Diokno said the BSP may cut its key interest rate again in December and further in 2026, as the economy may "slow down a bit" due to a corruption scandal and trade uncertainties.

The BSP earlier this month lowered interest rates by 25 basis points (bps) to 4.75%. It has cut rates by 175 bps since it began its easing cycle in August 2024.

The BSP said the peso will continue to be supported by "resilient remittance inflows, still relatively fast economic growth, low inflation, and ongoing structural reforms."

"Foreign exchange inflows from business process outsourcing, tourism, and overseas Filipino workers continue to buffer external shocks," it added.

It also said it continues to maintain "robust" foreign reserves, which stood at \$108.8 billion at end-September.

Peso, S1/5

ASEAN, China seal upgraded free trade deal

KUALA LUMPUR — The Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China on Tuesday signed an upgraded free trade pact that seeks to deepen regional integration in the face of increased protectionism from the US.

Closer economic cooperation instead of confrontation could help overcome global uncertainties amid coercion and bullying, Chinese Premier Li Qiang told the ASEAN-China Summit meeting after the signing, in a swipe at the US.

ASEAN leaders including Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. witnessed the signing of the third revision of the deal that was first inked in 2002 and took effect in 2010.

"The ACFTA (ASEAN-China Free Trade Area) 3.0 Upgrade Protocol seeks to expand ASEAN-China cooperation into new and emerging areas, including the digital and green economies, supply-chain resilience, competition and consumer protection, as well as support for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME)," according to a statement from Mr. Marcos' office.

The free trade agreement (FTA) lowers tariffs on goods and boosts the flow of services and investment in an area that covers a combined market of more than two billion people.

Chinese trade with the 11-member bloc reached \$771 billion last year, making ASEAN its biggest trading partner, according to ASEAN data.

Beijing is looking to deepen its engagement with the region, which has a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of \$3.8 trillion, as it seeks to offset the impact of steep import tariffs imposed globally by US President Donald J. Trump's administration.

China and ASEAN are also members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the world's largest trade bloc, encompassing nearly one-third of the global population and around 30% of global GDP.

Mr. Trump slapped almost all of its trading partners with varying tariff levels. He imposed a 30% tariff on Chinese exports to the US in a bid to protect his country's industries.

The US has also imposed a 19% duty on many goods from the Philippines, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia since Aug. 7.

The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) earlier said the new protocol aims to make the regional trade framework "more modern, more comprehensive, and better aligned with today's global realities."

Free trade, S1/5

Nomura slashes Philippine growth forecast amid graft scandal

PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC GROWTH may slow to 4.7% this year, as government spending is expected to further decline amid the corruption investigation in infrastructure projects, Nomura Global Markets Research said.

In a report dated Oct. 27, Nomura Chief ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Economist Euben Paracuelles and Macroeconomic Research Analyst Yiru Chen said the gross domestic product (GDP) forecast was slashed to 4.7% this year from 5.3% previously as downside risks increased due to the corruption scandal involving flood control projects.

"This pencils in GDP growth slowing to just 4% in the second half from 5.4% in the first half and is based on the assumption that the decline in government expenditures in September will worsen in the next 3-4 months," they said.

Nomura's latest forecast is below the government's 5.5-6.5% GDP growth target for the year and is slower than the 5.7% growth in 2024.

"Taking into account the sharp drop in fiscal spending in September, we think the 'bad scenario' on the growth impact of the ongoing corruption scandal is materializing," they said.

Third-quarter GDP data will be released on Nov. 7.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. had flagged anomalous flood control projects during his State of the Nation Address in late July. This sparked several investigations into alleged corruption involving lawmakers, government officials, and private contractors.

Latest Treasury data showed government expenditures declined by 7.53% in September, worsening from the 0.7% drop in August, mainly due to lower spending by the Department of Public Works and Highways. Nomura also noted that government spending declined by 2.8% in the third quarter, a reversal of 1.6% growth in the second quarter.

"Excluding interest payments and debt servicing, expenditure growth slumped even more to -10.2% y-o-y (year on year) in September from -3.5% in August, the weakest since 2020. This suggests a relatively rapid deterioration in the pace of budget disbursements after President Marcos brought to light the corruption scandal of flood control projects," they said.

Nomura also noted that the reallocation of funds to other types of capital

expenditures such as school buildings has been "challenging" to implement.

"In addition, we incorporate some spillovers into other components of domestic demand, which were also evident in these previous episodes, including household consumption spending. Our forecast continues to take into account the impact of the US tariffs, which, as we have argued before, pose significant headwinds for goods exports," they said.

The US had imposed a 19% duty on many goods from the Philippines starting Aug. 7.

Nomura also maintained its fiscal deficit forecast at 5.5% of GDP for this year.

"The decline in government expenditures, which we now assume in the coming months (under the 'bad' scenario), puts the MTFF (medium-term fiscal framework) target of 5.5% still within reach. Nevertheless, our fiscal deficit forecast implies a weaker fiscal impulse in Q4, when the output gap will likely remain negative," they said.

For 2026, Nomura maintained its Philippine GDP forecast at 5.6%, but uncertainty over the timely passage of the 2026 national budget poses risks to the outlook.

Nomura, S1/9

SEIPI projects single-digit growth in electronic exports

PHILIPPINE EXPORTS of semiconductor and electronic products may see single-digit growth this year, but uncertainty over the US tariff policy continues to cloud the industry's outlook, the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Foundation, Inc. (SEIPI) said.

"We're looking forward to a single-digit growth, which means anywhere from 1% to 9%," SEIPI President Danilo C. Lachica told reporters on the sidelines of the Philippine Semiconductors and Electronics Convention and Exhibition on Tuesday.

"My official position is still flat [growth,] but like I said before, there are signs of a positive outlook, modest growth," he said.

Citing the latest trade data, Mr. Lachica said there are signs of export growth.

"If you look at the PSA (Philippine Statistics Authority) numbers, it looks like we might look forward to that modest growth, a single-

digit growth. But now, the projection for the industry is still flat," he said.

PSA data showed that as of end-August, exports of electronic products reached \$29.48 billion, 7.4% higher than a year ago. Semiconductor exports during the period likewise grew by 4.9% year on year to \$22.07 billion.

The SEIPI board is set to meet in November to review its industry projections.

"Even though I've seen positive movement, I was hesitant to declare, 'OK, we're going to grow,' because who knows what's going to happen with the US tariffs," Mr. Lachica said. "It depends on what side of the bed Trump wakes up on."

US President Donald J. Trump earlier threatened to slap sectoral tariffs on chips as high as 300%, a move expected to bring back manufacturing to the US.

SEIPI, S1/9



Glowing bright for the holidays

SM NORTH EDSA illuminates its world tree with a warm, golden glow as the radiant northern star descends upon the supersized 60-foot centerpiece. Guests are invited to step inside the world tree, which is inspired by the magic of Nordic Christmas, and be mesmerized by the Northern Star Portal, which features a breathtaking experience of light, sound, and holiday wonder.