



# BusinessWorld



33<sup>rd</sup> 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
<b>PSEi</b> 6150 6010 5870 5730 5590 5450 30 DAYS TO DECEMBER 23, 2025 0.65 pts. 0.01% VAL(P): 4.698 B	<b>DECEMBER 25, 2025</b> JAPAN (NIKKEI 225) 50,407.79 ▲ 63.69 0.13 HONG KONG (HANG SENG)* 25,818.93 ▲ 44.79 0.17 TAIWAN (WEIGHTED)* 28,371.98 ▲ 61.51 0.22 THAILAND (SET INDEX) 1,265.27 ▼ -10.06 -0.79 S. KOREA (KSE COMPOSITE)* 4,108.62 ▼ -8.70 -0.21 SINGAPORE (STRAITS TIMES)* 4,636.34 ▼ -2.63 -0.06 SYDNEY (ALL ORDINARIES)* 8,762.70 ▼ -33.00 -0.38 MALAYSIA (KLSE COMPOSITE)* 1,678.31 ▲ 1.67 0.10 *CLOSING PRICE AS OF DEC. 24, 2025	<b>DECEMBER 24, 2025</b> DOW JONES 48,731.160 ▲ 288.750 NASDAQ 23,613.307 ▲ 51.463 S&P 500 6,932.050 ▲ 22.260 FTSE 100 9,870.680 ▼ -18.540 Euro Stoxx50 4,892.450 ▼ -2.340	<b>FX</b> 58.45 58.68 58.91 59.14 59.37 59.60 30 DAYS TO DECEMBER 23, 2025 12.00 cts SOURCE : BAP OPEN P58.700 HIGH P58.655 LOW P58.880 CLOSE P58.850 W.AVE. P58.752 VOL. \$1,139.68M	<b>DECEMBER 25, 2025 LATEST BID (0900GMT)</b> JAPAN (YEN) 155.8400 ▼ 155.6800 HONG KONG (HK DOLLAR) 7.7744 ▲ 7.7778 TAIWAN (NT DOLLAR) 31.4350 ▲ 31.4740 THAILAND (BAHT) 31.1000 ▼ 31.0900 S. KOREA (WON) 1,446.3200 ▲ 1,480.6200 SINGAPORE (DOLLAR) 1.2831 ▲ 1.2851 INDONESIA (RUPIAH) 16,750.000 ▲ 16,765.000 MALAYSIA (RINGGIT) 4.0430 ▲ 4.0630	<b>DECEMBER 25, 2025</b> US\$/UK POUND 1.3523 ▲ 1.3502 US\$/EURO 1.1782 ▲ 1.1778 US\$/AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR 0.6698 ▼ 0.6704 CANADA DOLLAR/US\$ 1.3676 ▲ 1.3675 SWISS FRANC/US\$ 0.7867 ▼ 0.7884	<b>FUTURES PRICE ON NEAREST MONTH OF DELIVERY</b> \$62.34/BBL 67.00 64.80 62.60 60.40 58.20 56.00 30 DAYS TO DECEMBER 24, 2025 ▲ \$0.19

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE'S 10 MOST ACTIVE STOCKS BY VALUE TURNOVER • DECEMBER 23, 2025 (PSEi article on S2/2)

ICT	P565.000	BDO	P133.000	SUN	P0.740	PLUS	P16.340	JFC	P179.000	BPI	P119.800	SMPH	P23.000	ALI	P22.100	SM	P700.000	URC	P67.500
Value	P575,211,335	Value	P493,299,182	Value	P455,891,280	Value	P298,836,700	Value	P288,241,855	Value	P218,386,920	Value	P208,321,910	Value	P139,005,715	Value	P124,377,015	Value	P97,694,641
-P9.500 ▼	-1.654%	-P0.700 ▼	-0.524%	P0.130 ▲	21.311%	-P0.800 ▼	-4.667%	-P6.400 ▼	-3.452%	P0.500 ▲	0.419%	P0.400 ▲	1.770%	P0.200 ▲	0.913%	P0.000 —	0.000%	P1.600 ▲	2.428%



PHILIPPINE STAR/RYAN BALDEMOR

HIGH-RISE buildings dominate the skyline of Makati City's central business district.

## RRR cut in 2026 seen to support growth

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas (BSP) may cut large banks' reserve requirement ratio (RRR) by up to 200 basis points (bps) next year to boost the economy's weak growth, analysts said.

Analysts said lowering banks' reserve requirements would add to the financial system's liquidity, leaving more room for lending activity that could help spur the economy.

"We do expect another round of RRR cut in 2026, and we project a 200-basis-point reduction, which we think could occur sometime in the first quarter," Security Bank Research Head and Chief Economist Angelo B. Taningco told *BusinessWorld* in an e-mail.

If realized, universal and commercial banks' RRR will be down to 3% from the current 5%.

Digital banks' RRR was likewise reduced by 150 bps to 2.5%, while thrift banks' RRR was lowered by 100 bps to 0%. The cuts took effect in the week of March 28.

Under the current easing cycle, the central bank has delivered a total of 450 bps in cuts to big banks' RRR since October 2024, 350 bps for digital banks, 200 bps for thrift banks, and 100 bps for rural and cooperative banks.

BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. has said after the Monetary Board's last policy meeting this year that although the current 5% is "already pretty good," they are open to reducing banks' RRR to 2% within the next year or so.

However, he noted that they are not rushing to bring down the said ratio as excessive liquidity remains in the financial system.

According to Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort, about P180 billion is injected into the

financial system for every 100-bp cut in big banks' RRR.

"This would reduce banks' intermediation costs and overall lending rates," he said in a Viber message. "Lower lending rates and more loanable funds by banks would increase demand for loans or credit, thereby would help boost economic activities and overall economic growth."

Mr. Ricafort also noted that a lower RRR would boost lenders' earnings.

Meanwhile, Jonathan L. Ravelas, a senior adviser at Reyes Tacandong & Co., said an RRR cut of 100 bps to 200 bps could come in the first half of 2026 as growth remains sluggish.

"An RRR cut in 2026 is likely, but timing is everything," he told *BusinessWorld* via Viber message. "A phased reduction of 100-200 basis points in the first half of the year makes sense to support growth without stoking inflation."

In the third quarter, the country's gross domestic product (GDP) growth slumped to 4%, the weakest print seen in over four years or since the first quarter of 2021. This brought GDP growth to an average of 5% as of September, below the government's 5.5-6.5% target.

The BSP chief earlier said the economy might only start to recover by the latter half of next year, with growth expected to return within target by 2027.

"But let's be clear: liquidity alone won't fix structural issues," Mr. Ravelas added. "If governance and accountability remain weak, extra money in the system will just leak through the cracks.

RRR, SI/6

## Business groups bare 'tax wish list' for 2026

By Aubrey Rose A. Inosante  
Reporter

PHILIPPINE business groups are urging lawmakers to pass a general tax amnesty and review the value-added tax (VAT) on electricity as part of their tax wish list for 2026.

British Chamber of Commerce Philippines Executive Chair Chris Nelson said the group supports the proposal of Senate Finance Committee Chair Sherwin T. Gatchalian to pass a general tax amnesty.

"This gives the opportunity for those taxpayers who may

have unpaid or outstanding liabilities to move forward amicably," he said during a phone call with *BusinessWorld*.

The measure is among President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.'s legislative wish list for the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress. Bills seeking a one-time general tax amnesty have been filed in both the Sen-

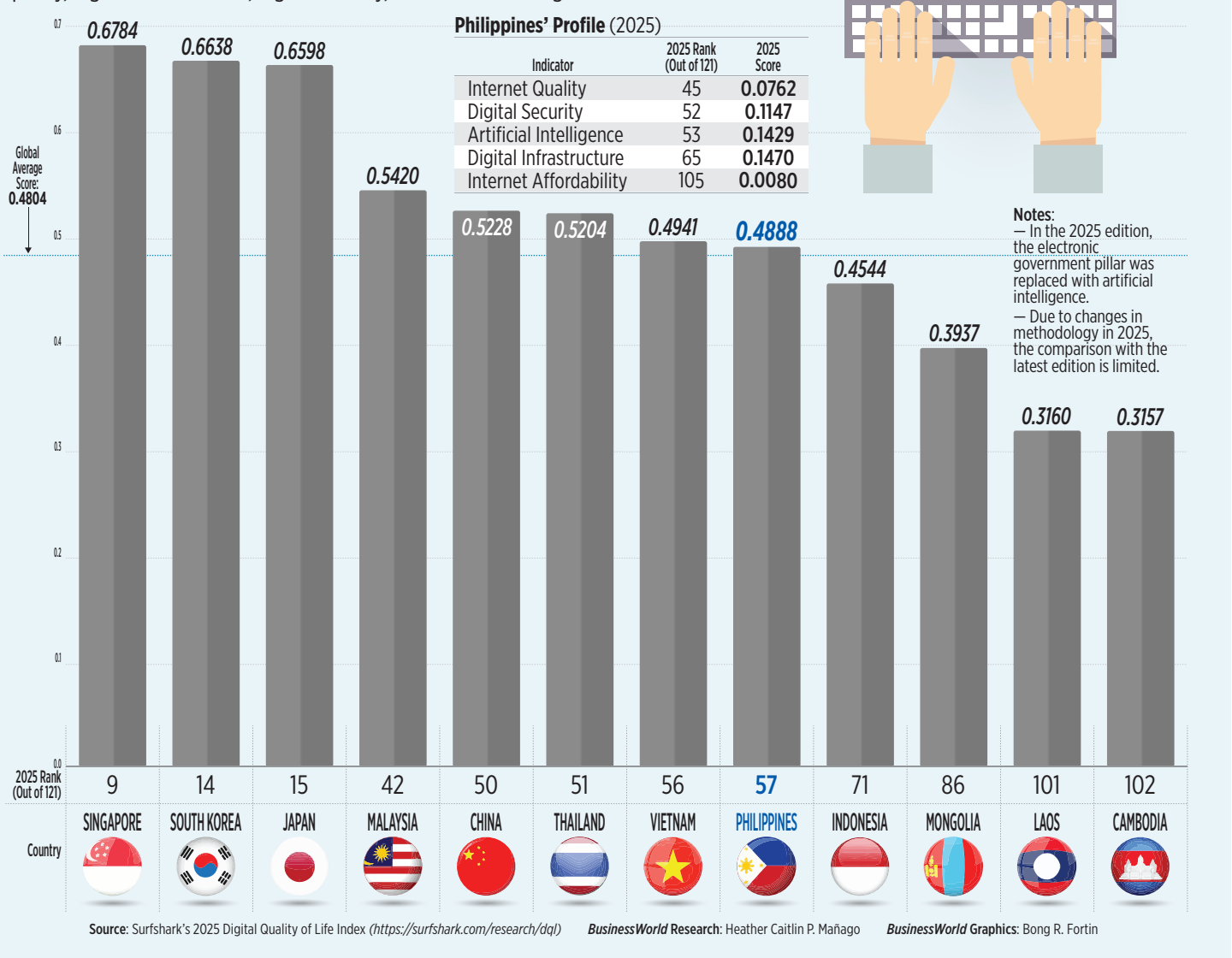
ate and the House of Representatives and are still pending at the committee level.

Senate Bill No. 60, filed in July by Mr. Gatchalian, aims to grant a one-time reprieve on unpaid internal revenue taxes for the taxable year 2024 and prior years.

'Tax wish list,' SI/6

## Philippines ranks 57<sup>th</sup> in digital quality of life list

The Philippines placed 57<sup>th</sup> out of 121 countries in the 2025 edition of the Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index, published by VPN provider Surfshark. With an overall score of 0.4888, the country was better than the global average score of 0.4804. The index assesses and compares the relative performance of a country's digital well-being based on five equally weighted pillars: internet affordability, internet quality, digital infrastructure, digital security, and artificial intelligence.



## PEZA eyes more investments from South Korea

By Justine Irish D. Tabile  
Reporter

THE PHILIPPINE Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) is seeing South Korea as among the potential sources of investments next year amid a free trade agreement (FTA) and the investments that will be attracted by Samsung Electro-Mechanics Philippines Corp.'s P51-billion expansion.

"For 2026, our best bets for foreign direct investments are Japan, South Korea, the US, China, and Singapore," PEZA Director-General Tereso O. Panga told *BusinessWorld*.

"We anticipate Korea to still come in strong owing to the Philippines-South Korea FTA and the huge expansion of

SEMPHIL, which should trigger more Korean investments," he added.

The Philippines-South Korea FTA took effect on Dec. 31, 2024. This was the Philippines' third bilateral FTA.

Meanwhile, SEMPHIL's P50.7-billion investment marked the first project to be granted presidential incentives under the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinventing the Economy Act.

For next year, PEZA is expecting to approve P300 billion in investment pledges, after green-lighting P261 billion worth of projects this year.

This year's approval surpassed the P250-billion target the agency set for the year, the highest since the P295.1 billion worth of

investment pledges approved in 2015.

Japan came out as the top source of foreign investments in 2025, accounting for P29.169 billion of the total approvals.

"The Japanese consistently have always been our biggest foreign investor in PEZA. However, in 2024, Korea emerged as our biggest country source of economic zone (ecozone) investments due to the big-ticket and high-tech project of SEMPHIL," Mr. Panga said.

"For 2025, Japan has regained its No. 1 spot, dislodging Korea at No. 3. Moreover, we saw a significant increase (in investments) from the Cayman Islands, Singapore, China, and the US," he added.

Investments from Cayman Islands totaled P16.694 billion

in 2025, while investments from South Korea reached P11.46 billion. Investments from Singapore, China, and the US reached, P11.186 billion, P6.788 billion, and P6.26 billion, respectively.

Completing the top 10 sources were Hong Kong (P5.112 billion), Germany (P4.456 billion), Australia (P3.718 billion), and the Netherlands (P2.674 billion).

In 2024, the top five sources were South Korea (P51.269 billion), Japan (P13.736 billion), the Cayman Islands (P9.116 billion), the Netherlands (P5.726 billion), and Malaysia (P4.555 billion).

On Dec. 22, the PEZA Board met to approve seven new projects with investment costs totaling P23.689 billion. These are expected to create 3,821 jobs and \$1.302 billion in exports.

PEZA, SI/6



COURTESY OF SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

### Private sector sustainability champion

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) recently honored Maria Yolanda "Yoly" Crisanto, chief sustainability and corporate communications officer at Globe, as the 2025 Private Sector Sustainability Champion. In photo (from left): SEC Chairperson Francis Edralin Lim, Ms. Crisanto, Komunidad Head of Enterprise Solutions Regi Delos Reyes, and Institute of Corporate Directors Philippines Vice Chairperson Imelda "Ida" Tionsgon.