



DASHBOARD

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MACROECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

OFW inflows hit record \$20.12 billion in 2011

Remittances from overseas Filipino workers hit a new record high of \$20.117 billion in 2011, 7.2 percent or \$1.254 billion higher than the \$18.763 billion in 2010, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) reported. BSP officer-in-charge Juan de Zuniga attributed the substantial rise in remittances to a 14-percent increase in inflow from sea-based workers and a 5.5-percent increase from land-based workers. De Zuniga said land-based workers accounted for 78.4 percent of total remittances in 2011. "Remittances remained resilient throughout the year amid the political turmoil in some parts of the Middle East and North African states, the slowdown in global economic growth and intensified financial strains brought about by the euro area sovereign debt crisis," De Zuniga said. The BSP official said the increase could be attributed to the diversified destinations and skills of overseas Filipinos, the strategic network of bank and non-bank service providers across the globe as well as the new financial products and money transfer services offered in the remittance market. (The Philippine Star)

59% of infrastructure projects awarded

The government has bid out and awarded 59 percent of its programmed infrastructure projects for the current year. Based on the data of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), notices to proceed were given to qualified contractors for some 1,208 projects that recently underwent competitive public bidding. Performance accomplishment of the DPWH further advanced with 19 of these projects already completed and overall actual rating ahead by 1.77 percent. "Project implementation for 2012 looks very different than the previous year. With the reforms in place and change in the procedure, we are now able to accelerate implementation of projects," said DPWH Secretary Rogelio Singson. (Manila Bulletin)

Greece heads for record books as economy slumps

Entering the fifth year of recession, Greece is writing its name in the book of unwanted records for one of the deepest economic slumps of modern times. The Greek economy shrank by 6.8% in 2011, leaving the level of output an estimated 16% below its pre-crisis peak. Unemployment has soared to more than 20% from 7.7% in 2008. Argentina suffered a 20% peak-to-trough drop in output as it defaulted on its debts in 2001, while Latvia's economy contracted by 24% because of the 2008 global financial crisis. With more belt-tightening in store in return for a proposed 130-billion euro (\$172 billion) international bailout, Athens is on course to join their ranks, and possibly overtake them, said Uri Dadush, an economist with the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, a think tank. "On the current path – which is not sustainable in my view – we may very well see Greek GDP go down 25-30%, which would be historically unprecedented. It's a disastrous crisis for them," Mr. Dadush, a former senior World Bank official, said. (BusinessWorld)

FINANCIAL TRENDS

Stocks retreat further on uncertainties

Philippine stocks tumbled yesterday, following Europe and Wall Street down amid growing fears the latest deal to resolve Greece's debts is faltering. The main Philippine Stock Exchange index declined by 5.90 points or 0.12 percent to close at 4,766.57. More than two billion shares valued at P6.04 billion changed hands Thursday. Losers led gainers 81 to 71 while 42 issues closed unchanged. (The Philippine Star)

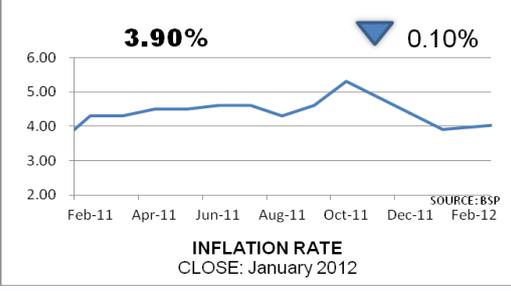
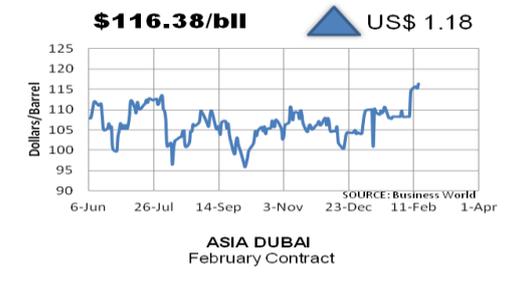
Greece bailout worries weigh on peso trades

The peso on Thursday erased the previous day's gains against the dollar as market players flocked to the greenback amid uncertainties hounding Greece's second bailout package. After gaining 11 centavos on Wednesday, it lost 19.5 centavos yesterday to finish at P42.835 to the dollar against its P42.64 close the previous day. The peso traded within the P42.75-42.94 per dollar band yesterday. (BusinessWorld)

INDUSTRY BUZZ

South Korean Hyundai backs design to drive sales

After winning a long battle for quality, South Korea's top automaker Hyundai Motor is focusing on beauty. Hyundai, together with its affiliate Kia, was ranked the world's fourth largest car maker in 2010, thanks partly to a decade-long drive to improve workmanship. Now the firm sees its core competitive edge as good design, expressed in a "fluidic sculpture" philosophy. "We are now in the global top five and we needed a product that could reflect that, a product that could differentiate itself from other manufacturers," chief designer Oh Suk-Geun told reporters last week during a rare tour of the company's design center. "We felt the importance of a fluidic softness of line, and harmony in line can also mean a car is very aerodynamic." The company says US sales rose around 20% annually over the past two years, with its salesmen attributing half of that increase to the look of the cars. (BusinessWorld)



	Thursday, February 15 2012	Year ago
Overnight Lending, RP	6.25%	6.50%
Overnight Borrowing, RRP	4.25%	4.50%
91 day T Bill Rates	0.919%	3.85%
Lending Rates	7.7430%	7.79%

