



BAIPHIL MARKET WATCH

27 Mar
2026

*BAIPHIL @ 85: CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP TO R.I.S.E. IN BANKING
RESILIENCE. INCLUSIVITY. SUSTAINABILITY. ENGAGEMENT*

Legend

- Improvement / Up
- Deterioration / Down
- No Movement

FINANCIAL MARKETS AT A GLANCE



Currency Exchange ¹	Current	Previous
USD/PHP	60.2300	60.1000
USD/JPY	159.5300	159.4700
USD/CNY	6.9075	6.9015
EUR/USD	1.1558	1.1561
GBP/USD	1.3348	1.3366

PHP BVAL Reference Rates ²	Current	Previous
30-Day	4.8220	4.8352
91-Day	4.9877	5.0129
180-Day	5.0682	5.0712
1-Year	5.1748	5.1578
3-Year	6.3259	6.4068
5-Year	6.7253	6.7970
10-Year	6.9830	7.0316

Domestic Stock Index ³	Current	Previous
PSEi	5,984.20	6,044.17
Trade Value (Php B)	7.876	7.353

Stock Index ⁴	Current	Previous
NIKKEI 225	53,603.65	53,749.62
FTSE 100	9,972.17	10,106.84
DOW JONES	45,960.11	46,429.49
S&P 500	6,477.16	6,591.90
NASDAQ	21,408.08	21,929.83

Various ^{5/6}	Current	Previous
Brent Crude (USD/bbl)	106.09	102.99
3-M US Treasury Yield	3.73%	3.73%
5-Y US Treasury Yield	4.08%	3.96%
10-Y US Treasury Yield	4.42%	4.33%



PHILIPPINES



- ✓ **Stocks sink as uncertainty weighs on markets.** Philippine shares retreated on Thursday as investors cashed in on the market's two-day climb and amid continued uncertainty over the conflict in the Middle East. The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) fell by 0.99% or 59.97 points to close at 5,984.20, while the broader all shares index went down by 0.65% or 22.05 points to end at 3,334.11. "The local market pulled back as investors took profits following two straight days of rallying. This comes as Iran stated that it has no intention of holding talks with the US, blurring the possibility of the two reaching a resolution," Philstocks Financial, Inc. Research Manager Japhet Louis O. Tantiangco said in a Viber message. "The PSEi closed lower on Thursday due to profit taking and cautious sentiment amid the lingering impact of Middle East tensions, as well as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) decision to keep interest rates steady, which further weighed on the peso," Unicapital Securities, Inc. Research Head Wendy B. Estacio-Cruz said in a Viber message. Decliners outnumbered advancers, 100 to 78, while 71 names closed unchanged. Value turnover rose to P7.88 billion on Thursday with 1.65 billion shares traded from the P7.37 billion with 1.15 billion issues that changed hands on Wednesday. Net foreign selling was at P135.29 million versus the P224.69 million in net buying in the previous session.
<https://www.bworldonline.com/stock-market/2026/03/26/738978/stocks-sink-as-uncertainty-weighs-on-markets/>
- ✓ **Peso sinks further as market eyes Iran deal.** The peso slid further against the dollar on Thursday due to lingering uncertainty over the war in the Middle East as markets awaited clearer signs of a potential de-escalation or ceasefire. The local unit declined by 13 centavos to close at P60.23 against the greenback from its P60.10 finish on Wednesday, data from the Bankers Association of the Philippines showed. "The dollar-peso closed higher, still due to uncertainties between the US and Iran and a lack of clear terms for the resolution of the war," a trader said in a phone interview. The trader added that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) off-cycle meeting did not materially affect trading on Thursday, although its impact could be felt on Friday once the market digests signals from officials.
<https://www.bworldonline.com/banking-finance/2026/03/27/738926/peso-sinks-further-as-market-eyes-iran-deal/>
- ✓ **BSP ready to hike rates if oil shocks persist.** While Philippine monetary authorities maintained the current policy rate at 4.25 percent in a rare off-cycle meeting, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said it would hike key interest rates if second-round effects from war-driven oil supply shocks occur. "Once we see second-round effects from those shocks, I think it would be appropriate for monetary policy to tighten and address the inflation arising from them," BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona Jr. told a virtual press briefing on Thursday, March 26. He said the central bank would have hiked key borrowing costs given the unprecedented price movements. However, the BSP held back, as inflation spikes have been driven by supply shocks, for which rate adjustments would provide minimal support. Remolona also pointed to the anemic gross domestic product (GDP) growth as a silver lining, saying it would temper further spikes in prices due to dampened demand. The BSP has forecast the economy to expand by a below-target 4.4 percent this year but rebound to 5.9 percent in 2027. "I hope it reassures markets that we are assessing the situation constantly," Remolona said, explaining the rationale behind the urgent announcement. After the off-cycle

meeting, Remolona said the next policy meeting will proceed as scheduled on April 23. He explained that the BSP calls for off-cycle meetings—as was done on March 26—when there are significant changes in the data points the central bank monitors. He added that the BSP will hold off-cycle meetings whenever global and domestic developments warrant it. For March, the BSP expects consumer prices to have expanded by 3.5 percent but anticipates acceleration to five percent in April. Second-round effects are the inflationary spillovers from initial supply shocks, such as rising oil prices, that trigger subsequent price increases in transport fares, food, and wages. “If [oil reaches \$200 a barrel for six months], we would be forced to raise our rates in a kind of catch-up mode,” Remolona said, referring to an extreme scenario where inflation could register in double digits.

<https://mb.com.ph/2026/03/26/bsp-ready-to-hike-rates-if-oil-shocks-persist>

- ✓ **BSP's market operations mop up P1.2T in liquidity.** The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has mopped up over P1 trillion in excess money supply from the market through its monetary operations as of early this year, a report showed. In its February 2026 Monetary Policy Report, the central bank said its monetary operations have absorbed P1.2 trillion in liquidity as of Feb. 11. “The BSP’s monetary operations effectively kept the overnight reverse repurchase rate aligned with the target reverse repurchase rate,” the BSP said. The central bank uses facilities such as the overnight reverse repurchase (RRP) facility, term deposit facility (TDF) and BSP securities to siphon off excess liquidity from the financial system and better guide market rates towards its policy rate. Based on BSP data, its overnight RRP facility absorbed most of the market’s liquidity at 44.4% of the total. This was followed by the BSP bills with 28.5%, overnight deposit facility with 18.2%, and the TDF with 9%. BSP Deputy Governor Zeno Ronald R. Abenoja earlier told *BusinessWorld* that the central bank initially decided to limit its monetary operations amid the anticipated high demand for liquidity during the holiday season. The central bank also noted that interest rates in the overnight RRP facility and TDF have already reflected 200 basis points (bps) out of the 225 bps in cuts delivered since its easing cycle started in August 2024.
<https://www.bworldonline.com/banking-finance/2026/03/27/738990/bsps-market-operations-mop-up-p1-2t-in-liquidity/>
- ✓ **PH econ team to hold special meeting on fuel excise tax suspension next week.** The inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) — which must recommend suspending excise taxes on fuel products before the President implements it — is set to hold a special meeting next week to discuss the matter. According to the Department of Budget Management (DBM), which chairs the DBCC, the body will act collectively on matters of such scale. “The full fiscal implications of a potential excise tax suspension, along with corresponding policy responses, will be thoroughly evaluated by the DBCC in a special meeting scheduled next week,” DBM Undersecretary Goddess Hope Libiran said in a mobile message. Under Republic Act 12316 signed into law by President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Wednesday, March 25, the President may suspend or reduce excise taxes on fuel upon the recommendation of the DBCC, in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary. The suspension or reduction, however, can only be done for a maximum of three months when the average Dubai crude oil price based on Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) reaches or exceeds \$80 per barrel for one month. Brent crude prices have been hovering at \$103 per barrel. Locally, pump prices have been hiked for the past 11 straight weeks for gasoline, and 13 for both diesel and kerosene, amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Chaired by the DBM, the DBCC counts as members the Department of Finance (DOF), the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DepDev), and the Office of the President.
<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/981462/ph-econ-team-to-hold-special-meeting-on-fuel-excise-tax-suspension-next-week/story/>
- ✓ **Marcos economic team in talks with multilateral lenders for power, fuel funding.** President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s chief economic manager said the economic team is in dialogue with the Philippines’ development partners, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to secure ample funding for the country’s power and fuel needs. “We are in constant discussion with our development partners. We have gone through external shocks before; thus, these facilities have been refined to address the country’s needs,” Finance Secretary Frederick D. Go told Manila Bulletin on Thursday, March 26. This was Go’s response to Manila Bulletin’s query on whether the national government (NG) has already taken steps to seal financing deals with the Manila-based multilateral lender related to the state of national energy emergency in its host country. While refusing to disclose the size the government has set its sights on, Go explained that credit facilities being extended by the country’s development partners are designed to cushion government spending. This, he said, directly ripples through health, education, and social spending, which seriously burdens vulnerable sectors.
<https://mb.com.ph/2026/03/26/marcos-economic-team-in-talks-with-multilateral-lenders-for-power-fuel-funding>
- ✓ **Australia grants the Philippines P1.8B to boost business, job creation.** Through the Department of Finance (DOF), the Australian \$45-million grant will be implemented under a flagship initiative of Canberra. This is the Promoting Growth, Resilience, Economic Stability and Sustainability in the Philippines Program or Progress. “Progress aims to help the country overcome barriers to economic growth,” the DOF said in a statement. “This means addressing slow formal job creation; income inequality; systemic barriers affecting women, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups; global and regional uncertainties; and vulnerability to climate-related shocks,” it added. According to the DOF, an implementing managing contractor (IMC) will carry out Progress. The DOF and Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will joint supervise and manage the IMC. Other partner agencies include the Anti-Red Tape Authority, Department of Energy, Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Economy, Planning and Development. The grant comes at a critical time for the Philippines, as the number of unemployed Filipinos rose to 2.96 million in January. This translated to an unemployment rate of 5.8 percent—the highest since June 2022. State statisticians earlier warned that the figure could rise further due to disruptions from the escalating Middle East war. This is now expected to weigh on the overall Philippine economy.
<https://business.inquirer.net/581644/australia-grants-the-philippines-p1-8b-to-boost-business-job-creation>
- ✓ **Balisacan appears lukewarm over proposed tax on super rich.** During a Malacañang press briefing on Thursday, Palace press officer and Undersecretary Claire Castro was asked about the opinion of former National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Winnie Monsod that suspending excise taxes on fuel is not the way to go since the rich would also benefit from it. Instead, Monsod suggested a wealth tax — which Castro said is an economist’s dream according to Balisacan. However, Balisacan’s next sentences — as read by Castro — enumerated risks and concerns about a wealth tax. “A wealth tax slows wealth concentration over generations — such concentration translates into political and economic power leading to market failures, slowing economic growth and further weakening inclusivity,” Balisacan noted, as relayed by Castro. “Implementing or administering a wealth tax is never easy. Most countries that have tried it, such as Germany, France, and Sweden, abandoned it because of its administrative complexity and the low revenue it generated. Moreover, a wealth tax may encourage capital flight especially when imposed during an economic crisis,” he added. This is not the first time that a tax on the super rich has been proposed: in August 2023, during the 19th Congress’ deliberation on the then-proposed 2024 national budget, former Kabataan party-list Rep. Raoul Manuel told the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) that a better way to extract revenues would be to tax billionaires.

- ✓ **Oil players favor VAT removal.** As the prices of fuel products surge, oil players have expressed support for removing the value-added tax to lower costs—a sentiment that has been reiterated by various transport groups. In a Senate hearing on Thursday, March 26, the Department of Finance (DOF) expressed hesitation about proposals to remove the VAT. DOF Undersecretary Karlo Adriano said that exempting fuel products from VAT may have counterproductive results. He explained that VAT applies to both input and output, so removing VAT at the output level while retaining it at the input level may pass the costs down to consumers. However, Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (IPPCA) President Tanya Samillano said that this could easily be resolved. Samillano said that removing VAT upon importation eliminates costs on the company's end. Ordinary Filipinos would feel the difference. Executives from major petroleum companies agreed, favoring the removal of VAT on fuel products. "Actually, from a technical point of view, the VAT will be faster to implement but indeed it should be end-to-end, so source to end," Shell Pilipinas President Lorelie Quiambao-Osial said. Petron General Manager Lubin Nepomuceno agreed, calling it an "industry position."
<https://www.philstar.com/business/2026/03/26/2516974/oil-players-favor-vat-removal>
- ✓ **ERC suspends electricity spot market operations.** The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has suspended the operations of the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) in the Philippines. All energy transactions – like the demand and supply of electricity – are scheduled through the market. This means electricity prices are governed by commercial and market forces. With the suspension of the WESM, the government is implementing a modified administered pricing mechanism, which is currently under consultation with stakeholders and may be finalized by April 1. The ERC said a modified pricing mechanism is needed because power prices from January and February — which under the prevailing rules are the basis for the administered prices — no longer reflect current conditions amid fuel price constraints. ERC Commissioner Francis Saturnino Juan said the agency was doing this to protect Filipino consumers while ensuring that the country's power supply remained stable and reliable. The ERC said the rules would remain in effect until it determines that conditions are suitable for the resumption of normal market operations.
<https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/business/2026/3/26/erc-suspends-electricity-spot-market-operations-1217>
- ✓ **PH nickel sector seen to expand role in global supply chains.** The country's nickel sector is poised to play a larger role in global critical minerals supply chains as demand rises, the Philippine Nickel Industry Association (PNIA) said Thursday. PNIA said according to the International Energy Agency, demand for nickel and other critical minerals – used in electric vehicles, renewable energy, and infrastructure – is expected to grow significantly over the coming decades as countries accelerate the transition to low-carbon energy systems. "The Philippines remains a major player in the global nickel market, with PNIA members accounting for around 73 percent of national output and total production reaching 37.81 million dry metric tons in 2025," PNIA Executive Director Charmaine Olea-Capili said in a statement. The Philippines ranks sixth globally in nickel reserves and remains a key supplier to international markets. Data provided by PNIA showed that the country represented 95 percent of global nickel ore exports, with about 55 million wet metric tons exported. PNIA said that in 2025, China was the country's top export market, accounting for 66 percent of exports, although its share had declined from 78 percent in 2024 as Indonesia increased imports from the Philippines. PNIA noted that the global nickel industry remains positioned for long-term growth, supported by industrial demand and the energy transition, despite near-term challenges. Opportunities include sustained demand from emerging economies, increasing interest in supply chain diversification, and continued investment in processing capacity. The industry, however, faces near-term pressures, including a potential market surplus, evolving battery technologies, and slower-than-expected electric vehicle adoption in some markets. PNIA said geopolitical tensions, particularly in the Middle East, are also disrupting global shipping routes and increasing logistics and fuel costs, which may impact mineral supply chains. PNIA is strengthening regional cooperation through the IndoPhil Nickel Corridor, which aligns the Philippines and Indonesia, two of the world's leading nickel producers, in building more integrated, resilient, and sustainable critical mineral supply chains.
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1271834>
- ✓ **CREIT net income steady at P1.4B in 2025.** Citicore Energy REIT Corp. (CREIT) reported a net income of P1.43 billion in 2025, reflecting stable earnings from its solar lease portfolio. In a statement Thursday, the company said revenues held steady at P1.88 billion. This was supported by long-term leases of solar power plants and land parcels for renewable energy projects.
<https://business.inquirer.net/581698/creit-net-income-steady-at-p1-4b-in-2025>
- ✓ **GT Capital core profit rises 8% to P30.5B in 2025.** GT Capital Holdings Inc. posted an 8-percent rise in core net income to P30.47 billion in 2025, driven by steady operations. The conglomerate said on Thursday its consolidated net income jumped 17 percent to P33.68 billion, reflecting strong contributions from key units. Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. and Toyota Motor Philippines led growth with record earnings. Metro Pacific Investments sustained solid core profit expansion. The holding firm said it remains well-positioned to capture growth opportunities despite global uncertainties, backed by a diversified portfolio.
<https://business.inquirer.net/581628/gt-capital-core-profit-rises-8-to-p30-5b-in-2025>
- ✓ **Meralco urges more firms to join interruptible load program.** The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) is urging more companies to join the interruptible load program (ILP), a voluntary plan where businesses can temporarily cut electricity use to help keep the power grid stable, as global fuel prices continue to rise amid the Middle East conflict. According to Meralco, it is proactively calling on more customers to increase the available de-loading capacity under the ILP, which currently has 105 companies enrolled for a total de-loading capacity of 513 megawatts. "For the benefit of the participants, the frequency of de-loading may be reduced if we can call on more customers. Within the ILP participant pool, we can also rotate who will be called to de-load," Meralco Generation and Transmission Economics lead specialist Ma. Leticia Sapina added. Meralco said the ILP has spared as many as 3 million households from rotating power interruptions since its implementation in 2014. The Department of Energy (DOE) earlier ordered power industry players to save fuel and manage supply more carefully to ensure the stability of electricity and prevent sharp price hikes, following the declaration of a state of national energy emergency.
<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/981465/meralco-urges-more-firms-to-join-interruptible-load-program/story/>
- ✓ **PAL to halt select flights from Cebu and Clark indefinitely.** Philippine Airlines (PAL) on Thursday said it is suspending several international and domestic flights starting mid-April through May as it adjusts its network in response to "changing conditions affecting global aviation." In an advisory, the flag carrier said the schedule changes will affect select routes from Cebu and Clark. Some suspensions are set to run "until further notice." Among international routes, PAL will suspend Cebu-Guam (PR120/121) flights starting April 16. The flag carrier did not specify the exact duration of the suspensions. It said only that adjustments will remain in place "until further notice" as it continues to monitor operating conditions.

"PAL is working to minimize disruption and will continue to review these routes as conditions improve," the airline said. Further, cargo operations on the affected routes will also be disrupted.

<https://business.inquirer.net/581662/pal-to-halt-select-flights-from-cebu-and-clark-indefinitely>

- ✓ **Russian oil delivery in Bataan consigned to Petron.** The Russian crude oil shipment that arrived in Limay, Bataan earlier this week was consigned to Petron Corp., according to shipping documents cited by Agence France-Presse. The Sierra Leone-flagged tanker Sara Sky delivered about 700,000 barrels of high-quality crude from Russia's ESPO pipeline, with Petron — operator of the country's only refinery — listed as consignee, the report said. Philstar.com first reported the vessel's arrival earlier this week, following disclosures that the government and private firms were exploring alternative fuel sources, including Russian supply, after a temporary easing of US sanctions. Petron CEO Ramon Ang earlier said the company was "in talks" to purchase Russian oil, but later declined to confirm the specific shipment. The cargo arrived a day before President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared a national energy emergency, as global oil prices surged amid disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. A temporary US sanctions window has allowed countries to purchase Russian oil cargoes already at sea.
<https://www.philstar.com/business/2026/03/26/2516968/russian-oil-delivery-bataan-consigned-petron>
- ✓ **Shell Pilipinas ends 2025 with P2.1-B profit.** Shell Pilipinas Corp. finished 2025 with a surge in net income reaching P2.1 billion, despite a challenging market. In a statement, the oil firm said its profit soared by 68 percent from P1.25 billion a year ago. The company's core earnings likewise jumped 28 percent to P3.3 billion. Lorelie Quiambao Osial, president and CEO of Shell Pilipinas, said 2025 marked a year of steady progress for Shell Pilipinas, with stronger results delivered quarter after quarter.
<https://business.inquirer.net/581642/shell-pilipinas-ends-2025-with-p2-1-b-profit>
- ✓ **FFCCCII backs Marcos push for Philippine-China joint energy exploration.** The Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII) has expressed support for the government's move to revive joint oil and gas exploration talks with China, citing the need for energy security amid global volatility. "FFCCCII welcomes the pronouncement of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. regarding the prospective reset of the discussions on joint oil and gas explorations in the West Philippine Sea," FFCCCII president Victor Lim said in a statement on Thursday, March 26. The business group's statement comes as Manila and Beijing signal openness to resume dialogue on energy cooperation, even as territorial disputes persist. Lim emphasized the importance of balancing geopolitical tensions with economic cooperation, particularly in the energy sector. For FFCCCII, rising global energy risks—exacerbated by ongoing conflicts and supply uncertainties—underscore the urgency of securing stable energy sources for the Philippines, a net oil importer. The group also called for broader support from stakeholders, stressing the economic benefits of maintaining engagement with key partners. The renewed push for joint exploration comes as the Philippines grapples with energy supply risks and price volatility, prompting the government to explore both domestic and international solutions to ensure long-term energy security.
<https://mb.com.ph/2026/03/26/ffcccii-backs-marcos-push-for-philippine-china-joint-energy-exploration>
- ✓ **Manufacturers scramble to tighten operations as costly energy bites.** Manufacturers are recalibrating operations to absorb rising energy costs driven by the Middle East crisis, shifting production to off-peak hours and adopting more flexible work setups to keep factories running. In a statement on Wednesday, the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) said uninterrupted production remains the top priority for local manufacturers, even as higher fuel prices ripple through electricity, transport and raw material costs. "Firms are prioritizing uninterrupted production while safeguarding workforce stability, even as margins tighten," FPI chair Elizabeth Lee said, noting that mitigation measures are being intensified across operations. President Marcos has declared a state of national energy emergency, triggering the rollout of the Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (Uplift), a whole-of-government response to cushion sectors from global energy shocks. The FPI described the Uplift framework as "timely and necessary" to help industries manage the spillover effects of the Iran war. Lee earlier warned that a weakening peso and rising energy costs could deliver a double whammy for Philippine manufacturers, especially domestic-oriented industries, as both drive up fuel prices and the cost of imported inputs. Beyond short-term measures, the industry is also accelerating longer-term adjustments, including diversifying supply chains and expanding local sourcing where viable to reduce exposure to global shocks. "This crisis magnified our country's vulnerabilities," Lee said. "Reforms that will deepen and expand local manufacturing as a national imperative will help the Philippines secure resilience, drive job creation, and help better shield the Philippine economy from global energy shocks."
<https://business.inquirer.net/581481/manufacturers-scramble-to-tighten-operations-as-costly-energy-bites>



- ✓ **Asia markets trade mixed as Iran rules out direct U.S. talks despite reviewing proposal.** Asia-Pacific markets traded mixed on Thursday after Iran signaled it had no intention of holding direct talks with the United States, even as Tehran reviews an American proposal to end the war, according to the Islamic Republic's foreign minister. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that an exchange of messages between the two countries through mediators "does not mean negotiations with the U.S.," Reuters reported. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was flat in early trade. Japan's Nikkei 225 added 0.28%, while the Topix rose 0.43%. South Korea's Kospi slid 1.55% and the small-cap Kosdaq was little changed. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index futures were at 25,268 compared with the index's last close of 25,335.95.
<https://www.cnbc.com/2026/03/26/asia-pacific-markets-live-updates-nikkei-225-kospi-hang-seng-index.html>
- ✓ **FTSE 100 Falls on Thursday.** The FTSE 100 dropped more than 1% on Thursday after two sessions of gains, tracking broader declines across Europe and the US as oil prices moved higher and geopolitical uncertainty persisted. Confusion around potential peace talks between the US and Iran continued to weigh on sentiment. Meanwhile, BRC data showed consumer confidence weakened sharply amid inflation concerns, with expectations hitting a record low.
<https://tradingeconomics.com/united-kingdom/stock-market/news/536633>
- ✓ **US stocks: Wall Street slumps as Middle East uncertainty spooks investors.** Wall Street's main indexes fell sharply on Thursday and the Nasdaq confirmed a correction as investors worried about escalation in the US-Israeli war against Iran, which has sent oil prices soaring

and exacerbated inflation concerns. The lack of clear signs of progress sent oil prices soaring, with US crude futures settling up 4.6 per cent compared with a 5.7 per cent advance for Brent futures. As a result, stock indexes erased gains from Wednesday when investors had been betting on a de-escalation in the war, which has disrupted oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. According to preliminary data, the S&P 500 lost 114.79 points, or 1.74 per cent, to end at 6,476.89 points, while the Nasdaq Composite lost 513.56 points, or 2.34 per cent, to 21,416.27. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 481.68 points, or 1.04 per cent, to 45,955.00.

<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/capital-markets-currencies/us-stocks-wall-street-slumps-middle-east-uncertainty-spoos-investors>

- ✓ **Brent Climbs on MidEast Uncertainty.** Brent crude futures rose above \$104 per barrel on Thursday, recovering part of the previous session's losses amid conflicting statements from the US and Iran on efforts to end the conflict that has roiled global energy markets. Iran said it has no intention of entering talks with the US and would reject a proposed ceasefire, instead outlining its own conditions including sovereign control over the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, the White House maintained that peace efforts are ongoing, with Washington reportedly sending a 15-point proposal to Iran via Pakistan aimed at resolving the conflict and reopening the critical waterway. The near-closure of Hormuz has severely disrupted global oil flows, resulting in the loss of millions of barrels of daily supply. While some vessels continue to transit under Iranian protection, US allies in the Asia-Pacific, including South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines, are grappling with a worsening fuel shortage.
<https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/brent-crude-oil/news/536449>
- ✓ **Gold Stabilizes as Trump Extends Iran Talks.** Gold steadied around \$4,400 per ounce on Friday after a sharp decline in the previous session, as President Donald Trump pushed back his deadline for Iran to secure a deal to end the war. Trump pledged to refrain from targeting Iranian energy facilities until April 6, providing some relief to markets unsettled by nearly a month of hostilities. He also said Iran had allowed 10 oil tankers to pass through the Strait of Hormuz this week as a "present" to the US. Meanwhile, Iran confirmed it had rejected the US' 15-point plan to end the war and submitted its own conditions, including recognition of Tehran's authority over Hormuz. On Thursday, gold dropped nearly 3% amid persistent doubts that the US and Iran can reach a ceasefire agreement any time soon. Gold and other metals came under heavy selling pressure as the Middle East conflict and surging energy prices fueled inflation concerns and raised expectations that major central banks could hike interest rates this year.
<https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/gold/news/536832>
- ✓ **Japan shifts focus to oil in unorthodox scramble to talk up yen.** Japan is weighing a controversial plan to arrest the yen's slide: stepping into oil futures markets, sources say, as long-standing policy tools lose traction against stubborn inflation pressures. Details of the proposal remain scant, after Reuters reported on Monday that it was under discussion, but the idea underscores Tokyo's mounting frustration. Policymakers increasingly see speculative surges in energy prices as a major driver of the yen's weakness against the dollar - and a problem monetary easing and verbal intervention no longer seem able to contain. Analysts and even some in the government, however, question whether such a strategy would have any meaningful impact in arresting the yen's current weakness, which they mostly attribute to dollar strength, rather than speculative yen short-selling. Market sources have told Reuters Japan's government is considering intervening in the crude oil futures market as the Middle East crisis drives energy prices up sharply. Japanese law allows use of foreign exchange reserves, preserved as a war chest for direct currency-market intervention, to take positions in futures markets if the objective is to stabilise the yen. The idea is being contemplated within the government, though there is no consensus on its feasibility, said three government sources with knowledge of the deliberations. The shift in the government's tactics has been signalled in government officials' recent comments. Instead of warning against speculative trading in the foreign exchange market, Finance Minister Satsuki Katayama on Tuesday blamed speculative moves in crude oil futures markets for swaying the foreign exchange market.
<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/business/japan-shifts-focus-oil-in-unorthodox-scramble-talk-up-yen-6017916>
- ✓ **Bank of Korea flags financial stability risks as Iran war fallout persists.** The Bank of Korea (BOK) said that the country's financial system remained broadly stable in March, but warned that escalating Middle East tensions and structural vulnerabilities could amplify risks across markets. BOK board member Lee Soohyung, who led the latest financial stability review, said financial institution resilience and solid external payment capacity have helped maintain overall stability. Still, she flagged a range of latent risks that could quickly surface under adverse conditions. Lee pointed to the potential for heightened volatility in foreign exchange and financial markets as geopolitical tensions in the Middle East could trigger asset price corrections and cross-border capital shifts, according to a statement from the BOK that cited Lee's views. The BOK's report follows Prime Minister Kim Min-seok's call on Wednesday (Mar 25) to further strengthen a preemptive response system, including preparations for worst-case scenarios, as turmoil in the Middle East is likely to be prolonged. The South Korean economy is facing "a complex challenge", with upside risks to inflation and downside risks to growth both elevated amid the possibility of prolonged Middle East tensions, the BOK statement said, citing Lee, who called for contingency plans to prepare for multiple scenarios. The challenge is also set to confront Hyun Song Shin, the former head of research at the Bank for International Settlements, as he takes over as BOK governor next month. Economists expect he will lean towards a cautious but proactive stance, having previously emphasised the need for central banks to act early against inflation risks.
<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/banking-finance/bank-korea-flags-financial-stability-risks-iran-war-fallout-persists>
- ✓ **Singapore Manufacturing Output Falls for 1st Time in 6 Months.** Singapore's manufacturing production fell by 0.1% year-on-year in February 2026, reversing a 12.9% surge in the previous month. This marked the first month of decline in manufacturing activity since August last year, driven by weaker output across nearly all sub-sectors except electronics. On a monthly basis, manufacturing output decreased by 7.2% in February, slipping from a 2% rise in the preceding period.
<https://tradingeconomics.com/singapore/industrial-production/news/536520>
- ✓ **Hong Kong plans tax cuts for asset managers, FT reports.** Hong Kong plans to change rules on carried interest that could allow asset managers to earn performance fees free of tax, the Financial Times reported on Thursday, citing people familiar with the matter. Under a bill that the legislative council will consider "imminently", profit from a range of investments would be eligible for tax treatment as carried interest, rather than just profit from private equity transactions, the newspaper reported.
<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/business/hong-kong-plans-tax-cuts-asset-managers-ft-reports-6017811>
- ✓ **German Consumer Morale Weakest in Two Years.** Germany's GfK Consumer Climate Indicator dropped to -28 heading into April 2026, from a marginally revised -24.8 in the previous period, and coming in worse than market expectations of -26.5. This is the weakest reading since March 2024, as households brace for a surge in energy costs linked to the Iran conflict, which could fuel inflation. Economic expectations deteriorated sharply to -6.9 (from 4.3 in March), as consumers worry that the German economy's slow recovery could be derailed if

the conflict persists. Income expectations also slid into negative territory at -6.3 (vs 6.3), reflecting concerns that rising energy costs may erode purchasing power. The willingness to buy declined further to -10.9 (vs -9.3), signaling subdued consumption, while the propensity to save remained elevated at 18.5 (vs 18.9), underscoring continued caution among households.
<https://tradingeconomics.com/germany/consumer-confidence/news/536548>

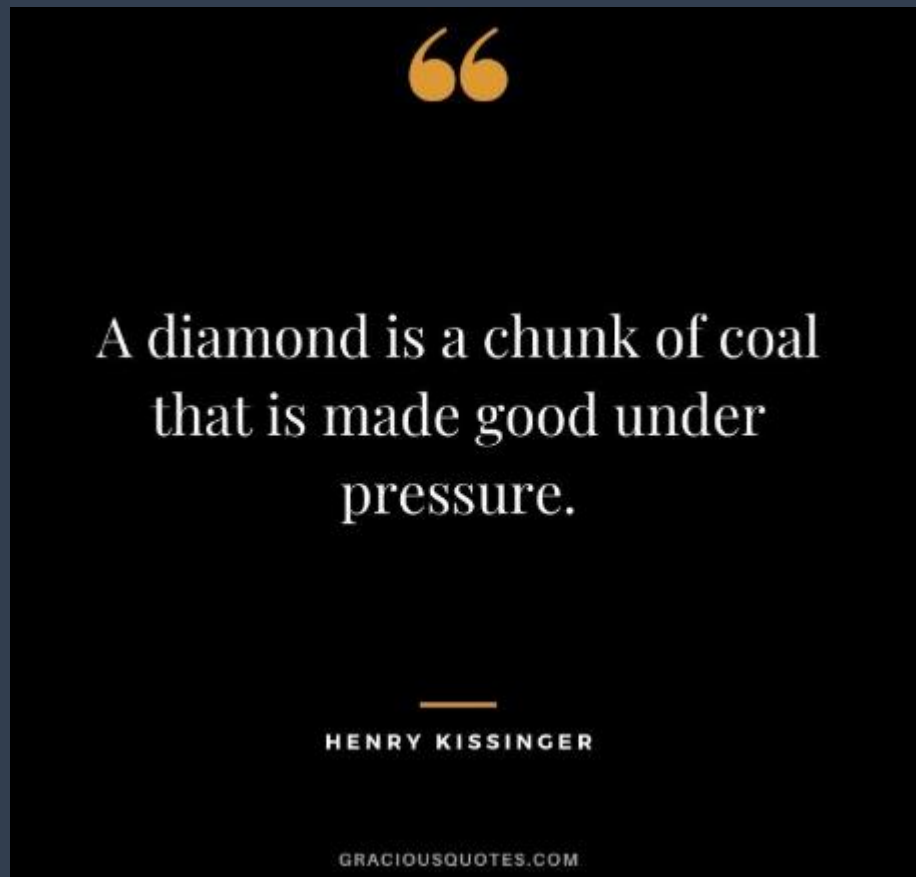
- ✓ **UK household confidence plunges to lowest under Starmer.** The threat of surging inflation has knocked UK consumer confidence to the lowest level recorded under Keir Starmer's Labour government. The British Retail Consortium said on Thursday (Mar 26) that its measure of expectations for the economy over the next three months plunged to minus 53 in March from minus 30 previously – the worst reading since the tracker began in March 2024. UK households were already cautious with their spending before the US and Israel attacked Iran on Feb 28, and this data suggests people will tighten their belts even more in response to a spike in inflation caused by the war. A survey on Tuesday also showed higher costs are rapidly feeding through to businesses, particularly manufacturers who saw the biggest pick-up in input cost inflation since Black Wednesday in 1992. With household saving rates already historically high, the tumble in confidence could put renewed pressure on the economy at a time when the Labour government is trying to boost growth. The PM said on Wednesday that he will “put in place appropriate support” on household energy bills.
<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/international/uk-household-confidence-plunges-lowest-under-starmer>
- ✓ **Bank of England likely to hold not hike rates as inflation stays at 3%.** Current pricing for the Bank of England looks extreme. Markets are pricing three hikes this year, albeit those expectations are likely being distorted by poor liquidity in the swaps market. We don't think it is at all clear that the bar for rate hikes has been met, at current levels of oil and gas prices. Our revised Bank of England base case is a pause throughout 2026, with rate cuts resuming in early 2027. Admittedly, nobody knows exactly where the threshold for hikes truly lies; last week's meeting didn't give much away. But last summer, Bank research suggested that second round effects tend to become more pronounced when headline inflation exceeds 3.5-4%. This is a helpful line in the sand. We think 2025, not 2022, is the playbook for how the economy is likely to respond to the current crisis. For the Bank to hike rates – something that clearly can't be ruled out – we think we'd need to see oil prices sustained at 120 USD/bbl or above, or European natural gas prices in excess of 70 EUR/MWh. That would take inflation materially above 4%. A sizeable energy support package would also substantially raise the chances of rate rises. Currently that looks unlikely, though the political backdrop is volatile going into May's local elections.
<https://think.ing.com/snaps/bank-of-england-set-to-hold-not-hike-rates-as-inflation-stays-at-3/>
- ✓ **Trump team examines what oil as high as US\$200 a barrel would mean.** Trump administration officials are examining what a potential spike in oil prices as high as US\$200 a barrel would mean for the economy, according to sources familiar with the matter, a sign senior officials are studying the possible fallout from extreme scenarios for the Iran war. Modelling of how damaging a bigger jump in oil prices could be to growth prospects is part of regular assessment done during times of strain and is not a prediction, according to the sources, who asked not to be identified, commenting on matters that are not public. The effort is aimed at making sure the administration is prepared for all contingencies, including a prolonged conflict, they said. Even before the war began, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent expressed concern that the conflict would boost oil prices and damage economic growth, the sources said. Senior Treasury officials have communicated worries to the White House about swings in oil and petrol prices for several weeks, some of the sources said. White House spokesperson Kush Desai called that account “false”, saying, “While the administration is always evaluating various pricing scenarios and economic impacts, officials are not examining the possibility of oil reaching US\$200 per barrel and Secretary Bessent has not been ‘worried’ about the short-term disruptions from Operation Epic Fury.” Crude at US\$200 would be an enormous shock to the world economy. In inflation-adjusted terms, the price has hit that level only once in the last half-century – in 2008, just before the global financial crisis. Even at lower levels, Bloomberg Economics forecasts that oil at US\$170 per barrel for a few months would push inflation higher for the US and Europe and cut economic growth. In the US, the most visible impact has been a 30 per cent increase in retail petrol prices, wiping away declines over the last year that Trump had touted as a key economic achievement. The outlook for US monetary policy is also increasingly muddled as the Federal Reserve watches for the impact of higher oil prices on inflation. Last week, Fed chair Jerome Powell said that it was too soon to gauge the effects of a surge in oil prices on the US economy.
<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/energy-commodities/trump-team-examines-what-oil-high-us200-barrel-would-mean>
- ✓ **US Fed's Jefferson: sustained higher energy prices could worsen inflation, spending outlook.** Federal Reserve Vice Chair Philip Jefferson on Thursday said he is keeping a watchful eye on higher energy prices, which, if sustained, could worsen inflation but also slow consumer and business spending, creating a challenging situation for a central bank tasked with price stability and full employment. For now, though, Fed policy is “appropriately positioned,” he said in remarks prepared for delivery to an event at the Dallas Fed. “The current policy stance should continue to support the labour market while allowing inflation to resume its decline toward our 2 per cent target as the effects of tariff pass-through are completed,” Jefferson said. “Ongoing trade policy uncertainty and geopolitical tensions, however, pose upside risk to my inflation forecast,” he said. “At least in the short term I expect overall inflation to move higher, reflecting a rise in energy prices stemming from the conflict in the Middle East.” And while the effect of a short-term rise in energy prices will last only a quarter or two, he said, sustained higher oil prices could have a more material effect. Jefferson forecast the US economy to grow at around 2 per cent this year or slightly faster, helped by investment in artificial intelligence, federal deregulation and an uptick in business formation. But he also noted headwinds and uncertainty from the conflict in the Middle East.
<https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/banking-finance/us-feds-jefferson-sustained-higher-energy-prices-could-worsen-inflation-spending-outlook>
- ✓ **Oil giants raise the alarm over energy shortages as Iran war drags on.** A trio of European energy CEOs has sounded a warning over energy supplies, amid the ongoing conflict in Iran and restricted access through the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz. Amid volatile trade, crude prices have surged around 40% in recent weeks, at one point approaching \$120 a barrel as investors raised concerns over a potential lack of supply. Those concerns have been felt particularly in Asian countries so far, with the Philippines announcing an energy emergency, while South Korea says it is preparing for “worst-case scenarios.” But now there are fears the supply concerns will move westward. “South Asia was first to get that brunt. That's moved to Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and then more so into Europe as we get into April,” Shell CEO Wael Sawan said at CERAWEEK in Houston, Texas. Sawan warned governments not to take actions that could magnify the impact of supply disruptions, adding that you cannot have “national security without energy security.” TotalEnergies CEO Patrick Pouyanné said the current oil products market is “dislocated,” telling CNBC that this is why “you see the impact in many countries, in Europe, on the gasoline price, diesel price, people being very unhappy.” Enquest, a North Sea-focused oil producer, also warned of a “significant” impact in the medium-to-longer term, with 2 to 3 million barrels per day removed from the market amid lost production, telling CNBC that excess capacity is gone “for years.” Speaking on “Squawk Box Europe” on Wednesday, CEO Amjad Bseisu also expressed his concern over what comes next for the Strait of Hormuz, saying “the future is not clear.”

UPCOMING BAIPHIL WEBINARS



TRAINING PROGRAMS		PROGRAM DETAILS		
COMMITTEE	TITLE	DATE	COURSE OUTLINE	REGISTRATION LINK
Finance and Audit Course Committee (FACCOM)	Accounting for Non-Accountants (with Financial Statement Analysis)	May 14 – 15, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Auditing the Cybersecurity Function	April 17, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Independent Assurance Assessment of Retail Branch Banking's AML Regulatory Compliance Culture & Ethical Culture and their AML Risk Governance & Controls	May 28 – 29, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Establishing, Maintaining, and Auditing Internal Control in Banks	April 18, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
Governance, Legal, Regulatory and Compliance (GLRC) Course Committee	Basic Course on Corporate Governance	April 7, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
Information Technology and Security Course (ITSEC) Committee	Cloud Security	March 30, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Advanced Excel Training for Bankers	April 27-28, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Artificial Management Fundamentals	May 12, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	IT Service Management Fundamentals	May 19, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Excel VBA Programming	May 21-22, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Intermediate Excel Training for Bankers	June 25-26, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
Leadership Effectiveness Course (LEC) Committee	Writing for Impact: Strengthening Your Business Communication Skills (Module 3 of the Effective Business Writing)	March 27, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Effective Business Writing: Professionalizing Your Communication Skills (Module 1)	April 14, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Leadership Effectiveness and Advancement Program (LEAP) – A Program for Managers	April 23-24, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Effective Business Writing: Level Up (Module 2)	May 5, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Conflict Resolution & Management	May 14, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Basic Leadership & Effective Supervision Seminar (BLESS) – A Program for Supervisors	May 22, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
Products, Bank Operations and Management (PBOM) Course Committee	Fundamentals of Credit: Module 8 – Credit Lending Process	April 16 – 17, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Fraud and Forgery Detection and Prevention Program	April 29, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Know Your Money and Counterfeit Detection	April 30, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Remedial Management	May 7 – 8, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Basic Identification Documents, Business Documents & Income Documents Verification	May 28, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Signature Verification and Forgery Detection	May 29, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Fraud and Forgery Detection and Prevention Program	June 24, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Know Your Money and Counterfeit Detection	June 25, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
Risk Management Course (RMC) Committee	Fundamentals of Security Incident Management	April 13, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Implementing a Circular Economy Aligned to ISO 59020 & UN SDGs	April 15, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Environmental, Social, & Governance	April 27, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Third Party Risk Management	May 11, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE

	Fraud Risk Management Professional Training Program	May 20, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Methodologies for IFRS 9 ECL Modeling	June 5, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE
	Enterprise Risk Management	June 16, 2026	PROGRAM DETAILS	REGISTER HERE



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- 1 Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/finance/currencies>
- 2 Philippine Dealing System: <http://www.pds.com.ph/>
- 3 Philippine Stock Exchange: <http://www.pse.com.ph/stockMarket/home.html>
- 4 Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/markets/stocks>
- 5 Bloomberg: <https://www.bloomberg.com/markets/commodities>
- 6 CNN Money: <https://money.cnn.com/data/bonds/>

OTHER REFERENCES / EXTERNAL LINKS

- > Philippine Stock Exchange: <http://www.pse.com.ph/stockMarket/home.html>
- > Philippine Dealing System: <http://www.pds.com.ph/>
- > GMA News Online: <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/>
- > BPI Asset Management: <https://www.bpiassetmanagement.com/>
- > Business World: <http://bworldonline.com/>
- > Philippine Daily Inquirer: <http://business.inquirer.net/>
- > Philippine Star: <https://www.philstar.com/business/>
- > ABS-CBN News: <http://news.abs-cbn.com/business/>
- > Manila Bulletin: <https://mb.com.ph/>
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- > Philippine Statistics Authority: <https://psa.gov.ph/>
- > Trading Economics: <https://tradingeconomics.com/>
- > South China Morning Post: <http://www.scmp.com/>
- > Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp>
- > The Japan News: <http://www.the-japan-news.com>
- > Market Watch: <https://www.marketwatch.com/>
- > Asia Nikkei: <https://asia.nikkei.com/>
- > Straits Times: <https://www.straitstimes.com/global>
- > Channel News Asia: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/>
- > CNBC: <https://www.cnbc.com/>
- > The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/>
- > Gulf News: <https://gulfnews.com/>

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