

ASEAN Bulletin

8 March 2024

February in ASEAN



- The MSCI Singapore Index ticked up this month and outperformed the Singapore Times Index (STI), largely due to strength in Sea Ltd. (+20.7% in SGD terms, reflecting expectations of improving profitability)
- Singapore announced a broadly GDP-neutral 2024 budget with a fiscal surplus of S\$0.8bn (0.1% of GDP). Budget 2024 was primarily designed to avoid stoking inflation and consists of various measures focused on alleviating cost pressures on households.
- For the month, Financials, Industrials and Tech outperformed, while REITs, Real Estate developers and Utilities lagged.



- The FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI (FBM KLCI) index maintained its upward trajectory. Year-to-date (YTD), the index has risen by 6.7% in RM terms.
- Foreign investors continued to purchase Malaysian stocks for the fourth consecutive month, pushing the foreign ownership level of the local bourse to 19.9% by the end of February 2024, up from 19.5% at the end of December 2023.
- GDP growth in 4Q23 disappoints due to a weakness in exports, which outweighed robust domestic demand.



- In February 2024, the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) recovered slightly, supported by the strongest expansion in exports in 19 months.
- GDP for 4Q23 was fell weaker-than-expected as public investment declined 20% due to delays in Budget approval.
- Foreign investors turned net buyers for the first time in 13 months, with a total of THB2.86 billion, after being net sellers of THB30.9 billion in January 2024.



- The market rebounded in February 2024 as the ongoing vote counts pointed to a landslide victory for Prabowo-Gibran at ~58%, reducing the political overhang.
- Financials, Infrastructures, and Healthcare sectors outperformed, while Tech, Transportation & Logistics, and Basic Materials lagged behind.
- Bank Indonesia maintained its policy rate at 6%, aligning with its strategy to target inflation within 1.5 to 3.5% range for 2024.



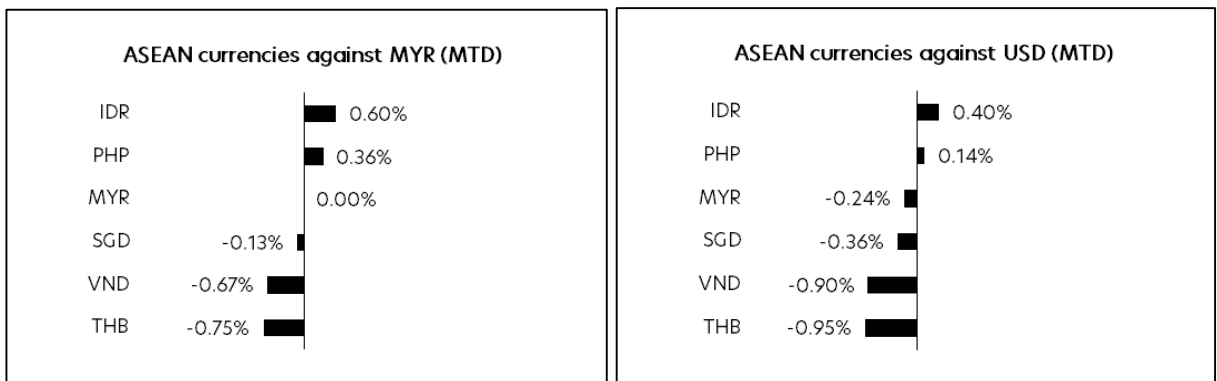
- The MSCI Philippines Index surged 5.3% in USD terms in February 2024, driven by upbeat economic data. (An improved unemployment rate of 3.1% in December 2023 and a surge in manufacturing output to a 2-year high.
- The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) maintained its policy rate at 6.5%.
- The Manila Airport rehabilitation project was awarded to an SMC-led consortium.



- Vietnam's stock market rose by 7.6% in February 2024, delivered a YTD return of 10.9%.
- The strong performance was fueled by increased investor confidence amid low interest rates, a global market rally, and strong macroeconomic data.
- All sectors contributed positively to the Vietnam Stock Index (VN-INDEX), with Banking, Materials, and Real Estate leading the way.

ASEAN Currencies

Riding the waves against USD and MYR



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