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**GOLDEN ACRES NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL- SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**  
Mansanitas St., Golden Acres Subd., Talon Uno, Las Piñas City

**JEEPNEY FARE IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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**AHRIEL ANNE L. MANDREZA**

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(02) 8-722-3686  
[ganhs-shs@depedlaspinas.ph](mailto:ganhs-shs@depedlaspinas.ph)  
[www.depedlaspinas.ph](http://www.depedlaspinas.ph)

## JEEPNEY FARE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Ahriel Anne L. Mandreza

“Have you ever wondered why the fare for a short jeepney ride in the Philippines can be less than the price of a candy bar?” The answer lies in the complex web of economic challenges faced by both commuters and drivers. Jeepneys are the most popular mode of public transportation in the Philippines, serving as a lifeline for many commuters. They are known for their vibrant designs and crowded seating. However, the fare system has been a subject of debate and controversy, raising questions about its fairness and sustainability. The jeepney fare should be adjusted to reflect the rising costs of operation and ensure fair compensation for drivers, in order to improve the quality of service and address the economic struggles faced by drivers.

Some argue that vehicles contribute to pollution and various accidents due to the improper maintenance and inefficient engines of these vehicles. According to the philstar.com news as reported by Guas Abelgas on March 15, 2017. The polluted air that the people of Metro Manila breathe is really bad compared to the provinces. The pollution level is said to be high in Manila, where experts recommend wearing face masks. According to The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) data in 2016, the pollution recorded in Manila was 120 micrograms per cubic meter, 30 micrograms higher than the standard level of only 90 micrograms per cubic meter. It also appears that the smoke coming from vehicles is the main cause of severe pollution in Metro Manila. Here it can be seen that the old and dilapidated vehicles should be removed from the streets. Apart from the danger it may cause on the road, it is still a health hazard. There is no denying that many vehicles running on the streets today are no longer being monitored by the authorities even though they are emitting terrible black smoke. Most of them are buses on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) and jeeps on the main streets. Poor those following these vehicles, inhaling the smoke emitted by the vehicle. Maybe it's time for the LTFRB and LTO and other agencies to focus on this to at least reduce the severe pollution especially in Metro Manila. Moreover, Inadequate maintenance practices and inefficient engines can indeed increase the risk of accidents. In a report by Mariz Umali on GMA News "24 Oras" on March 19, 2024, the speeding jeep driver who went to the other side of the road where he hit two motorcycles was caught on camera. Three people riding two motorcycles were killed after they were hit by a jeepney that allegedly lost its brakes in Ternate, Cavite. The dead were identified as Staff Sergeant Gerlyn Nicolas, of the Philippine Marines, who was riding a motorcycle, and the other motorcycle riders Gregorio Salazar, 54, and Caledonia Gutierrez, 40. According to the jeepney driver, he checked the condition of his vehicle before he used it. When vehicles are not properly maintained, issues such as worn-out tires, faulty brakes, or insufficient steering mechanisms can compromise their performance and safety. Additionally, inefficient engines that consume excessive fuel can lead to unexpected stalls or reduced acceleration, increasing the likelihood of accidents on the road. Regarding pollution, it is acknowledged that Metro Manila faces significant air pollution challenges.



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However, it is crucial to highlight that the government and various agencies have been implementing measures to mitigate pollution levels. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has been actively monitoring air quality and implementing regulations to reduce emissions. Furthermore, while there may be instances of vehicles emitting black smoke and contributing to pollution, it is important to note that the enforcement of emissions standards and vehicle inspections has been ongoing. The Land Transportation Office (LTO) and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) have been working to ensure that vehicles comply with emission standards and undergo regular inspections. Efforts are being made to identify and penalize vehicles that do not meet the required standards. In terms of accidents caused by inadequate maintenance and inefficient engines, it is crucial to emphasize that responsible vehicle ownership and proper maintenance practices are essential for ensuring road safety. The government, through agencies like the LTO, has been implementing campaigns to promote regular vehicle maintenance and inspections.

The increasing expenses faced by jeepney drivers, such as fuel prices and vehicle maintenance, make it necessary to adjust the fare. According to a report by the Philippine Statistics Authority that the average price of diesel fuel in the Philippines was \$0.58 per liter in 2016, with a maximum of \$1.01 per liter in 2012, the average price of diesel fuel has significantly increased in recent years, putting a strain on the operating costs of jeepney drivers. Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) Secretary General Renato Reyes stated that, the increase in fares is a result of the government's alleged lack of action on the increase in the price of petroleum products. One of the Filipino drivers says "Even a small tax reduction, they can't do it. They do not want to reduce the source of confidential and intelligence funds. The crossing is clearly not enough, so it is necessary to raise the fare for drivers," said Reyes. One of the drivers affected by the increase in gasoline prices, who are asking for help to have an increase in the fare price. The increase in gasoline prices results in additional expenses for jeepney drivers. Because of this, it is difficult for them to recover their expenses and have sufficient income to support their needs and their families. Increasing the fare price may be a solution to address the needs of jeepney drivers to have sufficient income to meet their needs. This is a challenge faced not only by jeepney drivers but by the entire transportation sector. The increase in fare prices should be studied and discussed thoroughly to ensure that not only the jeepney drivers will benefit, but also the passengers and the entire transportation system. The rising fuel prices not only impact their daily earnings but also make it challenging for them to cover the cost of fuel needed to operate their vehicles efficiently. Adjusting the fare to reflect these rising costs would ensure that drivers can sustain their livelihoods and continue to provide reliable transportation services.

Jeepney drivers work long hours and face various challenges to provide transportation services. Many drivers rely solely on their earnings from driving to support their families and meet their daily needs. In an interview by Brigada News FM Legazpi with Ronel Nebres, founder of Driver Safety Enforcement in the province, he



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said that many people will insist on increasing the price especially of basic goods because of the expenses when it comes to transporting the goods. product. Other than this, he said their take-home income will be low. Therefore, Nebres asks for the understanding of all commuters because they will have a restriction on charging fares especially the minimum fare. Said that, there are regular passengers who are getting used to giving PHP10 or PHP11 even though the tariff is PHP12. It is expected that they will now ask for additional pesos from regular passengers who will still pay the tariff mismatch, but retain the 20% discount for PWDs, students and others. For now, according to Nebres, it is possible that the fare will not increase because the price level of diesel is only at PHP63-64, compared to when diesel was at PHP80 so the minimum fare was raised to PHP12 from PHP11. Meanwhile, their only request as drivers is the cooperation of commuters. With the current fare, it can be challenging for them to make ends meet and provide for their loved ones adequately. Fair compensation would ensure that their hard work and dedication are adequately rewarded, allowing them to improve their living conditions and provide a better future for their families. Jeepney drivers often endure difficult working conditions, including heavy traffic, long wait times, and exposure to pollution and weather elements. Despite these challenges, they continue to provide essential transportation services to the public. Fair compensation would not only recognize and value their dedication and sacrifices but also motivate them to continue delivering quality service to commuters.

Adjusting the jeepney fare to reflect the current economic situation is necessary to ensure fair compensation for drivers and improve the quality of service. The government and relevant authorities should conduct a thorough assessment of the fare system, taking into account the economic realities faced by both commuters and drivers. This assessment should lead to the implementation of fair and sustainable changes that benefit all stakeholders, ensuring a reliable and efficient jeepney transportation system for the Filipino people.