

MEDIA RELEASE

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FROM: Ronald D. Holmes
President
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RE: Pulse Asia Research's September 2022 Nationwide Survey on Urgent National Concerns and Performance Ratings of the National Administration on Selected Issues

Pulse Asia Research, Inc. is pleased to share with you some findings on **Urgent National Concerns and Performance Ratings of the National Administration on Selected Issues** from the September 2022 *Ulat ng Bayan* national survey. We request you to assist us in informing the public by disseminating this information.

The survey fieldwork was conducted from **September 17 to 21, 2022** using face-to-face interviews. This nationwide survey is based on a sample of 1,200 representative adults 18 years old and above. It has a $\pm 2.8\%$ error margin at the 95% confidence level. Subnational estimates for the geographic areas covered in the survey have the following error margins at 95% confidence level: $\pm 5.7\%$ for Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Those interested in further technical details may refer to our website (www.pulseasia.ph)

The following are some of the key developments reported in the news immediately prior to the survey period as well as during the conduct of the survey interviews:

1. Through Executive Order (EO) No. 3, signed by the President through his Executive Secretary, the mandatory wearing of face masks in outdoor settings was lifted across the country. According to the EO, the wearing of face masks in open spaces and non-crowded outdoor areas is now voluntary, although those who are not fully vaccinated, senior citizens, and immunocompromised individuals are still highly encouraged to mask up. Despite this, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) urged the public to continue wearing face masks even outdoors to control the spread of COVID-19. The Department of

Health (DOH) also warned of an increase in the number of positive cases with the high mobility of people who are not wearing face masks.

The Department of Health (DOH) announced that while there is a slow continued decline in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country, the national positivity rate is going up. The National Capital Region (NCR), Calabarzon, Central Luzon, Davao, and Ilocos are the top regions contributing to new cases. As of 21 September 2022, the positivity rate in NCR is at 17.5%. The World Health Organization (WHO) has said the end to the COVID-19 pandemic is “in sight” but countries need to remain vigilant and to strengthen their policies for dealing with COVID-19 and future viruses.

Meanwhile, the state of public calamity due to the COVID-19 pandemic declared by former President Rodrigo R. Duterte, which was set to lapse on 12 September 2022, was extended by his successor for another three (3) months. This would allow the continued emergency procurement of vaccines and other essentials required to deal with the pandemic as well as the granting of special risk allowance for health care professionals, among others.

2. The country commemorated the 50th anniversary of the declaration of Martial Law on 21 September 2022, with martial law survivors, activists, and militant groups holding various protest actions and other activities nationwide to denounce the abuses that happened under martial rule. And while the current President was delivering his speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 20 September 2022, protesters also gathered outside the venue to condemn the human rights violations that took place not only under the administration of his father but also of former President Duterte. Malacañang Palace did not issue any statement on behalf of the President. In an earlier interview, the President said his father is not a dictator and his declaration of martial law is justified due to student protests, reported threats from the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and the separatist movement.
3. Prior to his visit to the United States (US), the President embarked on state visits to Indonesia and Singapore, during which he spoke with his counterparts and inked several bilateral agreements in the areas of defense and security, economy, and culture. The President claimed that his visits to these Southeast Asian countries netted the country nearly ₱ 805 billion in investment pledges. During his US visit, the President also spoke with members of the business community to encourage them to do more business in the Philippines.
4. The Philippine peso continued to depreciate vis-à-vis the American dollar, with the local currency closing at ₱ 58 on 21 September 2022, the end of the survey period. From the end of 2021, the Philippine peso has already depreciated by ₱ 7.001. This development, among others, led to an increase in the charges from independent power producers (IPPs) and power supply agreements (PSAs) that, in turn, meant higher electricity bills in September 2022 for customers of the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco). On a positive note, fuel prices went down for three

- (3) straight weeks in September 2022, with the last price cut per liter being at ₱ 4.15 for diesel and ₱ 4.45 for kerosene. Despite these price rollbacks, fuel prices remain high and as such, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) approved on 16 September 2022 an increase in the minimum fare for public utility vehicles (PUVs) and in the flagdown rate for taxis and transport network vehicle service (TNVS) units. The new fares will be effective only beginning 04 October 2022.
5. Executive Secretary Victor Rodriguez resigned from his post on 17 September 2022, citing his desire to spend more time with his family. Nonetheless, the latter said he will stay on as the President's Chief of Staff. Meanwhile, the Commission on Appointments (CA) confirmed the appointments of Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benjamin Abalos, Jr., Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Chairperson George Erwin Garcia, and Civil Service Commission (CSC) Chairperson Karlo Nograles, among others.
 6. The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) has requested the Pre-Trial Chamber (PTC) or the International Criminal Court (ICC) to deny the request made by ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan to reopen the investigation into the alleged extrajudicial killings committed under the "war on drugs" of the Duterte administration. According to the OSG, the ICC no longer has jurisdiction over the situation in the Philippines and the complaints filed before the ICC are already being investigated by the relevant agencies in the country. For his part, the President reiterated his position that the Philippines will not rejoin the ICC and said the ICC will only be welcome to enter the country if the system collapses or a war breaks out.
 7. The Senate Blue Ribbon Committee concluded its investigation into the controversy surrounding Sugar Order No. 4 on 06 September 2022. The said order, released on the website of the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), was for 300,000 metric tons of raw and refined sugar imports to help the country deal with a shortage in the local sugar supply. Malacañang Palace said the President never approved the order. Senator Francis Tolentino, who chairs the committee, said the main purpose of the probe is to determine whether there was a need to import sugar and if no such need existed, who authorized the importation of sugar.

The committee report, approved by the majority bloc, recommended the filing of charges against then Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary Leocadio Sebastian, then SRA Chief Hermenegildo Serafica, and two (2) SRA Board Members for committing "serious dishonesty, grave misconduct, gross neglect of duty, conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, and gross insubordination". However, minority Senators Aquilino Pimentel III and Risa Hontiveros described this as "disproportionately punitive" in light of evidence that there was an actual sugar shortage in the country and that the actions taken by the top officials from DA and SRA were done in good faith. Additionally, the members of the minority bloc pointed out that then Executive Secretary Rodriguez

- is “not entirely blameless” given his failure to act on behalf of the President in a timely manner on the import order.
8. Several senators are pushing for a ban on offshore gaming operators in the Philippines following cases of kidnapping and other crimes involving mostly Chinese nationals. These lawmakers point out that the high social costs of having Philippine offshore gaming operators (POGO) in the country far outweigh the revenues earned by the government their business. However, DOJ Secretary Remulla cautioned that the closure of POGOs may lead to a “humanitarian crisis” because Chinese nationals formerly employed in POGOs are having a difficult time returning to their home country. The DOJ Secretary estimates that there are about 40,000 Chinese nationals still working in POGOs that are illegally operating in the country.
 9. On 19 September 2022, the House of Representatives approved on third and final reading a bill seeking to postpone the conduct of the *barangay* and *Sangguniang Kabataan* (SK) elections from its original schedule of 05 December 2022 to 04 December 2023. A day after, a similar measure was approved by senators on second reading. One reason given for the proposed postponement of the *barangay* and SK elections is to reallocate the budget for the elections to the government’s pandemic response efforts. However, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) said this cannot be done even if the elections were postponed since the poll body enjoys fiscal autonomy. Moreover, delaying the elections will result in additional costs of up to ₱ 10 billion.
 10. The Senate Committee on Public Services launched on 08 September 2022 an investigation into the phishing scams that involve mobile users received text messages, even personalized ones, asking them for personal information that could be used for fraudulent transactions. Senator Grace Poe, head of the committee, pushed for the revival for a bill requiring SIM card buyers to register with network providers. The said bill was vetoed by former President Duterte. For its part, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) ordered Globe Telecom, Inc., Smart Communications, Inc., and DITO Telecommunity Corp. to deactivate websites and QR codes linked to fraudulent activities as well as to warn their subscribers about the proliferation of phishing scams.

Pulse Asia Research’s pool of academic fellows takes full responsibility for the design and conduct of the survey, as well as for analyses it makes based on the survey data. In keeping with our academic nature, no religious, political, economic, or partisan group influenced any of these processes. Pulse Asia Research undertakes *Ulat ng Bayan* surveys on its own without any party singularly commissioning the research effort.

For any clarification or questions, kindly contact Ana Maria Tabunda, Research Director of Pulse Asia Research at 09189436816 or Ronald D. Holmes, Pulse Asia Research President via Viber or Telegram or WhatsApp at +639189335497 or at ronald.holmes@gmail.com (via email).

Pulse Asia Research's September 2022 *Ulat ng Bayan* Survey:
Media Release on Urgent National Concerns and
Performance Ratings of the National Administration on Selected Issues
06 October 2022

Most Filipino adults (66%) are concerned about the soaring prices of basic commodities; public concern regarding this matter becomes more pronounced between June 2022 and September 2022 (+9 percentage points)

Amidst the continuing increase in the prices of basic goods, two-thirds of the country's adult population (66%) consider the need to control inflation as the national issue that requires the immediate attention of the incumbent administration. This is the prevailing view in all geographic areas and socio-economic classes (56% to 81% and 51% to 71%, respectively). Almost half of Filipino adults cite increasing workers' pay as an urgent national concern (44%) while around a third of them are concerned about job creation and poverty reduction (35% and 34%, respectively). Nearly a quarter of Filipino adults (22%) say the present dispensation should immediately take steps to combat corruption in government. (Please refer to Tables 1 to 2.)

Table 1
MOST URGENT NATIONAL CONCERNS
September 17 - 21, 2022 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed)

Base: Total Interviews, 100%				
	OVERALL	RANKED		
		FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
Controlling inflation	66	35	18	13
Increasing the pay of workers	44	15	17	12
Creating more jobs	35	8	14	13
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	34	10	12	13
Fighting graft and corruption in government	22	5	9	8
Fighting criminality	19	7	6	7
Addressing the problem of involuntary hunger	17	5	4	8
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	12	5	4	4
Providing support to small entrepreneurs to restore their businesses	9	2	3	4
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	9	1	3	5
Promoting peace in the country	8	2	3	3
Reducing the amount of taxes paid	7	1	2	4
Controlling the spread of COVID-19	5	2	2	1
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	5	1	1	2
Protecting the welfare of OFWs	4	1	1	2
Preparing to face any kind of terrorism	2	0	1	2
Others	0.2	0	0.1	0.05

Q14. Sa mga sumusunod na isyung pambansa, pakisabi ang hanggang *tatlong* isyung *dapat aksyunan agad* ng administrasyon ni Presidente Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. Maaari kayong magbanggit ng iba pang wala sa listahan. Alin po ang unang isyung dapat aksyunan agad ng administrasyon? Ang pangalawa? Ang pangatlo?

Table 2
MOST URGENT NATIONAL CONCERNS: OVERALL
September 17 - 21, 2022 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed)

Base: Total Interviews, 100%								
NATIONAL CONCERNS	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
Controlling inflation	66	68	56	71	81	51	71	58
Increasing the pay of workers	44	48	45	38	46	55	40	54
Creating more jobs	35	35	33	30	43	42	35	26
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	34	43	32	21	42	32	32	43
Fighting graft and corruption in government	22	18	26	19	17	24	21	22
Fighting criminality	19	23	22	16	15	17	22	11
Addressing the problem of involuntary hunger	17	12	20	25	9	16	18	16
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	12	7	11	21	9	18	11	11
Providing support to small entrepreneurs to restore their businesses	9	9	9	13	7	6	9	16
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	9	6	11	12	6	7	9	14
Promoting peace in the country	8	8	8	11	7	8	7	12
Reducing the amount of taxes paid	7	8	7	8	7	8	8	4
Controlling the spread of COVID-19	5	2	4	8	7	4	6	4
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	5	6	7	3	1	5	5	2
Protecting the welfare of OFWs	4	4	6	3	1	4	4	6
Preparing to face any kind of terrorism	2	2	3	0	2	2	3	1

Q14. Sa mga sumusunod na isyung pambansa, pakisabi ang hanggang tatlong isyung dapat aksyunan agad ng administrasyon ni Presidente Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. Maaari kayong magbanggit ng iba pang wala sa listahan. Alin po ang unang isyung dapat aksyunan agad ng administrasyon? Ang pangalawa? Ang pangatlo?

Criminality and involuntary hunger are issues that concern about a fifth of the adult population (19% and 17%, respectively) while enforcing the rule of law in the country is mentioned by a little over a tenth (12%). On the other hand, fewer Filipino adults express concern about the following issues: helping small entrepreneurs (9%), protecting the environment (9%), promoting peace (8%), reducing the amount of taxes paid by citizens (7%), controlling the spread of COVID-19 (5%), defending national territorial integrity (5%), protecting the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (4%), and preparing to deal with terroristic threats (2%). (Please refer to Table 1.)

Controlling inflation is the leading first-ranked urgent national concern (35%). The top second-ranked concerns are inflation (18%), workers pay (17%), and employment (14%). As regards third-ranked concerns, the most often mentioned ones are inflation (13%), jobs (13%), poverty (13%), workers' pay (12%), corruption (8%), and involuntary hunger (8%).

In addition to inflation, the only other issue deemed urgent by majorities in any of the geographic and socio-economic subgroupings is increasing the pay of workers, an urgent concern mentioned by 55% in Class ABC and 54% in Class E. On the other hand, the least often mentioned urgent national concerns across areas and classes are taxes (7% to 8% and 4% to 8%, respectively), COVID-19 (2% to 8% and 4% to 6%,

respectively), national territorial integrity (1% to 7% and 2% to 5%, respectively), welfare of overseas Filipino workers (1% to 6% and 4% to 6%, respectively), and terrorism (virtually nil to 3% and 1% to 3%, respectively). *(Please refer to Table 2.)*

There are few changes in public opinion regarding urgent national concerns during the period June 2022 to September 2022. The level of concern about controlling inflation – the only national issue considered urgent by most adults (66%) – increases (+9 percentage points) while concern about creating more jobs also becomes more pronounced (+6 percentage points). In contrast, public concern regarding peace promotion in the country eases during the same period (-6 percentage points). *(Please refer to Table 3.)*

Table 3
MOST URGENT NATIONAL CONCERNS
June 2022 and September 2022 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed)

National Concerns	Jun22	Sep22	Change*
Controlling inflation	57	66	+ 9
Increasing the pay of workers	45	44	- 1
Creating more jobs	29	35	+ 6
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	33	34	+ 1
Fighting graft and corruption in government	20	22	+ 2
Fighting criminality	14	19	+ 5
Addressing the problem of involuntary hunger	12	17	+ 5
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	15	12	- 3
Providing support to small entrepreneurs to restore their businesses	7	9	+ 2
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	7	9	+ 2
Promoting peace in the country	14	8	- 6
Reducing the amount of taxes paid	9	7	- 2
Controlling the spread of COVID-19	7	5	- 2
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	7	5	- 2
Protecting the welfare of OFWs	5	4	- 1
Preparing to face any kind of terrorism	3	2	- 1

Note: *Change = Figures of September 2022 minus Figures of June 2022.

The current national administration registers majority approval ratings on 11 of the 13 issues on which its performance is assessed in September 2022

Appreciation is the majority sentiment toward the present administration's work in the areas of responding to the needs of calamity-hit areas (78%), controlling the spread of COVID-19 (78%), promoting peace in the country (69%), protecting the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (68%), fighting criminality (67%), enforcing the rule of law (62%), creating more jobs (59%), increasing workers' pay (59%), fighting graft and corruption in government (58%), protecting the environment (57%), and defending the country's territorial integrity (52%). (Please refer to Table 4.)

However, when it comes to controlling inflation, the only majority urgent national concern, the plurality opinion among Filipino adults (42%) is one of disapproval for the national administration's performance. And on the issue of poverty reduction, the latter records essentially the same approval and indecision figures (39% versus 35%).

Table 4
PERCEIVED URGENCY OF SELECTED NATIONAL ISSUES AND
THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION'S PERFORMANCE RATINGS
September 17 - 21, 2022 / Philippines
(Row Percent)

Selected National issues	% citing as One of Three Most Urgent Issues	Approve	Undecided	Disapprove	NAR*
Responding to the needs of areas affected by calamities	---	78	19	3	+75
Controlling the spread of COVID-19	5	78	19	4	+74
Protecting the welfare of OFWs	4	68	29	3	+65
Promoting peace in the country	8	69	24	7	+62
Fighting criminality	19	67	24	9	+58
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	12	62	30	9	+53
Creating more jobs	35	59	29	12	+47
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	9	57	32	11	+46
Increasing the pay of workers	44	59	28	13	+46
Fighting graft and corruption in government	22	58	28	13	+45
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	5	52	40	9	+43
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	34	39	35	26	+13
Controlling inflation	66	31	27	42	-11

Q15a-m. Nais naming malaman ang inyong opinyon tungkol sa pagganap sa tungkulin ng administrasyon ni Presidente Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. sa pagharap nito sa mga sumusunod na isyung pambansa nitong huling tatlong buwan. Sa bawat isyung mabanggit, sa pamamagitan po ng board na ito, maaari bang pakisabi ninyo kung kayo ay (SHOW AND READ RATING BOARD) sa pagganap sa tungkulin ng administrasyon ni Presidente Marcos sa mga isyung ito?

Notes: (1) % Approve = % Truly Approve plus % Somewhat approve; % Disapprove = % Somewhat disapprove plus % Truly Disapprove.
(2) *NAR (Net Approval Rating) = %Approve minus % Disapprove
(3) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses.