

Barangay and SK elections

Timeline of Activities

25 September-10 November 2010

ELECTION PERIOD

Gun and bodyguards ban.

14- 23 October 2010

Candidates campaign period.

18 October 2010

Last day for filing of disqualification cases.

18- 20 October- Inspection and verification of completeness of the Voters' Registration Records and sealing of the Book of Voters for each barangay and SK precinct

20 October- Last day of posting the Computerized Voters' List (CVL)

25 October 2010

Casting of votes from 7 a.m until 3 p.m.. Canvassing follows.

Comelec Resolutions

Resolution No. 9069- Rules and regulations governing public works ban and release, disbursement and expenditures of public funds in connection with the November 13 Special elections in the province of Basilan, first legislative district of Bulacan and some areas of Lanao del Sur

Resolution No. 9068- Rules on the Liquor Ban in connection with the November 13 Special elections

Resolution No. 9067- Guidelines on the establishment and operation of Comelec checkpoints in connection with the November 13 Special elections

Resolution No. 9066- In the matter of exercising supervision and control over the Philippine National Police in connection with the Nov. 13, 2010 Special elections

Resolution No. 9065- In the matter of extending the period of implementation of the Comelec resolutions on the (1) prohibition against transfer/detail /suspension of civil service employees and elective officials, and (2) bearing, carrying, or transporting of firearms or other deadly weapons and the availability of the services of security personnel of bodyguards

Source: www.comelec.gov.ph

Government prosecutors urge to convict former Comelec Commissioner Tancango

- A 20- page memorandum was submitted to the Sandiganbayan on October 11, 2010 by Assistant Special Prosecutors Julieta Zinnia A. Niduaza and Paz Judith R. Boco-Mate, and Prosecution Bureau acting director Diosdado Calonge urging the Sandiganbayan to convict former Commission on Election (Comelec) Commissioner Luzviminda Tancango. The prosecutors noted that the anti-graft court has already upheld the evidence against Tancango in a ruling dated May 20, 2009 denying her demurrer to evidence on the ground that the evidence of the prosecution, if unrebutted, may be sufficient to establish the culpability of the accused for the violation charged against her. This ruling stems from the 2005 graft case filed on alleged anomalies in the award of Php 6.59- billion deal for the Voters' Registration and Identification System (VRIS) project of the Comelec in 2000 favoring the Photokina Marketing Group. The project was awarded even without a Certificate of Availability of Funds from the chief accountant of the Comelec as required under Presidential Decree 1445 or the Government Auditing Code. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case based on a complaint filed on Jan. 27, 2004 by Guillermo Luz, Augusto C. Lagman, and Telibert Laoc of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), which alleged that Tancango was principally responsible for the failure of the planned automated elections in May 2001, and linked her to anomalies in the bidding of VRIS project.

NAMFREL's initiative has become a deterrent for the overpriced purchase by the Comelec amounting to Php 6.59 billion, almost the price of leasing Smartmatic's automated machines used in the recently concluded May 10 elections. If the VRIS project was approved, each voters I.D. would have cost Php 1,900. In contrast, the Social Security System (SSS) has established a similar I.D. system with biometrics and embedded fingerprint at a much lower cost of Php 50.00 per I.D. After six years, the Sandiganbayan should make its final verdict in the said case. (KZR)

Comelec helpless vs bets campaigning on Facebook

- Under the Fair Election Act of 2001 or Republic Act 9006, the Comelec should supervise and regulate the utilization of the media of communication or information to guarantee and ensure equal opportunity for public service, including access to media time and space, and the equitable right to reply, for public information campaigns and fora among candidates. However, the said Act limits to cover print and broadcast media advertisements as well as the use of pamphlets, leaflets, cards, decals, stickers, and election posters. Given this restriction, it is expected that candidates will maximize the use of social networking sites to reach out to voters. Unfortunately, Comelec is still powerless when it comes to regulating campaigns on the internet. A case in point occurred when Comelec was not able to regulate websites of candidates in the recently concluded May 10 election.

There is a need to review and amend the parameters regarding the limits defined by the Fair Election Act on the regulation of the media communication to cover internet political campaigning for both national and local elections. The lopsided situation exists since candidates still pay for internet fees like website/ domain costs and advertisements from search engines (like Google and Yahoo) to social networking sites like Facebook. If the average cost-per-click of a certain candidate ad in Facebook Advertising is \$0.08 or Php 3.46 (1USD – Php 45.00), then the running ad campaign costs Php 84,993.04 (\$ 1,888.37) for 1,062,413 fans per ads. This does not include the CPM (Click per Miles – the online advertising cost per thousand views) which could cost \$ 0.06 / Php 2.7.00 and the other factors. According to the Philippine Internet Review Blog, as of October 11, 2010, Facebook active users stand at 10 million for the Philippines generating 3.9 billion page views. This is a huge number of viewers and potential voters that internet political campaign can influence but does not provide an equal playing field for candidates in terms of campaign spending limits. (KZR)

Send NAMFREL a Report

- In the upcoming Barangay and SK elections, NAMFREL is encouraging all to send reports on cheating or any irregularities on the NAMFREL website. You may attach photos, videos, or any supporting documents. In the recently concluded May 10, 2010 automated national and local elections, NAMFREL was able to receive numerous reports submitted by NAMFREL volunteers and individuals who witnessed threats, intimidation, violence, and mismanagement in their areas which were presented to the media. NAMFREL hopes that voters will actively involve themselves to guard the Barangay and SK elections by reporting at <http://www.namfrel.com.ph/namfrel/sendreport.htm> (KZR)



[Sources: Manila Standard, Manila Bulletin, COMELEC data, NAMFREL data]