

Timeline of Activities

November 13- Special elections

November 30- All winning candidates in Barangay and SK elections shall be proclaimed

Comelec officials are on verbal tussle

Commission on Elections (Comelec) Law Department Director Ferdinand Rafanan and Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez traded verbal barbs when Jimenez said that Rafanan as the head of the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) is partly to be blamed on the failure of the Comelec to deliver the materials on time. Rafanan called for the resignation of Jimenez as part of the fact-finding committee to investigate the delay in the distribution of election paraphernalia in the recently concluded Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections (SK). He also said that Jimenez is not fit to be Comelec spokesperson. Rafanan also accused Jimenez of furnishing ABS CBN news with a circulating document in the Comelec attacking his reputation.

The public infighting in Comelec borne from the gaps in performance in the recent elections does not bode well for the morale and image of the Comelec. While Namfrel lauds the move of the Comelec leadership to seek accountability for these lapses which hopefully would lead to actions to reform, it is incumbent for Comelec to be transparent and immediately release the findings of the fact-finding committee to ensure that these mistakes and mismanagement would be remedied.

Comelec elections savings worth Php 253 million to be distributed to Comelec personnel?

Employees and officials of the Comelec will be getting their share if the proposal to distribute the Barangay and SK election savings will be approved. Comelec Bids and Awards Committee head Ferdinand Rafanan has proposed to the Comelec en banc to distribute more than Php 253 million that the agency saved in the last election through contracts in forwarding, ballot papers, and other election paraphernalia. He said the savings could have been bigger if the agency did not buy new ballot boxes worth Php 48 million and instead recycled old ballot boxes.

It is wrong and unacceptable to tax-paying Filipinos that the election savings will not be used for future election expenses but rather for personal benefits of Comelec employees and officials. The Comelec was hard pressed to provide just compensation to teachers who served in the past village and youth election claiming that it lacks the budget to augment the teachers' honorarium. If the proposal would be approved, it may open the Comelec to accusations that the Comelec adopted austerity measures in its procurement in order to compensate its employees and officials. This move would be frowned upon as the Comelec reels from criticisms in their performance during the Barangay and SK elections. It is suggested that the Comelec en banc not approve such proposal. This election savings may be of better use to augment the funds to be allocated for the upcoming Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) elections in 2011 since the Comelec has constantly complained of the meager budget that Congress has allotted for the ARMM elections.

Medicine Monitoring Project updates

On October 26, 2010, a NAMFREL procurement observer attended the bid opening for infrastructure projects at the Rizal Medical Center (RMC) with an approved budget of Php 26.6 million. The bidding was participated in by eight (8) bidders. During the bid opening and evaluation of documents, two (2) bidders were disqualified due to the failure to submit a bid security in the form of a check issued by a commercial bank. Checks submitted were issued from a thrift bank and personal check, respectively. The issuances of such checks are disallowed under Section 27.2 of the GPRA 9184.

Also on the same day, NAMFREL procurement observers attended bid opening for the bidding of medical supplies at the East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC). The approved budget for the contract is pegged at Php 2.8million. Although, seventeen (17) bidders participated, two (2) bidders were disqualified due to incomplete submission of documents.

As observed, the bidding process in both the RMC and EAMC were in accordance with the provisions of the procurement law. The technical working group and BAC members used the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria to determine the lowest calculated bid.

In 2010, NAMFREL has so far monitored a total of Php 144.7 million procurement items in DOH hospitals nationwide. A detailed report of these procured items and BAC proceedings will be issued as NAMFREL observer volunteers submit their reports.