



NATIONAL CITIZENS' MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL)

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PRESS STATEMENT

NAMFREL Gears Up for the May 2013 Elections

Recently accredited by the COMELEC for the May 2013 National and Local Elections, the **National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL)** convened the leaders of its local chapters from all over the country at The Heritage Hotel in Pasay City for its Pre-Election National Assembly, from February 28-March 2, 2013.

NAMFREL National Chairperson Corazon de la Paz-Bernardo challenged the Chapters to mobilize a stronger volunteer force from different sectors of society. "Engage every Filipino who loves this nation" she said.

COMELEC Chairman Sixto Brillantes Jr., who attended the Welcome Dinner for the participants on February 28, enjoined the volunteers to ensure clean and honest elections, and to help improve the electoral system.

Over 150 chapter chairpersons shared relevant experiences on the ground as NAMFREL outlined its six (6) major areas of work, and formulated strategies to ensure effective implementation of the programs.

For the 2013 Mid-term Elections, NAMFREL will pursue a holistic approach as vanguards of honest and fair elections. To this end, NAMFREL will engage its volunteers to conduct Voters' Information and Education, Campaign Finance Monitoring, Election Paraphernalia Deployment Monitoring, Voters' List Monitoring, Poll Watching, and Random Manual Audit Monitoring.

NAMFREL's stress on Voters' Education lies on responsible and critical voting. It is releasing modules on the program for its provincial chapters to run in their respective areas.

Election Paraphernalia Deployment Monitoring is not something new to NAMFREL. Taking experience from its Textbook Count program with the Department of Education (DepEd), the organization will monitor the delivery and deployment of election paraphernalia and accountable forms from COMELEC holding areas to the precincts.

The movement's Campaign Finance Monitoring work will be a supplement to the COMELEC's mandate to monitor campaign funding and expenditures. NAMFREL hopes to provide viable data on the trends involved in campaign financing and compliance to established guidelines. This endeavor will hopefully level the playing field for all political parties and candidates.

In Voters' List Monitoring, NAMFREL hopes to verify from a sample of the voters' list its accuracy and completeness, and help ensure that citizens are not disenfranchised. This endeavor will also facilitate easy access to relevant voting information for citizens.

The Random Manual Audit Monitoring will entail observation of the manual count being conducted by COMELEC's Random Manual Audit Teams in 234 districts. NAMFREL chapters will gather the precinct reports on the congruence and discrepancies of the machine and manual counts.

Poll Watching, NAMFREL's globally renowned expertise, will be implemented with even more vigor this 2013 elections. Apart from volunteer poll watchers in the precincts, NAMFREL will deploy roving and mobile teams to carefully assess the election process as it happens in a given election area.

Under the leadership of Ms. Corazon de la Paz-Bernardo, citizens will see a reinvigorated NAMFREL with its heart firmly anchored on great love for the nation, its mission rooted on tenets of good citizenship, and its volunteers equipped with moral fiber and skills. As she shared, "my idea of people power means using individual talents to help create an atmosphere of good citizenship." ###