



NATIONAL CITIZENS' MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL)

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PRESS STATEMENT

NAMFREL urges every Filipino to be a citizen-observer in tomorrow's elections

Ms. Corazon de la Paz-Bernardo, Chairperson of the **National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL)** urges the Filipino voters to go the extra mile when they vote tomorrow, May 13 by being citizen-observers for a free, honest and orderly elections. The first order of the day for every qualified voter of course is to go to the precinct to exercise his/her right (and duty) to vote.

After he has voted, there are three engagements that ordinary voters may participate in, without having to be a member or volunteer of any citizens' arm or media watch team and without training on pollwatching.

Firstly, the voter will observe the poll center environment to note unusual or irregular situations like vote buying, very long queues, *hakot* of voters by a candidate, campaigning by candidates inside the poll center, the PCOS machine in any precinct breaking down, etc.

Secondly, the voter is requested to go back to his precinct at 7:00 PM to observe the closing of the polls until transmission of the results to the COMELEC server. If the transmission in the precinct is successful, the voter goes home with assurance that his vote has been counted among the rest. If the transmission fails, he is advised to observe succeeding efforts like retrying to transmit in the same PCOS machines or detaching the CF cards to bring this to the COMELEC Office. If necessary, the citizen-observer will accompany the CF cards until this is transmitted successfully. In the May 2010 elections, some 8 % of the precincts failed to transmit electronically and some CF cards were reported to have landed in private persons' hands.

The last and final act of citizen participation is to observe the Random Manual Audit (RMA) if the precinct or municipality in one's area has been selected as an RMA site. It is simply making a manual count of the votes similar to vote tallying in the pre-automated system of elections by a new team called the Random Manual Audit Team. The result of the manual count is recorded at the end to compare this with the count of the machine. One precinct is identified as an RMA subject in every congressional district.

For any observation on any of the three engagements above, the citizen-observer may call NAMFREL at (02)9420918 or send an SMS to this NAMFREL number with information on his name, precinct number, voting center, town and province: 09984582009. These numbers will be in operation starting at 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, May 13, 2013, until 6:00 a.m. on May 15, 2013.