



NATIONAL CITIZENS' MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL)

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PRESS RELEASE

NAMFREL Bantay ng Bayan UPDATE #2 May 9, 2022, 6pm

Pockets of violence and intimidation mar an otherwise generally peaceful election day

NAMFREL expresses concern over incidents of violence and intimidation that marred today's polls in certain areas of the country. Reports were received and verified by NAMFREL volunteers who are deployed in the areas concerned.

In Buluan, Maguindanao, at around 11:30am, unknown assailants opened fire and killed three members of a barangay patrol action team (BPAT) outside Datu Luminog Mangelen Pilot School while voting was ongoing. According to NAMFREL volunteers in the area, the police consider the incident politically motivated because the victims were supporters of a local party. According to volunteers, gunshots were also heard in the vicinity of the same voting center when unknown assailants fired at a helicopter while a relative of a local candidate was onboard.

In Malabang, Lanao del Sur, a fistfight occurred between supporters of opposing candidates inside Malabang National High School. They were forced by the police and Marines to leave the school, but once outside, a gunfight ensued. One supporter of a candidate was killed. Voting continued in said voting center.

In another incident in Malabang, a man was shot dead while sitting on a pedicab outside Jose Abad Santos Elementary School.

In Dimatubo, San Luis, Aurora, five trucks were apprehended, with one truck containing money, guns, and sample ballots. The NAMFREL volunteer who reported the incident said that the details have already been turned over to the PNP, which is now handling the investigation.

In Pilar, Abra, NAMFREL volunteers reported that members of private armies are present in at least four barangays.

In Baybay City, Leyte, a NAMFREL volunteer reported that the principal of a voting center mobilized barangay tanods for election day, supposedly in coordination with the PTA president of the school and a barangay councilor. A police officer in the city also prevented NAMFREL volunteers from observing in at least three barangays.

In Cotabato City, NAMFREL volunteers reported a commotion outside Vilo Elementary School. Barangay officials responded to the incident and soldiers were called to guard the premises and those waiting outside the voting center.

In Tagbilaran City, Bohol, barangay officials manned voter assistance desks. The city COMELEC promptly replaced them after the local NAMFREL chapter inquired.

Volunteers in NAMFREL's Bantay ng Bayan Operations Center in Mandaluyong City continue to receive and verify observation reports sent in by NAMFREL Bantay ng Bayan volunteers nationwide. NAMFREL will continue observing the different processes of the elections throughout the day and week, and will continue to release updates covering voting, counting, transmission of results, and canvassing. ###