



## **NATIONAL CITIZENS' MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL)**

Room 601, DMG Center, Domingo M. Guevara St.,  
Barangay Mauway, Mandaluyong City 1550  
Philippines

Telefax: +63 (2) 8470-4151  
Wireless Landline: +63 (2) 8736-0969; 8788-3484  
Telephone: +63 (2) 8451-1586  
Mobile No.: +63 939.1102872; 977.2417080  
E-Mail: [namfrelsecretariat@namfrel.org.ph](mailto:namfrelsecretariat@namfrel.org.ph)  
Website: [www.namfrel.org.ph](http://www.namfrel.org.ph)

### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **NAMFREL Bantay ng Bayan UPDATE #1 October 8, 2022 1:15PM**

#### **NAMFREL releases preliminary observations on the 2022 Ormoc Plebiscite**

Voting ran smoothly and orderly during the first half of the Plebiscite Day among 35 polling precincts within the single voting center at Ormoc City Central School.

Before the official poll open time of 7am, the Plebiscite Committees in polling places opened the ballot boxes to show poll watchers that they were empty and recorded the serial numbers of plebiscite ballots in the minutes of the voting.

Voting started at 7am in most of the 35 polling precincts with a few opening earlier than 7am.

At Polling Precinct No. 006 with 29 registered voters, voting opened earlier than 7am to await voters, with members of the Plebiscite Committee complete and a poll watcher from the City of Ormoc already present.

At Polling Precinct Nos. 04A to 04D, voters crowded along the narrow hallway. A number of senior citizen and PWD voters were among those waiting for their turn. A special lane for said voters was not available and the crowd was not managed well but was resolved around 11:20am with Plebiscite Committees from adjacent polling places volunteering to manage the crowd. The voters were led to a holding room and were called in groups of five to vote.

At Polling Precinct Nos. 15A to 15B, voters likewise crowded at the door wanting to vote early because they said they had to report for work. The Plebiscite Committee in said polling precinct issued queuing numbers and directed the voters to the holding room. Some voters still insisted that they be given the earlier numbers saying that they were there first.

At Polling Precinct Nos. 19A-19B, a lone senior citizen voter was able to cast her ballot within 10 minutes of poll opening. Voters in said precinct came in trickles. Voters came in trickles at Polling Precinct Nos. 3, 5, 6, 11, and 12.

The Voters' Assistance Desk (VAD) which was manned by DESO (Department of Education Supervisor Official) personnel was easily missed by incoming voters since the VAD was located at the side of the covered court. The VAD was moved with the desks facing incoming voters to make it more visible.

The voting center is not senior citizen- and PWD-friendly due to uneven grounds, dark hallways, and pipes crossing some pathways.

While thermal scanning was done at the entrance of the voting center and rubbing alcohol was provided, Covid protocol such as social distancing and proper wearing of face masks were not observed in some polling precincts.

NAMFREL was accredited by the COMELEC as citizens' arm for the 2022 Ormoc Plebiscite. NAMFREL deployed a three-member Election Expert Mission (EEM) to Ormoc to look into the issues surrounding the plebiscite, as well as to observe the process on plebiscite day. NAMFREL will continue to gather observations throughout the day. Voting will end at 3pm, and counting and canvassing of votes will commence after that. NAMFREL will be submitting a report to the COMELEC on the findings of the observation, identifying areas that could be further strengthened, and recommending measures to help ensure the conduct of safer and more efficient electoral exercises.

###