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MEDIA RELEASE

NAMFREL Bantay ng Bayan BULLETIN #2

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Incidents of violence and disturbance, issues with ACMs

NAMFREL expresses concern over incidents of violence and disturbance that marred today's polls in certain areas of the country. Reports were received and verified by NAMFREL volunteers in the area.

In Silay City, Negros Occidental, a shooting incident took place in front of the headquarters of a mayoralty candidate. The incident reportedly involved six people, with bystanders and media reports alleging two or three fatalities. Media reports claim that the incident was perpetrated by supporters of a former mayor, while the victims, who were brought to the nearest hospital, are supporters of the incumbent mayor. Authorities are conducting an investigation.

In Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao del Norte, protesters gathered at the municipal hall to oppose the electoral boards assigned to their precincts, blocking the distribution of election materials and delaying the voting process. The protestors were reportedly dissatisfied with the makeup of the electoral boards, citing partiality. This came after Datu Odin Sinsuat was placed under COMELEC control following the killing of the local election officer and her husband. In response to the unrest, 312 police officers were assigned to man polling centers and ensure security. Police personnel were designated as Special Electoral Board (SEB) members to replace the contested electoral board. This measure was taken to address concerns over impartiality and ensure the elections proceeded.

NAMFREL verified multiple incidents in Lanao del Sur:

1. In Maguing town, an unknown male person reportedly from Pikit, Maguindanao was killed after being suspected of vote buying. Police arrived in the area to investigate.
2. In Bayang municipality, two persons were killed. The victims were identified as a candidate for councilor and the brother of a barangay chairman.
3. In Marantao, a mob reportedly attacked six vans carrying flying voters, resulting to injuries and the vehicles getting damaged.
4. In another barangay in Marantao, suspected flying voters got injured after being mobbed by a crowd. Police are investigating both incidents.
5. In Sagonsongan, Marawi City, two watchers from opposing parties had an altercation, resulting to water being thrown at the ACM.

NAMFREL is currently verifying with its NAMFREL chapters other incidents reported, and will include them in forthcoming Bulletins once verified.



NAMFREL continues to receive reports about the automated counting machines (ACMs) not performing as expected, observed in a number of polling places across the country. NAMFREL notes that most of the reported incidents involving the ACMs were immediately resolved. Some of these reports include:

- Voter-verified paper audit trail paper jam
- Ballots not being accepted at first try but accepted at second
- Ballots not being accepted because scanners were not clean

In one polling place in San Francisco Elementary School in Quezon City, an observer reported that an issue with the ACM took two hours to resolve. Voters were allowed to fill out their ballots and just leave them with the Electoral Board. Some voters had a verbal altercation because some voters inadvertently cut in line.

In one polling place in Bongato East Elementary School in Bayambang, Pangasinan, several ballots were rejected by the ACM because of creases ("medyo nagusot"). The EBs set the ballots aside for safekeeping, and said that they would try to feed them again later ("susubukan daw ulit mamaya").

In a polling place in Sto. Niño Elementary School in Caloocan City, an observer reported that 15 minutes were spent fixing an ACM that did not accept a ballot, labeling it as "Misread Ballot".

In one polling place in Maligaya Elementary School, Quezon City, the cleaning of the ACM scanner took 8 minutes. In a polling place in Robinsons Place Iloilo and a polling place in Bagumbong Elementary School in Caloocan City, wiping of the scanner took 10 minutes.

In a polling place in Kapitolyo High School, Pasig City, the ballot jam reported by an observer led to the voting time increasing to more than one hour.

However, in one polling place in Taysan Elementary School, a ballot was rejected even after the scanner was cleaned. After three attempts, the ballot was placed in the container for rejected ballots.

Meanwhile, a NAMFREL observer in Tanauan South Central School in Batangas reported that a voter there complained that their VVPAT indicated an overvote for party-list. The voter filed a complaint and waited for two hours for a resolution, but was just informed that their vote for party-list would not be counted.

NAMFREL observers also reported some administrative issues in today's voting.

Ballot secrecy concerns continue to be observed by NAMFREL volunteers in many voting centers. Some of them are:

- EBs instead of the voters folding the VVPATs and depositing them to the VVPAT receptacle
- Ballot secrecy folders not being used
- Voters could see other voters' votes on the ballots

In one polling place in Epifanio Delos Santos Elementary School in Quezon City, one voter was not allowed to vote because of "double/multiple registrant as per AFIS result" as stated in the voter's list. Meanwhile, in a polling place in Epifanio Delos Santos Elementary School in

Malate, Manila, a voter's name was found in two different polling places. The voter's name was stricken out of one polling place and allowed to vote in the other polling place.

The general public are again encouraged to download the NAMFREL 2025 app from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store and participate in the NAMFREL Operation QR Count 2025 (OQC 2025). Filipinos can use the app to scan the QR codes of the election returns (ERs) posted outside polling places during today's counting period to help independently verify electronically transmitted results. NAMFREL will make available the transmitted results it received on the NAMFREL website and on <https://www.namfrel-analytics-apc.org>.

NAMFREL will continue to gather observations throughout the day. Voting will end at 7pm, and counting and canvassing of votes will commence after that. ###