



NATIONAL CITIZENS' MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL)

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PRESS RELEASE

THE CVL IS ONE OF THE WEAK LINKS IN THE 2010 ELECTIONS

The reliability of voters' lists is a persistent problem in past elections. NAMFREL has long advocated the need for a clean, accurate complete, and current Certified Voters List,(CVL) because a reliable CVL is the "guardian" of the "one person, one vote" election principle. A clean CVL has no duplicate names or multiple registrants or ineligible persons on the list such as minors and deceased persons. NAMFREL has also advocated that such a list should be made public and accessible to all voters and interested parties.

While COMELEC has stated that the CVLs are available to the public and interested groups, it is available for a fee for those who want to secure copies like NAMFREL. The election watchdog's local coordinators were quoted fees ranging from P 15.00 to P 75.00 per precinct to be able to secure copies for it to have the documents for its election monitoring task . If NAMFREL was to pay P15 per precinct to photocopy the CVLs nationwide, it will need approximately P5.0 million for all unclustered precincts.

According to NAMFREL Secretary-General Eric Alvia, random inspections by its Bantay ng Bayan teams in different parts of the country show that CVLs continue to contain errors. One such flaw are 36 voters with identical names in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro and 10 names which have different middle names or spelling in Balo-i, Lanao del Norte. Another flaw are names of deceased persons still appearing in the voter rolls in Sugpon (5 names) and Sta Lucia (5 names), both in Ilocos Sur, and in Mandaluyong (6 names). Still another flaw is the questionable number of centenarian voters in certain towns, among others in Mandaluyong which has 187 voters who are at least 100 years old.

The COMELEC's Education and Information Department itself has identified almost 705,000 multiple registrants across the country and has bundled these under a "Watch List."

The COMELEC should view NAMFREL as a co-operator rather than an adversary. NAMFREL's findings should help COMELEC identify the problem areas and do whatever is necessary to clean up the list where problems have been spotted. The COMELEC can look at the NAMFREL volunteers as its grassroots organization and give credence to its findings. We can assume that their common mission is to clean up the certified voters list so that the NAMFREL inputs should enable the COMELEC to target the area where priority should be given.

To address the issue of multiple registrants, NAMFREL advises the use of genuine indelible ink to ensure that persons vote only once in spite of possible multiple registrations.

NAMFREL Bantay ng Bayan volunteers also reported that names of persons who registered during the voter registration extension period in December 2009 were not included in CVLs posted in Valenzuela, Taguig, Las Pinas, Pasay, Muntinlupa and in the province of Palawan. COMELEC officials there said that "Supplemental Lists" containing names of late registrants were still being prepared for posting. It is hoped that COMELEC shall incorporate the names in the Supplemental List with the CVLs so that the Board of Election Inspectors will not have to check two different lists on election day.

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