

# Cheating, Manipulation and Harassment

A Report on the 2007 Elections



**Citizens' Caucus for Effective Governance**

JULY 2007



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## **1.0 Background: A Continuing Account of Philippine Electoral Fraud**

**DURING THE 2004 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, SEVERAL GROUPS AND** concerned political personalities joined efforts to gather evidence, analyze and expose the extent and magnitude of election manipulation carried out by the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA) administration.

These efforts resulted to the production of a 60-minute documentary entitled “Stealing the May 2004 Elections,” which compiled documented incidents of poll irregularities and made available detailed accounts and analyses of the massive and systematic GMA-led elections fraud which paved the way for GMA’s fake victory over Fernando Poe Jr. These findings were later on validated and reinforced by the “Hello, Garci!” scandal.

As an offshoot of these efforts, the Citizens’ Caucus for Effective Governance (CCEG) was formed. The Caucus is a network of development non-government organizations (NGOs), policy think-tanks and citizens’ movements working towards the deepening of Philippine democracy, especially through electoral reforms, grassroots empowerment and sustainable development.

Its members include the Convergence for Community Centered Area Development (CONVERGENCE), Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), La Liga Policy Institute (LLPI), Rural Enlightenment and Accretion in Philippine Society (REAPS), and the Kilusan para sa Makatarungang Lipunan at Gobyerno (KMLG).

The report on the 2007 elections is based on reports from CCEG coordinators, field workers and the media. It presents the cheating, manipulation and harassment undertaken by the GMA administration in trying to ensure victory for its national (senatorial), party lists and local candidates (congressmen, mayors, etc.). The report further discusses the immediate political implications of the outcome of the recent elections as well as arenas for electoral reforms.

## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 Varying Perspectives on the 2007 elections

The 2007 midterm election is the first national election after the controversial 2004 polls. Its significance across political forces can be summarized as follows:

- For the GMA administration, a sweep in this election could lay to rest the lingering question of her legitimacy as president.
- An administration victory could deny the prospects of another impeachment and increase the prospects for charter change.
- The opposition saw it as a referendum against GMA and as a further indictment of her administration.
- Presidential aspirants regarded it as a test run for their 2010 ambitions.
- On the other hand, social movements opted to critically engage in this midterm election around the platform of GMA's illegitimacy, her impeachment and against her charter change.



### 2.2 Lessons from Electoral Cheating in 2004

Apart from competing perspectives, the conduct of the 2007 midterm election was also under heavy scrutiny. It has become common knowledge among the general public that the 2004 election was ridden with massive fraud and despite evidence no serious investigation or any electoral reforms have been undertaken by the current administration.

Monitoring the conduct of the 2007 election was greatly informed by electoral cheating in 2004. Key lessons include:

- Cheating at the canvassing level or wholesale cheating (i.e., tampering with or fabricating provincial and/or municipal Certificates of Canvass) has been exposed and found to be easy to detect.
- The COMELEC and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have become key institutional cheating machineries of the administration (as revealed in among others, by the Hello, Garci! scandal).
- The administration wantonly used public funds in the campaign and other elections operations (e.g., the Fertilizer Fund scam, the PhilHealth scam, Road Users' Tax scam, etc.).
- NAMFREL, supposedly the citizens' electoral watchdog, failed to conduct a credible count and became an instrument for trending in favor of GMA.

### **3.0 Mapping Out the GMA Administration's Cheating Operation for 2007**

#### **3.1 General Observations**

- It was the most expensive election for both the local and national level.
  - Massive vote-buying with amounts ranging from P500 to P3,000 per voter, and as much as P20,000 per clan or family.
  - At least P20 billion in government funds was squandered.
  - Based on the election spending monitoring by AC Nielsen, at least P1.635 billion was spent on political ad placements alone by the 12 biggest spenders among senatorial bets.
- It was a violence-marred election.
  - Throughout the campaign period up to election day, the PNP recorded a total of 126 election-related deaths.
  - This figure does not include election-related deaths in the post-election period and deaths of militant and activist campaigners.
- COMELEC, AFP and other national government agencies were again mobilized in the attempts to ensure the victory of the administration-backed candidates, including party-list groups.
- Drawing lessons from the 2004 cheating operations, the administration employed a more rigorous and costly, but less detectible cheating scheme that was principally directed at the precinct level (ballots and election returns [ERs] ).

#### **3.2 Cheating at the Institutional (COMELEC) Level**

3.2.1 The COMELEC failed to cleanse and continued to rely on a corrupted voters' list.

- The COMELEC reported the number of registered voters at 45.5 million.
- Several sectors raised question regarding this number, arguing that this is statistically improbable given official estimates of the population-growth rate. Given the population-growth rate, registered number of voters could only reach between 30 million and 35 million.
- The voters' list continues to be padded with double-registrants, names of dead voters and of minors.
- 300,000 multiple registrants in ARMM were discovered.
- 73 of 102 ARMM towns posted growth in the number of voters from 10 percent to 177 percent from 2004 to 2007 although the average annual population growth rate in the region is only a minuscule 2.36 percent.
- Several towns in Cagayan and Lanao del Sur have shown large increases in number of voters. In some towns, the number of registered voters more than doubled.
- The supposedly cleansed Certified Voters' List (CVL, or master list of registered voters) was believed to have been burned in a mysterious fire at COMELEC on March 11, 2007, which was supposed to have been caused by faulty electrical wiring. A fire station lies several meters away from the main COMELEC office.

- As a result, thousands were not able to vote because they could not find their names in the certified voters' information list. The COMELEC, as an explanation, simply said, "We may have misprinted names."
- Also, names that should have been delisted (dead, multiple registrants and minors) were reportedly used for vote padding.
- Max Soliven, deceased publisher of The Philippine Star, was still on the voters' list on Election Day, six months after his death, even as COMELEC said it had purged 1.1 million names of "flying voters, those who have died, been convicted, acquired foreign citizenship and the double-registered."
- In several areas, these names were in fact intentionally re-included in the voters' list.
- Minors voted in Maguindanao. Election supervisor Atty. Lintang Bedol said there's nothing wrong in minors being able to vote because it is consistent with Shariah Law.
- Some areas showed voter turnout of over 100 percent, with votes cast exceeding the number of registered voters. Batangas showed a discrepancy of 200,000 voters in 5,825 precincts in the entire province.

### 3.2.2 Accountable election forms were severely compromised.

- Forms were stolen in the May 14 (election day itself!) burglary at the COMELEC Manila office. Stolen were four sets of Certificates of Canvass (COCs) for national positions, 16 sets of overseas absentee-voting forms, 11 sets of certificates of canvass of votes and proclamation forms, and two sets of summary of statement of votes.

### 3.2.3 Promotion/appointment of "Hello, Garci!" operators to sensitive COMELEC posts.

- 16 regional and provincial election officers who figured in the "Hello, Garci!" scandal were assigned to manage the election.



Among the most prominent were:

- Rey Sumalipao promoted to ARRM Regional Director;
- Lintang Bedol promoted to Maguindanao Provincial election supervisor;
- Renato Magbutay promoted to Regional Director for Northern Mindanao;
- Francisco Pobe, promoted to Assistant Regional Director for CARAGA, and;
- Renault Macarambon, promoted to Head of the COMELEC Barangay Affairs Department.

### 3.2.4 Dagdag-Bawas (vote-padding/vote-shaving) during the canvassing

- In Davao, 130,000 votes "shaved" from Genuine Opposition (GO) candidates Pimentel and Roco were added to Team Unity (TU) bets Recto and Singson.

- In Zambales, Escudero's 185,923 in Statement of Votes (SOV) reduced to 85,923 in the COC.
- Also in Zambales, Cayetano's 129,198 votes were reduced to 29,198
- In South Cotabato, the following candidates had padded votes: Angara by 101,000; Arroyo 110,000; Defensor 109,000; Pichay 110,000; Recto 116,000; and Zubiri 77,000.
- In North Cotabato, Zubiri's votes increased by 130,000 votes while Pimentel's votes decreased by more than 40,000 votes.
- The poll body's 73.4-percent voter turnout in 45 provinces was 4.42 percent higher than the Pulse Asia exit poll of 69 percent and it provides 2.7 million in cheatable, negotiable votes.
- In Davao del Sur, the Board of Canvassers chairman used typing correction liquid on the tallies and added 1,000 votes to each of the selected candidates.
- P20 to P50 was the reported going rate for vote padding at the COMELEC-level canvass.

### 3.2.5 Vote Protection During the Canvassing

- Candidates and party list groups have raised concerns over the practice of having to pay off electoral operators in order for their actual votes to be tallied and reflected in the certificates of canvass.
- This pay-off was said to be necessary as a safeguard against the "dagdag-bawas" operation, in which the votes of candidates and party list groups inside the winning circle are shaved (bawas) and sold and added (dagdag) to those who either (a) want to maintain their position or (b) make it to the winning circle.
- The going rate for vote protection ranged from P35 to P50 per vote.

## 3.3 Cheating at the Local Level

### 3.3.1 Prevalence of vote buying all over the country

- In previous elections, vote buying was mainly intended to influence voters to vote for a particular candidate. Most often, the pay-off was distributed along with sample ballots.
- For this election, vote buying also took the form of dissuading voters and their families from going to the polls, particularly in known opposition bailiwicks.
- In Bataan, no less than Bishop Soc Villegas loudly complained of massive vote buying estimated at P1,700 per voter, with candidates buying out one another, saying it was the "dirtiest election" in Bataan.
- In Pampanga, barangay officials supporting administration candidates distributed five kilograms of rice and P500 in cash to voters.
- In Pangasinan, mayors were paid P1 million each by a congressional candidate. Other local officials from the vice-mayors down to the barangay *tanods* also received pay-offs.
- Also in Pangasinan, Jose De Venecia distributed insurance cards for P100,000 accident insurance coverage and P10,000 burial benefits.
- In Nueva Vizcaya and Bataan, families were offered as much as P20,000 in exchange for not voting.

- Reporters covering the COMELEC received Globe prepaid cards worth P100 each, contained in mail envelopes with the return address “Anak ng Maynila, Ali Atienza for Mayor Headquarters, Manila City Hall.”
- Elsewhere, vote buying ranged from P500 to P3,000 per voter.

### 3.3.2 Denying access to poll watchers of the opposition, independent watchdogs and the media

- Volunteers from PPCRV, NAMFREL, other watchdogs and those from opposition parties were not allowed to enter in several polling and canvassing centers.

### 3.3.3 Ballot/ER Snatching and Switching

- Ballot boxes (with filled-up ballots and accomplished ERs) were snatched.
- In Valenzuela and Manila, ballots filled up by voters were taken out of the ballot boxes and replaced with pre-filled ballots.
- In Pampanga, 154 ballot boxes were stolen and thrown into the Pampanga River (June 7). COMELEC said all 154 ballot boxes containing official ballots and election results were destroyed and burned ballots represented 41 percent of all official ballots in Mabalacat.

## 3.4 The Administration's Direct Hand

### 3.4.1 GMA and Cabinet Officials Directed the TU Campaign

- GMA and her cabinet managed the TU campaign and actively joined the TU campaign sorties.
- GMA, on May 1, promised salary increase and income-tax exemption to minimum wage earners to entice voters to support TU.
- Cabinet officials were also tasked to perform campaign functions and were assigned specific regions and provinces as their areas of responsibility.
- Each government department was assigned to “adopt,” campaign for and deliver votes to TU senatorial candidates and government-backed party list groups.



For example:

- Tourism Secretary Ace Durano served as the TU campaign spokesman.
- Executive Sec. Ermita was in charge of Batangas and Region 4.
- Department of Agrarian Reform Sec. Pangandaman was in charge of campaigning in the Davao provinces. The DAR Satellite Office in Davao was used for this operation.
- Department of the Interior and Local Governemnt Sec. Ronnie Puno and Political Affairs Sec. Gabby Claudio were tasked with strategic roles in the campaign.

### 3.4.2 The Military Top Brass as TU Campaigners

- The AFP undertook a nationwide voters' education campaign which centered on a "negative" campaign against militant party-list organizations
- Military personnel exposed a directive from AFP top brass for enlisted personnel to vote 12-0 in favor of the TU senatorial slate.
- Soldiers of the Philippine Army's 31st Infantry Battalion put up campaign posters and performed other tasks, for President Arroyo's son, Diosdado "Dato" Arroyo, who ran and won as congressman in Camarines Sur.
- 20,000 soldiers from 54 military units, two infantry divisions, one joint task force, 11 infantry brigades, and 29 infantry battalions from the Philippine Army and three brigades and 11 battalions from the Philippine Marines were deployed in 41 "areas of concern" or election hotspots by the COMELEC.

### 3.4.3 The party-list system was also undermined by the proliferation of administration-funded fronts.

- Malacañang directly facilitated the accreditation, and provided funding for "allied" party-list groups. They also decided on who will be denied accreditation.
- Among those denied accreditation were: LADLAD, an opposition gay party list group; and, MARE, known opposition group of urban poor women.
- The proliferation of administration backed party list groups resulted in diluting votes of genuine party-list groups.
- A memorandum was submitted to President Arroyo dated Oct. 16, 2006 and signed by Marcelo Fariñas II, a former assistant secretary in the Office of External Affairs (OEA) titled "2007 Party-list Campaign: A Proposal," for a five-month operation with a P5.5 million fund.



### The administration-front partylist groups include:

- AA-Kasosyo - associated with Felix Brawner Jr., brother of COMELEC Commissioner Romeo Brawner
- AGBIAG – Secretary General is Marcelo Fariñas II of the Office of External Affairs
- AHON PINOY - headed by Dante "Klink" Ang II, son of Dante Ang of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas
- AKBAY PINOY - member of Sigaw ng Bayan Chacha through People's Initiative Group
- AKSYON SAMBAYANAN - linked to National Security Adviser (NSA) Norberto Gonzales
- ANAD – nominees include Jun Alcover, campaigner for the government's anti-Left initiatives. Also associated with retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan
- BANTAY - first nominee is Palparan

- BANAT – second nominee is Raul Lambino, chairman of the pro-Charter Change group Sigawang Bayan
- BIGKIS PINOY – openly supported by PAGCOR Chair Ephraim Genuino
- BIYAHENG PINOY - nominee is COMELEC chairman's brother, Dr. Arsenio Abalos
- KAKUSA - headed by former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, a known GMA ally
- Kalahi – nominees include, Karlo Nograles, the son of House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles
- KASANGGA - nominees include Marilou Arroyo, sister of Mike Arroyo, husband of Gloria Arroyo
- NALIFF - nominees include son of DAR Secretary Nasser Pangandaman

#### 3.4.4 Use of government funds for TU campaign and related expenditures

- P4.7-billion Hunger Mitigation and School Feeding Fund
- P6.7-billion Calamity Fund
- P5-billion National Irrigation Fund
- P4-billion PhilHealth fund
- P200-million Department of Public Works and Highways “urgent” Bridge Repair Fund (Ayala Bridge and Jones Bridge in Manila, Tullahan Bridge in Valenzuela and Guadalupe Bridge in Makati City)
- Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF)
- Road Users' Tax

#### 3.4.5 Harassment of opposition candidates

##### Against GO Senatorial Candidates:

- Namesakes of Noynoy Aquino and Allan Peter Cayetano were fielded to confuse voters and to disrupt the appreciation of votes.
- Staunch critic of the First Gentleman, Allan Peter Cayetano, was accused of being an alien and a disqualification case was filed against him in spite of his having been previously elected as town councilor and congressman.
- The AFP threatened with dismissal from service any active military personnel campaigning for Lt. Senior Grade (SG) Sonny Trillanes.

##### Against local candidates:

- Iloilo Governor Niel Tupas Sr. was suspended.
- Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay was suspended.
- Pasay Mayor Peewee Trinidad was suspended.
- Naga Mayor Jess Robredo was slapped with a disqualification case on the basis of his citizenship despite serving for three terms as city mayor.

Against partylist groups:

- Militant party list groups Bayan Muna, Gabriela and Anakpawis were slapped with disqualification cases.
- Bayan Muna Representative Satur Ocampo was jailed.

3.4.6 Financial incentives for TU victory (cash rewards for local officials)

- Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan offered P1 million per Maguindanao mayor who will deliver a 12-0 win for TU.
- DOJ Sec. Raul Gonzalez offered P10,000 per Iloilo barangay chairman who will deliver a 12-0 win for TU.

#### **4.0 Contrary to claims by the Philippine National Police (PNP) leadership, the 2007 midterm election was one of the most violent.**

##### **4.1 Election Related Violence (ERV) in the run-up to May 14**

- The PNP recorded a total of 126 election related deaths of politicians and their supporters.
- The PNP tally does not include the militants and activists involved in party-list campaigns who were killed.
- It also does not include election-related deaths occurring after the May 14 elections.
- The PNP recorded that in 2004 there were 249 incidents of ERV resulting in 148 deaths while in 2001 there were 269 incidents of ERV resulting in 111 deaths.
- As per remark by the international observer group ANFREL, the polls were “worse than the Afghanistan elections,” with bomb explosions and the sight of uniformed armed men in polling places.
- British Ambassador Peter Beckingham expressed disappointment over the violence.



##### **4.2 Post-election deaths**

- May 15: Kabataan party-list coordinators Jun Bagasbas and Ronilo Vallevaré was abducted and killed in Camarines Sur.
- May 16: Two leftist rebels and a soldier escorting ballot boxes were killed in Camarines Norte

- May 18: Mayor Philip Velasco and Councilor Marcelo Andaya of Bacarra, Ilocos Norte were slain.
- June 2: Mayor-elect Magdaleno Peña of Pulpandan, Negros Occidental was ambushed, with three of his companions killed.
- June 12: Police Chief of Masiu, Lanao del Sur, Inspector Bernie Alejandro was shot dead.
- June 12: Councilor-elect Oswald Villamor of Lagangilang, Abra was killed.
- June 15: Lupao town mayor-elect Alfredo Vendivil Sr. and his cousin, vice mayor-elect Virgilio Vendivil were killed in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija.
- June 18: Aldin Clemente, brother of Jovellar, Albay vice-mayor Gilbert Clemente was killed by three gunmen.

Among the more sensational cases include:

- In Taysan, Batangas, while ballots were being counted, the school building was burned by armed men who turned out to be elements of the local and regional PNP. The incident caused the deaths of two teachers and two poll watchers.
- The murder of Musa Dimasidsing, a retired school supervisor from Maguindanao who exposed the cheating in the province. Two other witnesses of electoral fraud in Maguindanao were kidnapped.
- In May 26, Barangay Captain Jomar Nulud, supporter of governor-elect Fr. Ed Panlilio, was killed.

#### **4.3 More than half of the country's provinces were declared by COMELEC as areas of concerns.**

- 46 of the Philippines' 81 provinces were declared by COMELEC as either "areas of concern" or "areas of immediate concern" (formerly referred to as hotspots).
- These include five areas in Metro Manila such as Pasay, Pasig, Kalookan, Taguig, and Marikina.

### **5.0 Assessing the Outcome of the 2007 Elections**

#### **5.1 The 2007 senatorial election results represent a clear expression of anti-GMA sentiments nationwide.**

- The 2007 midterm election was, in effect, a national referendum on the GMA administration, with the senatorial election serving as the platform for expressing the public's general assessment of the administration. Their verdict, a resounding NO.
- Eight GO bets and two anti-GMA independents won. The two TU candidates who won are actually the least identified with GMA. So in a way, the result was twelve anti or non-GMA candidates and ZERO pro-GMA. (Unless, they succeed in getting Zubiri in).
- GMA's endorsement turned into a kiss of death for key GMA protégés and allies. The key allies who did not win include:

- Presidential Chief of Staff and apologist Mike Defensor
- Anti-impeachment and pro-charter change Congressman Butch Pichay
- Presidential crony Governor Chavit Singson
- E-VAT promoter Senator Ralph Recto
- Former FPJ supporters-turned-GMA backers, former Senators Tito Sotto and Tessie Aquino-Oreta



## **5.2 In key congressional and local races, being associated with GMA and her protégés became more of a burden than an asset.**

For congressional candidates:

- Presidential poster boy and world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao was knocked out by Darlene Antonino-Custodio in South Cotabato.
- GMA's favorite election operator Virgilio Garcillano lost to a Bukidnon political neophyte.
- A daughter of National Security Adviser Bert Gonzales lost in Bataan
- A son of DENR Secretary Angelo Reyes lost in Taguig, Metro Manila
- The wife of Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan trounced in Eastern Samar
- A brother of Secretary Ronnie Puno, broadcaster Dong Puno, lost to the son of Senator Biazon in Muntinlupa
- A son of PAGCOR Chairperson Ephraim Genuino lost to the daughter of Mayor Jejomar Binay

For local executives:

- Presidential *Kumare*, townmate and “*Jueteng Lady*” Baby Pineda and “Quarry Lord” Mark Lapid humiliated by Among Ed Panlilio, an alternative gubernatorial candidate fielded by concerned citizens of Pampanga – GMA's home province.
- Incumbent administration Senator Lito Lapid lost by about 170,000 votes to United Opposition President and incumbent Makati Mayor Jojo Binay.
- Presidential Adviser for Youth and Sports Ali Atienza lost by about 90,000 votes to Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) Senator Fred Lim in the Manila mayoralty race.
- Suspended PMP Mayor Peewee Trinidad trounced anti-impeachment Congresswoman Connie Dy in the Pasay city mayoral race.
- A son of TU Senatorial bet and incumbent Governor Vicente Magsaysay lost to the United Opposition gubernatorial candidate in Zambales.
- A son of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita lost in the vice-gubernatorial race in Batangas
- COMELEC Chairman Ben Abalos' son-in-law was defeated in Binan, Laguna.

**5.3 On the other hand, the victory of TU candidates at the local level could not be attributed to the support of GMA. Their victory can be attributed more to factors that are unique to each locality like local patronage, local political dynasties, weak or no opponents and local issues.**

For example:

- In Tarlac, Victor Yap won over Peping Cojuangco as governor because of the Hacienda Luisita issue.
- In Batangas, Vilma Santos won due to her popularity, her strongest opponent was a known jueteng lord; and, the opposition fielded a weak candidate.
- Espina of Biliran in Cebu, Governor Gwen Garcia won because of the strength of her family's political dynasty.



**5.4 The phenomenal Trillanes Vote is the clearest expression of the people's anti-GMA sentiment.**

- Campaigning behind bars on a single platform- to impeach GMA, Lt.SG Sonny Trillanes won despite, or even perhaps because of, his pending cases of rebellion and coup d'etat.
- With virtually no traditional campaign machinery, no political advertisement, limited financial resources, Trillanes consistently placed among the top 12 senators in majority of the provinces in the country.
- The outpouring of spontaneous and voluntary support across classes, sectors and geographical areas for Trillanes foiled attempts to deny him a Senate seat.
- The vote for Trillanes is a potent expression of people's resentment of GMA, affirming the issue of GMA's illegitimacy.
- It is a vote for more radical changes and demand for reforms in government.

**5.5 The Maguindanao Conspiracy: GMA, Ampatuan, Abalos and Bedol**

The election in Maguindanao is the most glaring example of the brazenness and impunity in cheating undertaken by the administration. It showed the total disregard for basic decency and complete disrespect for the will of the electorate and the legal process.

- The province, with 350,000 registered voters, produced a 12-0 victory for TU initially based on the provincial COC, not backed up by source documents.

- 19 of the total 37 senatorial candidates, including GO bets, got zero votes. Initially, TU senatorial candidate Chavit Singson, a non-Muslim, ranked No. 1 among the senatorial candidates in the province, but later, the COMELEC canvass showed TU candidate Miguel Zubiri topping the list when he desperately needed the votes to grab the 12th slot.
- Even COMELEC Commissioner Chairman Benjamin Abalos declared that it is statistically improbable for senatorial candidates to receive zero votes in the province.
- Maguindanao mayors themselves, including Balindong, Lanao del Sur Mayor Benjie Bagul (vice president of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines - Mindanao chapter), said a TU sweep was possible only through fraud.

#### Cheating Exposed:

- Immediately after the 12-0 declaration, witnesses have come out, saying that no elections were actually held in the province.
- They testified that on election day, 100 teachers assigned as members of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEIs) were fetched by armed men and instructed to fill up ballots with names of TU Senatorial candidates.
- One of the witnesses, Musa Dumasidsing, was gunned down several days after executing an affidavit regarding the cheating in the province. Two other witnesses were abducted while on their way to Manila to give their testimonies. Three weeks after the much touted 12-0 TU victory in Maguindanao, Provincial Election Supervisor Lintang Bedol claimed that municipal certificates of canvass, which are the source documents of the provincial certificates of canvass, were stolen on May 29.
- Despite all of these, Chairman Abalos has flip-flopped on whether or not to declare a failure of election in the province and on the canvassing of the provincial certificates of votes.



#### Latest Developments:

- More than one month after the 2007 elections, amidst controversies and legal petitions, the COMELEC canvassed election results from Maguindanao. Relying solely on the 2nd copy of the municipal certificates of canvass, final COMELEC tally shows a 12-0 TU victory with Miguel Zubiri now ranking No.1 instead of Chavit Singson as previously reported by Gov. Ampatuan.

### 5.6 GMA's Machinery Rendered Ineffective

- The GMA administration undertook its most extensive and intensive cheating and maneuvering operations but despite these efforts, GO senatorial candidates won.
- The output of the cheating fell short of what was required to stop an opposition senatorial victory.

- In many areas, they were not able to operate fully because of the fear of local candidates to affiliate openly with the TU to avoid backlash from the electorate—particularly in areas where anti-GMA sentiments were strong.
- The much-touted command votes of the administration did not deliver. Infighting among local administration candidates from LAKAS and KAMPI prevented them from devoting effort in cheating for the TU senatorial slate. Many local administration bets did not campaign for TU Senators at all.
- LAKAS and KAMPI competed against each other in 216 races, covering more than half of the country's election areas: 43 provinces, 110 districts and 63 cities.
- Infighting between LAKAS and KAMPI occurred in vote-rich provinces such as Bulacan, Batangas, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga and Pangasinan, compromising further their ability to carry TU senatorial bets.

### **5.7 Vigilance paid off**

- Outside the traditional election watchdog, NAMFREL, many new efforts on election monitoring were initiated by various citizens' groups.
- The media took on an activist and crusading role in monitoring and exposing electoral fraud, and greatly helped in preventing some irregularities.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION:

- The conduct of the 2007 election was far from being fair, honest and clean. It was the most expensive. It was marred with violence. And just like in the 2004 election, public institutions and resources were abused to provide undue support to administration candidates.
- The cheats projected an aura of impunity as if they would never be called to account for their wrongdoings. This is best shown by their brazenness in the Maguindanao case which featured fabrication of election results, theft of COCs, murder, kidnapping, terrorizing of poll watchers and voting populace.
- The party-list system has been abused by the administration that put up its own parties to promote its own interests and in this election, to prevent any impeachment moves by the opposition, thus defeating the constitutional intent of providing proportional representation to marginalized, underrepresented groups.
- Despite all efforts directed by the GMA administration for a sweep national electoral victory, the protest vote prevailed.
- The senatorial race became the platform for the public to express their anti-GMA sentiment. GMA's endorsement became tantamount to a kiss of death while the opposition and independents who did not align themselves with GMA became the beneficiaries.
- The Senate victory of Lt. SG Trillanes is the most potent expression of the people's resentment against the current administration. Furthermore, his victory represents the Filipino electorate's search for alternative leaders and for more radical reforms in governance.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATION:

The Citizens' Caucus for Effective Governance calls on the government to immediately undertake the reform measures so as to restore the integrity of the Philippine electoral system and put to rest the lingering issue about the legitimacy of the incumbent president.

- The 2007 election underscores the need to REVAMP THE COMELEC. Far from being credible, the constitutional body that is supposed to ensure a free and fair election process has become the legitimizing institution for the fraudulent election results in many crucial races, such as those in the ARMM areas, where votes are openly manipulated to favor the administration candidates.
- There is a need to set-up an independent multi-sectoral body that shall act as a search committee for COMELEC Commissioners.
- Institute reforms in the electoral system that will ensure freer participation of the electorate and create a level playing field that will encourage the candidacy of competent citizen leaders. This should include: cleansing of voters' list; automation of counting; passage of an anti-dynasty law; and, ensuring the non-partisan role of all government agencies especially the police and military.
- Penalties for election overspending, vote buying, and other campaign finance excesses must be rigorously implemented to prevent the dominance of money in politics. Current election laws stipulate strict guidelines for limiting spending but COMELEC is yet to punish offenders. Save for some media/press statements, COMELEC has not done its role to regulate campaign conduct and spending in this election.
- Set up a COMMISSION on Electoral Fraud that shall investigate the anomalies related to the conduct of the 2007 Midterm election and the 2004 Presidential elections and shall prosecute parties found accountable for electoral fraud.

## References

- **Surveillance cameras installed at NPO...**,The Philippine Star (02/06/07)  
*“COMELEC maintains 1:1 ratio of official ballots for the 45,005,000 registered voters in the country and 504,000 for Overseas Absentee Voting. ...”*
- **NPO chief linked to election-rigging plan...**, ABS-CBN (01/06/07)  
*“NPO chief Felipe Evardone is a brother of Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, campaign manager of the administration’s TU.”*
- **GO urges COMELEC to post official list of voters**, ABS-CBN (03/29/07)  
*“GO doubts number of voters can reach 45 million... based on a study of a group of experts, the number of voters this May can only reach 30 million.”*
- **Fire razes old Comelec building**, PDI (03/12/07)  
*“Destroyed in the fire were those involving the failed P1.3-billion poll modernization project, the procurement of supplies for the 2007 elections and the cheating allegations in the 2004 presidential election.”*
- **Comelec forms stolen**, Manila Times (05/16/07)  
*“Theft of (COMELEC) forms... missing were four sets of certificates of canvass for national positions, 16 sets of overseas absentee voting form No. 21, 11 sets certificates of canvass of votes and proclamation forms, and two sets of summary of statement of votes.”*
- **250,000-300,000 multiple registrants in ARMM**, PDI (05/23/07)  
*“List of voters of ARMM has between 250,000 and 300,000 multiple registrants... Lanao Del Sur, Maguindanao, Shariff Kabunsuan, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi... showed significant increases in number of voters... Comelec discovered 120,000 voters who registered more than once.”*
- **73 of 102 ARMM towns post 10%-177% growth in number of voters**, PDI (05/18/07)  
*“Comelec data... shows that 73 of 102 ARMM towns, or 72 percent, posted double-digit growth in the number of voters from 2004 to 2007...the average annual population growth rate in the special autonomous region is 2.36 percent.”*
- **Large increases in number of voters in some towns noted...**,PDI (05/12/07)  
*“Several towns in Cagayan and Lanao del Sur provinces have shown large increases in number of voters... some towns have more than doubled their number of registered voters.”*

- **Dead people voted**, The Philippine Star (06/07/07)  
*“(Dead people) resulted in a voter turnout of over 100 percent, where the number of votes cast exceeded the number of registered voters in the precincts. A computation of the irregularities in Batangas province alone shows a discrepancy of 200,000 voters in 5,825 precincts in the province.”*
  
- **Max Soliven still on voters’ list...**, The Philippine Star (5/14/07)  
*“Max Soliven, deceased publisher of The Philippine Star, is still on the voters’ list... on election day, 6 months after his death, even as COMELEC said it purged 1.1 million names of “flying voters,” those who have died, been convicted, acquired foreign citizenship and the double-registered,*
  
- **Minors voted in Maguindanao....**, ABS-CBN (05/25/07)  
*“Minors voted in Maguindanao... election supervisor Atty Lintang Bedol said there’s nothing wrong in minors being able to vote... because it is consistent with Shariah Law...”*
  
- **No truth to Comelec claim of cleaned-up voters’ list...**, Inside PCIJ (05/14/07)  
*“(In) Rizal province, at least 60 dead persons were discovered to remain among registered voters in Cainta... over 100 double registrants in Taytay... dead voters in the 98 precincts covering four barangays... According to Ramon Casiple of the Institute of Political and Electoral Reform... the cleaned-up list (could have been) destroyed in the fire that razed the old Comelec building last March...  
... 2,357 double registrants out of 24,297 voters within four polling centers and 120 polling precincts...  
... 353 double registrants in Cainta.”*
  
- **Comelec forms body to probe missing voters’ names**, PDI (05/15/07)  
*“COMELEC continues to receive complaints from people who failed to vote ... Abalos said., “...we may have misprinted some names...”*
  
- **16 Comelec officials under watch**, PDI (05/13/07)  
*“...16 regional and provincial election officers... to rig the 2007 elections, a plan dubbed “Oplan Mercury Rising.” “Lintang Bedol, the provincial election supervisor for Maguindanao; and Ray Sumalipao, regional election director for the ARMM figured in the Hello Garci tapes”*
  
- **COMELEC officials to be probed**, ABS-CBN (06/13/07)  
*“Other COMELEC personnel identified with Garcillano are ARMM director Rey Sumalipao, who is the former provincial election supervisor in Lanao del Sur in 2004...; lawyer Renato Mabutay, ARMM director in 2004 and current COMELEC regional director for Northern Mindanao; and Francisco Pobe, former election supervisor of Agusan del Sur and the current assistant regional director for Caraga... Renault “Boy” Macarambon, the former vice-chairman of the Lanao del Sur board of canvassers.”*

- **Foreign observers can't stop poll fraud in South**, PDI (05/14/07)  
*"...Dalidig, chair of Namfrel in Lanao del Sur, said many of the Comelec officials responsible for the alleged cheating in 2004... were still around."*
  
- **GMA back on campaign trail for TU**, The Philippine Star (04/28/07)  
*"GMA... rejoined the campaign trail of TU. ... leaders in Cebu prepared separate meetings in Talisay, Danao and Mandaue towns..."*
  
- **No probe on admin-linked party lists...**, Manila Times (03/26/07)  
*"... COMELEC dismissed the request of Akbayan to investigate at least 11 party-list organizations "fronting" for the Arroyo administration."*
  
- **Palace 'special operations' for party-list elections bared**, Inside PCIJ (04/20/07)  
*"a secret memorandum dated October 16, 2006, addressed to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and coursed through her special assistant, Atty. Eryln de Leon, informs the president of the setting up of the Office of External Affairs Special Concerns Group (OEA-SCG) headed by Assistant Secretary Marcelo Fariñas II... A proposed budget of P5.5 million was requested... Interviewed on ANC last March, Agbiag! and Babae Ka did not deny receiving assistance from the Office of External Affairs."*
  
- **Another Arroyo emerging as partylist House member**, PDI (05/21/07)  
*"Ang Kasangga, the partylist group of Marilou Arroyo, sister of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Representative Ignacio Arroyo Jr. (Negros Occidental 5th district) won in Negros Occidental over 92 other groups..."*
  
- **Admin funding party lists**, Tribune (05/10/07)  
*"a memorandum submitted to President Arroyo dated Oct. 16, 2006 and signed by Marcelo Fariñas II, a former assistant secretary in the Office of External Affairs (OEA) titled "2007 Party-list Campaign: A Proposal, for a five-month operation with a P5.5 million fund."*
  
- **Party-list groups, pinaiimbestigahan....**, ABS-CBN Bandila (03/26/07)  
*"... kapatid ni First Gentleman Arroyo ang kongresista ng grupong Ang Kasangga... Proyekto ni NSA Norberto Gonzales ang Aksa... lider ng Agbiag ang Secretary for External Affairs ng Malacañang... Anak ni Dante Ang ang lider ng Ahon Pinoy,... lider ng Biyaheng Pinoy si Arsenio Abalos, kapatid ni COMELEC Chairman Benjamin Abalos."*
  
- **Pondo ng gobyerno... sa kampanya....**, ABS-CBN Bandila (03/08/07)  
*"...kukumpunihin ang 27 mga tulay.... P150 milyon ang halaga ng mga proyekto na nailathala sa pahayagan. ...maari ding nagagamit sa kampanya ang Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund.."*

- **Lacson questions farm fund for areas of TU bets**, PDI (03/30/07)  
*“One TU candidate received P50 million from the P5-billion National Irrigation Administration (NIA) fund... the P1.7-billion Calamity Fund... School feeding program”*
  
- **Philhealth probe**, ABS-CBN (01/30/07)  
*“Senator Lacson called for audit of all fund releases by the Philhealth, DBM, PAGCOR, PCSO, OWWA, POEA...”*
  
- **Bicol to get P5-B in rehabilitation funds**, PDI (02/23/07)  
*“The Bicol region gets P5 billion to rebuild and recover from the devastation wrought by typhoons... The P5 billion is the lion’s share of the P6.7 billion to be divided among 11 disaster-stricken areas.”*
  
- **School feeding funds watched**, FDC (02/19/07)  
*“... re-channeling of the controversial P4.7 billion school-feeding program a rice distribution scheme thus raising suspicion it would be used for indirect vote-buying in the coming May elections.”*
  
- **GMA vote buying scored**, The Philippine Star (05/02/07)  
*“At the TUCP’s May 1 assembly, Mrs. Arroyo, among other promises, said minimum wage earners will be exempted from paying income tax if the group’s candidates win in the Senate race.”*
  
- **Reporters get cellcards from candidate**, The Philippine Star (04/27/07)  
*“Many reporters... received Globe prepaid cards worth P100 each... supposedly from Manila mayoralty bet Arnold “Ali” Atienza.”*
  
- **Biggest spenders**, PCIJ (05/31/07)  
*“Pichay spent the biggest in political ads... AC Nielsen reported that the combined political ads expenses of the 10 candidates from TU and two from GO amounted to P1.635 billion.*
  
- **Insurance cards questioned**, The Philippines Star (04/25/07)  
*JDV distributed insurance cards for P100,000 accident insurance coverage and P10,000 worth of burial benefits.*
  
- **P1-M for TU sweep in Maguindanao**, The Philippine Star (04/15/07)  
*“Maguindanao Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan promised his local mayors P1 million in exchange for a 12-0 win for TU. Jong Mangudadatu, a candidate in the town of Buluan, said, “...yun ang susundin namin.”*
  
- **Abalos shies away from Gonzalez cash incentive**, The Philippine Star (4/24/07)  
*“... Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez... offered barangay officials in Iloilo cash incentives if Team Unity’s senatorial candidates would win 12-0 in the province.”*

- **No funds for opposition bailiwicks**, DZBB (05/01/07)  
*“Bayan Muna Rep. Ocampo said activist congressmen and LGU officials have not received their pork barrel and IRA allocations, respectively, since 2005”*
- **Vote-buying rampant; costs from P50 to P1,500**, PDI (05/14/07)  
*“In Pampanga, ... vote-buying in Floridablanca, Sta. Rita, San Simon and Magalang towns, and San Fernando... five kg of rice and P500.... In Bacolor, “flying voters”... taken from various resettlement sites. Some candidates offered up to P1,500 per voter. In Guimaras, the PNP intercepted eight men carrying 155 small envelopes containing cash...”*
- **Ex-AFP brass bare ‘Oplan Mercury Rising,’** PDI (05/09/07)  
*“(Bantay Boto) composed of retired military brass, officers and enlisted men disclosed an alleged fresh plot to cheat in the May 14 elections,... local government and COMELEC had been “offered huge cash incentives” to deliver a 12-0 win for TU. “An added bonus is promised if GO candidate Alan Peter Cayetano gets zero vote,”... the AFP chief of staff, had issued verbal instructions to all military commanders to ensure a 12-0 TU win.”*
- **AFP chief approves voters’ education**, PDI (04/30/07)  
*“AFP Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon gave blessings... to the voters’ education campaign by the AFP NCRCom...”*
- **Soldiers told to back TU, Palparan’s party list**, PDI (05/09/07)  
*“Ranking military officials in Mindanao are said to be visiting soldiers in various camps, telling them to vote for the administration’s Team Unity (TU) slate as well as party list groups identified with the government, including that of retired Gen. Jovito Palparan. Among these officials is Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino...”*
- **Soldiers campaign for presidential son**, ABS-CBN (05/10/07)  
*“Soldiers of the Army’s 31st Infantry Battalion put up campaign posters for President Arroyo’s son, Diosdado “Dato” Arroyo.”*
- **AFP: So sue us for electioneering**, Malaya (05/10/07)  
*“Trillanes said Esperon has issued a radio message to military commanders to ensure that the TU candidates will get a 12-0 win. Lacson said he received text messages from Western Samar that (Philippine Army commanding general) Tolentino asked officers and men to vote straight TU.”*
- **Kampi slugging it out in 216 poll races**, The Philippine Star (04/15/07)  
*“...two administration parties, Lakas-CMD and Kampi fight each other in more than half of the country’s provinces, congressional districts and cities: 43 provinces, 110 districts and 63 cities.”*

- **Iloilo gov defies suspensión**, ABS (01/14/07)  
*“Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. said DOJ Secretary Raul Gonzalez was behind the order suspending him...”*
- **AFP to probe Trillanes’s campaign blogs**, PDI (02/20/07)  
*“AFP will investigate online journals for Trillanes IV to find out whether active military members are behind the cyberspace senatorial campaign.”*
- **Cayetano hits Gonzalez’s probe into citizenship**, The Philippine Star (02/20/07)  
*“Cayetano scored DOJ Secretary Raul Gonzalez for plowing into the issue of his citizenship.”*
- **Cayetano, Abalos trade barbs on namesake**, ABS-CBN (02/19/07)  
*“... Cayetano and Abalos traded barbs after the COMELEC approved the senatorial candidacy of Cayetano’s namesake, Joselito Pepito “Peter” Cayetano.”*
- **Suspension order vs Binay served**, ABS-CBN (5/04/07)  
*“... a six-month preventive suspension order was served by (DILG USec) Corpus against Binay and the city treasurer.”*
- **‘Kuya Ted’ says he’s qualified for Senate run**, ABS-CBN (03/01/07)  
*“GO candidate (Noynoy) Aquino filed a petition before the COMELEC seeking to declare (Ted) Aquino as a nuisance candidate.”*
- **Palace behind disqualification bid vs activist party list groups**, ABS-CBN (02/16/07)  
*“Bayan Muna criticized Malacañang on disqualification cases against it, Gabriela and Anakpawis...”*
- **Trinidad supporters dispersed**, The Philippine Star (02/01/07)  
*“Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad was ordered dismissed by Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez over an irregular garbage contract.”*
- **International observers note fraud**, ABS-CBN (05/19/07)  
*“People’s International Observer Mission, Compact for Peaceful Elections reported vote-buying, violence, fraud.”*
- **GO votes shaved**, ABS-CBN (05/19/07)  
*“In Zambales, Escudero’s 185,923 in Statement of Votes reduced to 85,923 Certificate of Canvass; Cayetano’s 129,198 reduced to 29,198”*
- **Ballots misread to favor TU**, DZMM (05/14/07)  
*“International observers noted repeated instances of misreading of ballots...”*

- **Lacson missing 117,000 votes in Marikina?** The Philippine Star (06/07/07)  
*“(HALAL) uncovered significant vote discrepancies in Marikina City, which reportedly cost re-electionist Sen. Panfilo Lacson at least 117,000 votes.”*
  
- **Bishop Villegas angry: Bataan polls ‘dirtiest,’** PDI (05/18/07)  
*“Digusted over what it said was the “dirtiest election” in Bataan, the diocese of Balanga has issued the angriest Roman Catholic Church statement yet denouncing massive vote-buying ... in the province, out-buying one another, at as high as P1,700 per voter.”*
  
- **Activist group says 2.7-M votes padded for admin bets...**, The Philippine Star (05/30/07)  
*“... analyst Dr. Giovanni Tapang, said... poll body’s canvass showed a “73.4% voter turnout in 45 provinces, 4.42% higher than the Pulse Asia exit poll of 69% percent... providing political operators with as much as 2.7 million in cheatable, negotiable votes.”*
  
- **Group claims poll anomalies in Tawi-Tawi**, The Philippine Star (06/03/07)  
*“(HALAL) said that in Tawi-Tawi, which has the highest voters discrepancy among 65 cites and provinces across the country, 57 of every 1,000 votes cast for two candidates Tessie Aquino Oreta and Cesar Montano were credited to other candidates.”*
  
- **Irregularities mar Lanao Del Sur special polls**, ANC (5/26/07)  
*“Volunteers from PPCRV and NAMFREL were not allowed to enter the polling center. The COMELEC OIC was nowhere to be found.”*
  
- **Witnesses surface, tell of cheating in Sulu**, GMANEWSTV (05/25/07)  
*“... former judge and assemblyman., said, “Hindi pinakita ang pag-open ng ballot boxes; ... barangay chairmen made off with the ballot boxes and had the ballots inside filled up from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. of May 14.”*
  
- **Another fraud witness surfaces**, ABS-CBN, (05/20/07)  
*“BEI chairman in Sulu said 4 ballot boxes with 700 ballots filled up before election day.”*
  
- **Pimentel files electoral sabotage raps vs Cotabato poll execs....**, PDI (6/14/07)  
*“...provincial election supervisors... Lilia Radam of South Cotabato ... padded votes of Angara by 101,000 votes, Arroyo 110,000, Defensor 109,000, Pichay 110,000, Recto 116,000, and Zubiri 77,000 in South Cotabato... and Yogie Martizar increased votes of Zubiri by 130,000 votes while decreasing Pimentel’s votes by more than 40,000 votes in North Cotabato.”*
  
- **Tallies “snowpaked,”** ABS-CBN (05/18/07)  
*“BOC chairman “snowpaked” tallies, and added 1,000 to “selected candidates in Davao del Sur.”*

- **Over 3,000 ballots missing in Lanao Norte town**, PDI (05/14/07)  
*“A total of 3,702 ballots are missing in Pantao, another town in the province of Lanao Del Norte, the Commission on Elections has disclosed.”*
  
- **COMELEC discovers vote-padding in Davao**, ABS-CBN (05/25/07)  
*“... at least 80,000 votes were added to the vote tally of TU bet Ralph Recto and... 50,000 votes to TU bet Luis “Chavit” Singson.... the votes were “shaved” from GO candidates Koko Pimentel and Sonia Roco.”*
  
- **Poll exec accused of vote-padding in ARMM**, PDI (06/01/07)  
*“Votes for two party list groups, including one where Commission on Elections Chairman Benjamin Abalos’ brother is a candidate, have been padded, a militant party list organization has disclosed.”*
  
- **100 BEIs ‘abducted,’ forced to certify ERs, CoC for TU**, The Philippine Star (05/31/07)  
*“Maguindano election inspectors turned election fraud whistleblowers who said they were abducted by armed men and forced into signing and certifying the election returns backing the Team Unity (TU) senatorial bets, all of whom uniformly obtained the same number of votes while the GO bets all obtained a zero vote.... the voter-turnout in Maguindanao was so high no municipality had a turnout of less than 90 percent.”*
  
- **Maguindanao: BEI teachers recount kidnapping and ballot-writing ordeal; Abalos orders recanvass**, Manila Times (05/20/07)  
*“This, for us, is statistically improbable,” (Abalos) explained.”*
  
- **Teacher details poll cheating in province**, PDI (05/21/07)  
*“(Maguindanao)... with armed guards... they were forced to fill blank ballots with names of TU senatorial candidates. ... children... were asked to mark ballots with their thumbprints and sign their names...”*
  
- **Maguindanao mayors say TU sweep only through fraud...**, PDI (05/12/07)  
*“All 27 mayors of Maguindanao... said a 12-0 win for TU is not possible. The vice president of the League of Municipalities in the Philippines-Mindanao said (it) would only be possible if the results... were manipulated. Balindong, Lanao del Sur Mayor Benjie Balindong, Lanao del Sur Mayor Benjie Bagul, LMP-Mindanao vice president, said there was no assurance... all TU candidates would win in his province.*
  
- **Maguindanao used 2 sets of poll docus**, Tribune (06/24/07)  
*“Not only are the votes as tallied in second copy of the Maguindanao municipal certificates of canvass (MCoC) grossly manufactured, but also that there were two sets of Comelec-issued election documents in various parts of Maguindanao... said a Roel de la Torre, a Pwersa ng Masa coordinator...”*

- **Foreign observers can't stop poll fraud in South**, PDI (05/14/07)  
*"The chair of Namfrel in Lanao del Sur said he received information that negotiations were in progress for a dagdag-bawas operation to favor three senatorial candidates... (for) P20 for every vote added..."*
- **Stolen ballot boxes recovered in Pampanga**, ABS-CBN (05/15/07)  
*"...ballot boxes snatched by 10 gunmen... containing certificates of canvass, voters' master list and election returns..."*
- **Arson seen in burning of ballot boxes in Mabalacat**, PDI (05/18/07)  
*"...fire that destroyed 154 of 399 ballot boxes containing... official ballots and election results... (representing) 41% of all official ballots in Mabalacat."*
- **Poll violence and death toll mounts**, Manila Times (05/16/07)  
*"The death toll from election-related violence has risen to 200... PNP said 126 people had been killed and 148 others wounded in violence leading up to and during Monday's polls ... number of towns declared hotspots..."*
- **More than half of country 'areas of immediate concern'**, PDI (05/13/07)  
*"Army troops deployed to more than half of the Philippines — 46 of the country's 81 provinces — declared "areas of immediate concern" by Comelec... five in Metro Manila — Pasay, Pasig, Kalookan, Taguig, and Marikina — and Bantayan Island in Cebu, said Abalos..."*
- **Hearing on Extrajudicial killings**, Asian Journal (03/19/07)  
*"207 killed in the Philippines in 2006 alone"*
- **Maguindanao cheating whistleblower killed**, Malaya (07/11/07)  
*"The supervisor... Musa Demasidsing... who exposed alleged poll irregularities in the May 14 elections in Maguindanao was shot dead..."*
- **Killings continue**, ABS-CBN (06/16/07)  
*"Lupao town mayor-elect Alfredo Vendivil Sr. and his brother, former board member Virgilio Vendivil, were killed in San Jose City... Six people were wounded in the shooting."*
- **Albay vice-mayor survives, brother dies in ambush**, The Philippine Star (06/18/07)  
*"Vice Mayor-elect Gilbert Clemente of Jovellar, Albay survived but his brother, Aldin, died following the ambush."*
- **Town police chief, newly elected official shot dead....**, AFP (6/13/07)  
*"Police chief of Masiu, Lanao del Sur, Inspector Bernie Alejandro was shot dead... "Oswald Villamor, elected councilor of Lagangilang, Abra, was shot dead..."*

- **Mayor-elect survives ambush; 3 companions die**, The Philippine Star (06/02/07)  
*“Three companions of Mayor-elect Magdaleno Peña (Pulupandan, Negros Occidental) killed, Mayor survived”*
- **Panlilio supporter slain**, ABS-CBN (05/28/07)  
*“Barangay Captain Jomar Nulud, supporter of Father Ed Panlilio, killed.”*
- **Third victim in Taysan dies**, ABS-CBN (05/22/07)  
*“Poll watcher Guillermo Malaluan is the third fatality in the incident after teacher Nelly Banaag and poll watcher Leticia Ramos who perished when the Pinagbayanan Elementary School was torched... on May 15.”*
- **Mayor, councilor slain**, ABS-CBN (05/19/07)  
*“Mayor Philip Velasco and Councilor Marcelo Andaya of Bacarra, Ilocos Norte slain; gunman also killed.”*
- **Coordinators of militant group slain**, ABS-CBN (05/16/07)  
*“Kabataan party-list said their coordinators Jun Bagasbas and Ronilo Vallevere were abducted and killed May 15 in Camarines Sur.”*
- **Poll violence claims 3 more lives**, The Philippine Star (05/16/07)  
*“Two insurgents and a soldier were killed in Camarines norte in incidents linked to this week’s mid-term elections, the military said Friday.”*
- **Polls ‘worse than Afghan elections,’ says foreign observer**, PDI (05/15/07)  
*“Bomb explosions and the sight of uniformed armed men in polling places ... made a foreign observer (from the group, ANFREL) think the country’s latest political exercise was worse than Afghanistan’s.”*
- **Poll violence very distressing – UK envoy**, The Philippine Star (06/03/07)  
*“British Ambassador Peter Bevington expressed disappointment over the violence... particularly the death of a Batangas teacher and a poll watcher in a fire that gutted a public school.”*
- **ABS-CBN, partners launch “Boto Mo, I-Patrol Mo”**, ABS-CBN (03/11/07)  
*“ABS-CBN... launched “Halalan 2007: Boto Mo, I-Patrol Mo” campaign for the May 14 elections... the network’s partners include Globe Telecommunications, BayanTel, Institute for Popular Democracy, Pulse Asia, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, Commission on Elections, Philippine Star, Business World and STI.”*

*“The vote is a trust more delicate than any other, for it involves not just the interests of the voter, but his life, honor and future as well.”*

*Jose Marti*