

Electoral Protests and Battles Rage Across the Philippines: Fair and Democratic 2016 Elections?

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A month since the May 2016 polls, the electoral battle rages on in many provinces and cities.

MANILA, Philippines – It has been a month since the May 2016 elections, but the fight is not yet over in many provinces and cities.

At least 42 election protest cases (EPC) in connection with local polls have been filed before the Commission on Elections (Comelec) as of Friday, June 10.

These were filed against 6 provincial governors, 3 vice governors, the regional governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), 21 city mayors, and 4 city vice mayors. One protest questioned the results for a seat in the Antique provincial board, while 7 cases involved city council elections.

One electoral protest contested the victories of both the governor and vice governor of Sulu.

In Metro Manila, losing mayoralty candidates in the cities of Manila, Caloocan, Makati, Muntinlupa, and San Juan filed electoral protests against the proclaimed mayors.

Elsewhere, Cebu City mayor-elect Tomas Osmeña is likewise facing an electoral protest filed by his closest rival Michael Rama. In Cagayan de Oro City, reelected Mayor Oscar Moreno's qualification to assume office is questioned by Vicente Emano.

The narrowest vote margin involved in these protests was in the South Cotabato vice gubernatorial election. Independent candidate Bernie Palencia lost by only 144 votes (or 0.35%) against Vic de Jesus of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC).

Other protests with vote margins less than 5% in the official election results were:

- Mayor, Manila – Alfredo Lim (38.17%) vs Joseph Ejercito Estrada (38.54%)
- Mayor, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur – Omar Ali (49.66%) vs Majul Gandamra (50.28%)
- Mayor, San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan – Reynaldo San Pedro (49.26%) vs Arturo Robes (50.15%)
- Mayor, San Juan City – Francis Javier Zamora (48.91%) vs Guia Gomez (51.08%)
- Mayor, Cabuyao City, Laguna – Julio Alcasabas (31.57%) vs Rommel Gecolea (34.28%)
- Vice Governor, Tarlac – Pearl Angel Pacada (37.63%) vs Carlito David (41.04%)
- Governor, Cagayan – Cristina Antonio (34.68%) vs Manuel Mamba (38.20%)

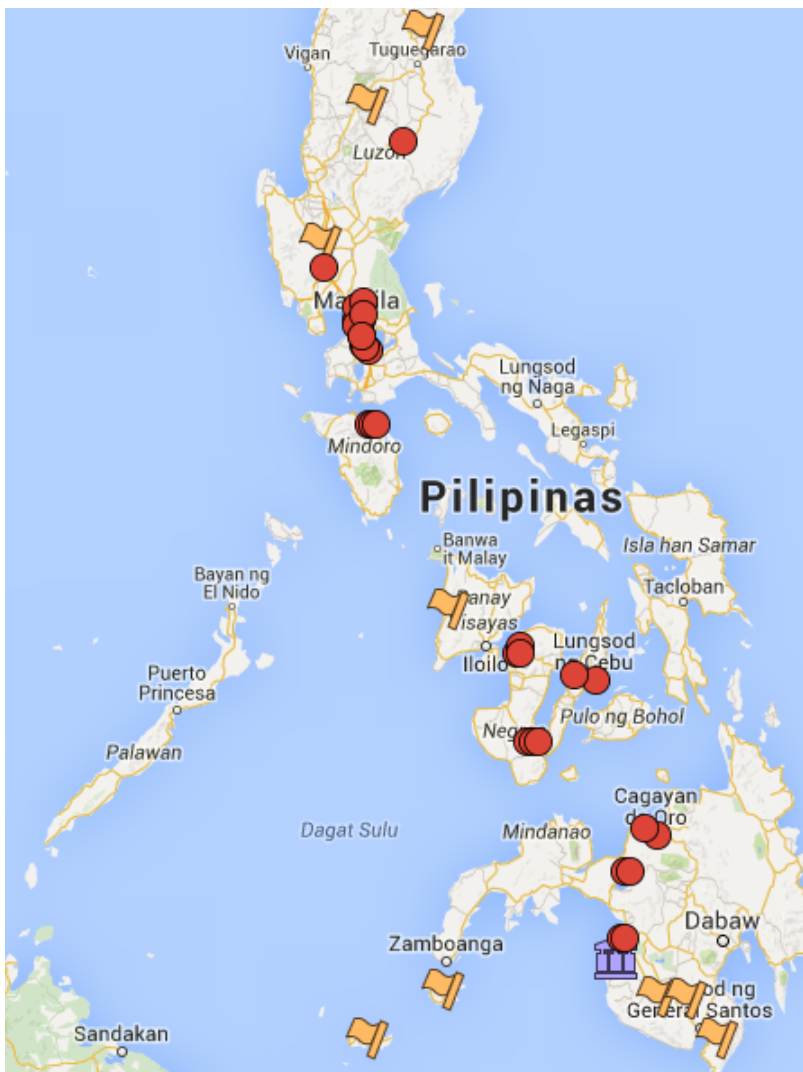
Click the icons on the map below for details on each of the 42 EPCs filed before the Comelec as of June 10, 2016.

Among the cases, 7 were *quo warranto* protests, wherein a winning candidate's qualification for public office is questioned. Notable was the one filed by Tomas "Thom" Tawagen against proclaimed Mountain Province Governor Kathy Jyll Mayaen-Luis, who substituted for her late father Leonard Mayaen but was reportedly not allowed to do so by the Comelec en banc.

Meanwhile, 4 were *ad cautelam* cases, or those on standby pending a disposition of a similar but separate case in the Comelec. One was both a *quo warranto* and an *ad cautelam* case, in the electoral protest concerning the mayoralty race in Mabalacat City, Pampanga.

According to Comelec Resolution 8804, election protest cases can be filed within 10 days from the proclamation of a winning candidate. These cases will then be raffled off to the two divisions of the Comelec.










Electoral protests in congressional polls are filed before the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET). Under its new rules, protests can be filed within 15 days from June 30 of the election year or the date of actual assumption to office of the winning candidate, whichever is later.



Regional Election (ARMM)

 Regional Governor, ARMM

Provincial Elections

-  Governor, Basilan
-  Governor, Cagayan
-  Governor, Mountain Province
-  Governor, Sarangani
-  Governor, South Cotabato
-  Governor and Vice Governor, Sulu
-  Vice Governor, South Cotabato
-  Vice Governor, Tarlac
-  Board Member (1st District), Antique

City Elections

- Mayor, Bacolod City
- Mayor, Bais City
- Mayor, Biñan City
- Mayor, Calapan City
- Mayor, Caloocan City
- Mayor, Cabuyao City
- Mayor, Cagayan de Oro City
- Mayor, Cebu City
- Mayor, Cotabato City
- Mayor, El Salvador City
- Mayor, Mabalacat City
- Mayor, Makati City
- Mayor, Manila
- Mayor, Marawi City
- Mayor, Meycauayan City
- Mayor, Muntinlupa City
- Mayor, San Jose del Monte City
- Mayor, San Juan City
- Mayor, Santa Rosa City
- Mayor, Santiago City
- Mayor, Talisay City
- Vice Mayor, Bacolod City
- Vice Mayor, Bais City
- Vice Mayor, Calapan City
- Vice Mayor, Marawi City
- Councilor, Calapan City
- Councilor, Cotabato City
- Councilor, Pasay City (1st District)
- Councilor, Quezon City (2nd District)
- Councilor, Toledo City
- Councilor(s), Bais City
- Councilor(s), Muntinlupa City

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