

Audit No Reason to Postpone ARMM Polls – Nene Pimentel - MabuhayRadio

Written by Nene Pimentel's Press Office
Tuesday, 12 April 2011 20:07 -

Former Senate President Aquilino “Nene” Q. Pimentel, Jr. today said that the expected conclusion in May of the audit being done in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is yet another compelling reason why the ARMM election should be held as scheduled on August 8 this year.

Nene Pimentel stressed that with the release next month of the Commission on Audit (COA) report on ARMM, the government, if so warranted, will have more than ample time in June and July to file charges in relation to the utilization of ARMM funds.

“The very excuse cited by DILG Secretary Jesse Robredo in calling for postponement – the release of the COA report on ARMM in May – is the very proof that there is no valid reason not to push through with the ARMM election this year,” said Mr. Pimentel.

“They will have all the time in the world to go after those who had misused ARMM funds well before the August ARMM election. In fact, the government can file the charges even after the ARMM election,” he added.

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Former Senator Pimentel issued the statement in reaction to reports that the first phase of the COA audit of ARMM, covering P2.5-billion, is already finished and that phases 2 and 3 and the concluding phase 4 will end next month.

Secretary Robredo said that charges of plunder against outgoing ARMM officials or those who were suspended in relation to the Maguindanao Massacre might be filed upon the conclusion of the COA audit.

“The audit of ARMM pertains to past or outgoing officials. It has nothing to do whatsoever with the need to elect new officials at ARMM, which is the clamor of Muslim Filipinos and all Mindanaonons who want to see a peaceful and prosperous ARMM,” said Mr. Pimentel.

“Real reforms can only come under a new ARMM leadership that is elected and not appointed by Malacañang. The right to govern comes from a mandate vested by the electorate and not by an appointive power.”

Nene Pimentel said the ARMM election should not be synchronized with the national election because it needs more guidance and attention to ensure that the true will of the people will be reflected in the results.

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The Comelec, Namfrel and the PPCRV voiced out the same opinion. # # #

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