



### **PRESS ADVISORY**

**Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG)**

**For: July 21, 2009**

## **Comelec should release source code now – UP-based think tank**

A Study Team from the Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG) has set a meeting with Atty. Jose M. Tolentino, Executive Director of Comelec, to pick up a copy of the source code of the automated election system (AES) for its review. The Comelec approved en banc the release of the source code in its Minute Resolution No. 09-0366 dated June 16, 2009 in response to the May 26 letter of request of CenPEG but was delivered to the latter's office only last July 10. Until now the source code has not been released.

The meeting with the Comelec is on:

**July 21, 2009, 10 a.m.  
Atty. Tolentino's Office  
Comelec, Intramuros**

In the team are Prof. Bobby Tuazon, CenPEG Director for Policy Study; Dr. Pablo Manalastas, IT Consultant; Prof. Rosa Castillo; and CenPEG Executive Director Evi-ta Jimenez.

The election modernization law (RA 9369) mandates the Comelec to provide a copy of the source code to all interested parties for review. The source code is the human readable version of the computer programs running on the PCOS and BOC computers and reveals whether the counting and canvassing are done properly and no cheating is possible. It is one of the safeguards against wholesale fraud, according to the UP-based think tank, including ensuring the integrity of the digital signature and rules on root user of the machines. In the August 2008 ARMM election the source code was not reviewed at all due to "time constraint."

A source code review takes time, according to Dr. Pablo Manalastas, CenPEG IT consultant, especially for IT experts who have yet to take hold of the system design of the vendor, considering the time constraint brought about by undue delay in the Comelec timetable, and with the manufacturing of machines and customization of software already being undertaken.

The policy institute is undertaking a policy study of Comelec's AES with the UP College of Law. CenPEG is an independent policy institute or think tank based in UP Diliman, Quezon City. Its preliminary findings on the automated election can be downloaded at [www.cenpeg.org](http://www.cenpeg.org).

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