

Comelec SBAC to resolve appeals

by ANNA VALMERO
Inquirer.net

MANILA—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) said it will start post-qualification and technical evaluation of poll machines of a qualifying bidder while it resolves pending appeals for the P11.2-billion poll automation project, a poll official said.

“Whatever rulings in the motions of AMA-ES&S consortium, Gilat consortium and Sequoia joint venture, we shall proceed with the post-qualification and technical evaluation of machines of the bidder Smartmatic and TIM (Total Information Management)—this will be without prejudice to the pending motions or requests so that proceedings will not be delayed any further,” said Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) chairman Ferdinand Rafanan.

Smartmatic and local partner TIM pegged its financial bid for the automation contract at P7,191,484,739.48—about P4 billion below than the total contract amount.

The Smartmatic-TIM consortium emerged the lone qualifier for the final leg of the automation bidding when SBAC on May 17 declared the bid of Indra Sistemas, Strategic Alliance Holdings (SAHD) and Hart Intercivic non-compliant for providing partial bid or insufficient supply of poll machine units worth P11.2 billion.

Asked if Smartmatic-TIM had the lowest bid, Rafanan said: “Not yet, because SBAC has to make a ruling first on this before we can proceed with the post-qualification and technical demonstration for Smartmatic-TIM. If they pass these final two requirements, they cannot bag the award yet because there is a remaining veil for them to clinch victory—that the awarding is still subject to results of pending motions.”

According to the Technical Working Group, Smartmatic set up the machines and other automation related-equipment on Tuesday, May 26 for the technical demonstration and evaluation of machines slated on Wednesday, May 27.

For the technical demonstration, the first part will include an end-to-end demonstration of the vendor’s system, which includes the scanning of 670 ballots, electronic consolidation of voting results and electronic transmission of voting results using a public telco network. This will be followed by the evaluation and testing for compliance of the 26 technical criteria set by the SBAC, said Rafanan.

“During post-qualification that can last for a week, SBAC shall verify and validate if the documents submitted by Smartmatic-TIM are genuine, true and correct,” said Rafanan. ■

Nothing less than the presidency for Teodoro



Defense Sec. Gilbert Teodoro

he would have a fair chance of getting the nomination as standard-bearer of the administration even as Lakas and Kampi merge.

“I am optimistic that the selection process will be there and in full steam soon. And I am optimistic about the selection process,” Teodoro said.

“I have a fair and fighting chance, and I am overwhelmed by the amount of support that the people have been giving me.”

He downplayed results of surveys, saying that party nomination is more important to him. “Whatever comes out of the merger, I will join that,” he added.

Confirmation of 15 AFP officials deferred

As this developed, the CA deferred last May 25 the confirmation of 15 military generals and a colonel after Sen. Rodolfo Biazon questioned the policy on appointing too many generals in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Teodoro attended the CA

hearing to answer questions raised by Biazon and other CA members on the appointment of too many generals.

The CA’s Committee on National Defense decided to review the case until next week before Congress goes on sine die adjournment.

Biazon said the AFP leadership violated Republic Act 9188 that provides the number of generals who should be appointed to positions in the military.

“If we confirm the number of generals beyond what is provided for by law, then we will be violating the law. That’s why my position can’t be moved because my basis is the law. Remember, as I said the table of organization is not the one approved by Congress. What is approved by Congress through budget is the troop ceiling or the authorized strength,” Biazon explained.

He was referring to RA 9188 that provided the percentage distribution of generals/flag officers in the AFP table of organization. (Philstar.com)

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