

OVERSEAS VOTING IN BAHRAIN BREACHES 20% MARK PHILIPPINE EMBASSY URGES MORE PINOYS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS



SBEI Chairperson Atty. Emily Kristine Villanueva-Descallar and Poll Clerk Cynthia Depalobos overseeing the conduct of the elections at the voting precinct.

23 April 2016 – After (15) days since the start of overseas voting, over 3,000 registered Filipino overseas voters have already cast their ballots at the Philippine Embassy in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain. Compared to other GCC countries, the number of registered overseas voters in Bahrain is considered small at only 18,497. However, Filipinos in Bahrain are making sure their voices will be heard this election, as more than 20% of the total number of registered voters have already voted.

In a bid to mobilize more Filipino community members to participate in this year's elections, Philippine Ambassador to Bahrain, H. E. Alfonso A. Ver, has written a letter which was circulated to leaders of Filipino associations soliciting their assistance in encouraging their members to go out and vote. Ambassador Ver is also making the rounds during Filipino community gatherings and events to persuade those registered overseas voters to exercise their right to vote ahead of the last day of voting on 09 May 2016.

Local newspaper, Guam Daily News, also featured an article on 23 April 2016 regarding the turnout of Filipino overseas voters and Ambassador Ver took this opportunity to continue announcing to *kababayans in Bahrain* they can still cast their votes at the Embassy. GDN also noted that Filipino overseas voters in the Middle East and Africa appears to be the most enthusiastic this elections as the percentage of voter turnout in the region is higher than those in Europe and the Americas.

80pc Filipinos yet to vote in election

BY SANDY GARCIA

At least 80 per cent of Bahrain's Filipino community are yet to cast their votes in their country's Presidential election. Around 11,500 of the country's registered Filipinos are eligible to vote, but only 2,300 have cast their ballots so far since polls opened on April 8.

Philippine Ambassador Alfonso Ver is encouraging more to come forward to shape the outcome of the election, with overseas voting continuing until May 4.

"We continue to encourage overseas registered voters in Bahrain to visit the embassy to cast their ballots," he said. "These days we receive more than 10,000 votes and the number increases during the week."

The result of voting by Filipinos at home and abroad will determine the country's next president, its choosing the leaders of the country and government members, who propose different visions to their future representation.

"The voting process has been running smoothly with advanced vote counting machines set up where the voters can enter their ballots," said the ambassador.

"So far no incident of overseas ballot stuffing has been reported by the overseas voters in Bahrain."

There are two separate rooms at the Philippine Embassy in Doha, where trained embassy staff verify that those voting are registered on the ballot.

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"Bahrain is the US remained the lowest at 8.84pc, or 2,322 out of 275,729 registered voters. The second lowest was Europe with 10,848 ballots cast, 4.5pc of the total."

"We would like to see more Filipinos in Bahrain cast their vote and participate in choosing the leaders of the country and help shape its future," said his Ver.

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People can vote at the embassy from Sunday to Thursday, from 9am to 5pm, and on weekends from 8am to 5pm.

www.dfgp.com.ph



Overseas Filipino voters accomplishing their ballots at the voting precinct.

The Philippine Embassy remains open every day in order to accommodate those who wish to cast their ballots for the elections. Voting hours are from 9AM to 6PM during weekdays (Sundays to Thursdays) and from 8AM to 5PM on weekends (Fridays and Saturdays). Conduct of the overseas voting will continue until 12 noon of Monday, 09 May 2016.(END)