

December February

Forth and back

JON-JON MENDOZA, FOR ALMOST THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS, HAD BEEN THE ENTITLED BULACAN GOVERNOR UNTIL HIS CLOSEST RIVAL Obet Pagdanganan appealed to Commission on Elections (Comelec) claiming he officially won in 2007 national elections. Comelec Second Division, after a recount, proclaimed Pagdanganan as the rightful winner for the gubernatorial post on the last day of the filing of Certificates of Candidacy (CoC) for the next elections.

When Mendoza was first proclaimed by Comelec as the duly elected winner of the said seat having a total vote of 364, 566 against Pagdanganan's 348, 834, which made him win via 15, 732 votes, a protest was immediately filed by Pagdanganan to predetermine the votes. After the protest was granted, Mendoza, being allowed to defend himself, filed a counter-protest which the Comelec set aside to give way to Pagdanganan's appeal. Soon after, Pagdanganan was declared as the rightful winner having a head vote of 4,231. An oath-taking ceremony was held right after Comelec En Banc declared him Governor of Bulacan. But still, Mendoza has not stepped down from office.

On an official statement released by the Provincial Capitol on February 9, Mendoza said that he has not received a Notice of Promulgation from Comelec or DILG which states that Pagdanganan has already seized his position;

therefore he will not leave the office yet. Since December, supporters of Pagdanganan (with a little number) in Capitol View Park were seen shouting for Mendoza to step down from office because he was said to have cheated in the previous elections, while Mendoza's supporters (with a way larger number) block every entry of the Capitol to prevent Pagdanganan and his supporters to get in.

Bulakenyos are now wondering who their official leader is. For almost three months, projects are on-hold for no one knows who will sign for it. Public Utility Vehicle operators are losing business because the usual vehicle routes are blocked. Those who have transactions in the Capitol can't seem to do their business for every entrance is jammed with government trucks which are supposed to be for official use. End line: Every one is affected in any way possible.

Hence, the credibility of the results of last year's elections planted



a seed of doubt upon the people of the province. Why did this detour happen just when the nationwide election is barely three months from now? Or worse, why does this have to last for three months? What action has the government been taking for this to last up to now—when this has been constantly written in newspapers, seen on national television and heard on the radio?

Before, when Mendoza was still part of Lakas Kampi, the administration's

party list, no news of this election results inconsistency controversy arose. When he unexpectedly left the said party and joined Liberal Party instead with presidential Noyon Aquino came these political rumors. The same scenario also happened to Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca and Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio who left the party. Now is this mere coincidence or another of the nation's political vendetta?

The choice is ours to seize the real score. No more in-betweens.



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