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ACTION ARA-00

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INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 AID-00 INR-05 SS-00 CIAE-00 N-01
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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6919
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SECDEF WASHDC
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CONFIDENTIAL LIMA 04561

DIA FOR OA-5/OS-1D/DB-6D2/JS1-4B/DB3C1

USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356; DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOW, PTER, ASEC, MASS, PE
SUBJECT: SECURITY OUTLOOK FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT

2. SUMMARY. SENDERO HAS INITIATED ITS CAMPAIGN OF TERROR AGAINST THE APRIL 8 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. IN THE INTERIOR SL HAS KILLED FOUR PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES. VOTERS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS INSIDE EMERGENCY ZONES HAVE ALSO BEEN ASSASSINATED FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE NOVEMBER MUNICIPAL BALLOTING. SL IS OCCASIONALLY STOPPING RURAL BUSES AND THREATENING POTENTIAL VOTERS. 95 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION OBSERVED AN SL-DECLARED ARMED STRIKE IN AYACUCHO, MORE OUT OF FEAR THAN CONVICTION. SL'S CAMPAIGN IN LIMA BEGAN ON MARCH 19 WITH ATTACKS ON OUT-OF-SERVICE CITY BUSES. ON MARCH 23 SL KILLED A LIMA CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS AND DETONATED A CAR BOMB IN FRONT OF THE FINANCE MINISTRY. POLICE ARE FEARFUL OF FUTURE ATTEMPTS AGAINST CANDIDATES AND HAVE PROMISED MORE PROTECTION. POLICE ALSO BELIEVE THAT SL IS PLANNING A RIOT AT CANTO GRANDE PRISON TO DISTRACT SECURITY FORCES NEAR ELECTION DAY. AN ARMED STRIKE HAS BEEN CALLED IN LIMA ON MARCH 28.

3. THE POLICE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ELECTION DAY SECURITY IN LIMA. THE NATIONAL POLICE CHIEF ADMITS HE DOES NOT HAVE THE MANPOWER TO PROVIDE THE AROUND THE CLOCK PROTECTION JUST PROMISED TO LIMA'S APPROXIMATELY 2,000 CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES. MANY HAVE ACQUIRED PRIVATE PROTECTION. IN THE INTERIOR, THE MILITARY WILL HAVE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING AND ASSISTING THE ELECTIONS, INCLUDING TRANSPORTING THE BALLOTS IN REMOTE LOCATIONS. THE MILITARY FRETS IT MAY NOT HAVE THE BUDGET RESOURCES TO DO SO TWICE IF THERE IS A RUN-OFF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. ABSENTEEISM IN THESE ELECTIONS MAY EQUAL THE RATE (28 PERCENT) IN THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. SOME VOTERS WILL STAY HOME OUT OF FEAR AS SENDERO STEPS UP ITS INTIMIDATION. BUT OVERALL WE EXPECT THESE PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS TO COME OFF SUCCESSFULLY. END SUMMARY.

4. SENDERO BEGAN ITS CAMPAIGN IN THE INTERIOR NEAR

THE END OF FEBRUARY. BUT THROUGH MARCH 26 THE PRESS SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERPLAYED THE INCIDENT AND DEATH RATE OUTSIDE LIMA. WITH THE KILLING OF FIVE CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES IN A TWO WEEK PERIOD, INCLUDING A FREDEMO CANDIDATE IN LIMA ON MARCH 23, THE MEDIA IS ONCE AGAIN BANNERING THE TERRORIST THREAT TO THE ELECTIONS. JUST AS THE INITIAL PRESS SILENCE ON TERRORISM IN THE INTERIOR IGNORED THE THREAT, SO THE CURRENT REPORTING EXAGGERATES SENDERO'S POWER TO INFLUENCE THE APRIL 8 BALLOTING.

IN THE INTERIOR

5. SENDERO'S ANTI-ELECTIONS STRATEGY OUTSIDE LIMA WAS EXPECTED: ARMED STRIKES (PAROS ARMADOS) IN THE MAJOR TOWNS INSIDE THE EMERGENCY ZONES; SELECTIVE ASSASSINATIONS OF ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS AND PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES; ATTACKS AIMED AT KILLING ELECTION OFFICIALS AND POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVISTS; ASSASSINATIONS AND THREATS AGAINST CITIZENS WHO VOTED IN THE NOVEMBER BALLOTING; THREATS, COMMUNICATED THROUGH FLYERS, WALL GRAFFITI, PERSONAL LETTERS, AND "EL DIARIO", AGAINST WOULD BE VOTERS IN THE APRIL 8 ELECTIONS.

6. THAT STRATEGY IS UNDERWAY. AN ARMED STRIKE WAS CALLED IN AYACUCHO CITY FOR MARCH 12 AND 13. ACCORDING TO THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, IT WAS 95 PERCENT EFFECTIVE. FOLKS WE HAVE TALKED TO WHO WERE IN AYACUCHO DURING THE STRIKE SAID THERE WAS NO MOVEMENT WHATSOEVER IN THE CITY EXCEPT FOR SOLDIERS AND A FEW STREET VENDORS. EVEN THE DEPARTMENT ELECTION COMMISSION REFUSED TO OPEN ITS DOORS. SIMILAR STRIKES HAVE BEEN CALLED FOR PARTS OF HUANCAYO, HUANUCO, HUANCVELICA AND ANCASH DEPARTMENTS. NOT ALL WILL BE AS SUCCESSFUL AS THE AYACUCHO STRIKE. SOME MAY BE.

7. SENDERO'S USE OF SELECTIVE ASSASSINATIONS HAS BEEN ON TARGET. CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES IN ANCASH (ONE - FREDEMO), JUNIN (ONE - APRA), AND HUANUCO (TWO - BOTH INDEPENDENTS) HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS. PARTY LEADERS TELL US THAT FEW CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES ARE REMAINING INSIDE THE EMERGENCY ZONES (ONE THIRD OF THE LAND AREA, 28 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION) TO CAMPAIGN. LIKE THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, MOST ARE MAKING ONLY SHORT TRIPS INTO THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENTS AND THEN RETURNING TO LIMA OR OTHER COASTAL CITIES. IN AYACUCHO ONLY APRA HAS A PERMANENT CAMPAIGN OFFICE OPEN BUT SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE DEFIED THE SL AND ATTENDED A MARIO VARGAS LLOSA RALLY THERE MARCH 24.

8. THERE ARE RANDOM REPORTS OF SL ATTACKS AGAINST CITIZENS WHO VOTED IN THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. SUCH INCIDENTS TEND TO BE EXAGGERATED AMONG RURAL RESIDENTS, BUT DO INCREASE LOCAL FEAR. A HUANTA PROVINCE (AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT) FAMILY OF SIX WHICH DEFIED THE NOVEMBER SL BOYCOTT WAS SLAUGHTERED. THE HAMMER AND SICKLE WAS CARVED INTO THE CHESTS AND STOMACHS OF THE VICTIMS. THEIR HANDS WERE AMPUTATED, THE HANDS WITH WHICH THEY COMMITTED THE CRIME OF VOTING. WORD OF SUCH ATROCITIES SPREADS FAST IN THE RURAL INTERIOR. WE HAVE TWO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF FATAL ATTACKS AGAINST CITIZENS WHO SERVED AS ELECTION OFFICIALS IN THE INTERIOR.

9. ACCORDING TO A NORMALLY RELIABLE PRESS ACCOUNT, THE GOP IS HAVING SOME TROUBLE FINDING CITIZENS

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WILLING TO SERVE AS LOCAL ELECTION OFFICIALS INSIDE
THE EZS. ELECTION DUTY IN PERU IS LIKE JURY DUTY IN
THE U.S.; CITIZENS ARE CHOSEN AT RANDOM FROM A POOL
OF "QUALIFIED" CANDIDATES. EVEN THOUGH ONLY A FEW OF
THE NOVEMBER ELECTION OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED,
THERE IS SOME HESITATION NOW TO SERVE. WITH MORE
THAN 50,000 ELECTORAL "TABLES" NATIONWIDE, AND THREE
CITIZENS NEEDED FOR EACH TABLE, THE GOVERNMENT IS
CREATING A TARGET POOL OF 150,000 POSSIBLE VICTIMS
FOR FUTURE SL REPRISALS.

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GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR SAFETY, AS IF THEY
KNEW SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN. WE DO NOT
DISCOUNT SEVERE REPRISALS IF SL PRISONERS RIOT ON
ORDERS AS THEY DID IN THREE PRISONS IN 1986.

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10. SL IS STOPPING BUSES ON A FEW RURAL ROADS,
WARNING POTENTIAL VOTERS, AND TAKING AND DESTROYING
THEIR ELECTION ID CARDS (LIBRETAS ELECTORALES). WE
HAVE CONFIRMED REPORTS FROM NORTHERN LIMA DEPARTMENT,
AND FROM PASCO, JUNIN AND AYACUCHO. IN NORTHERN LIMA
DEPARTMENT, SL HAS HALTED BUSES IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.
SOME PASSENGERS HAVE BEEN KILLED. BUS COMPANIES
THERE ARE REPORTEDLY STOPPING THE BUSES PRIOR TO
REACHING KNOWN SL CHECK-POINTS AND ALLOWING
PASSENGERS TO WALK SEVERAL MILES THROUGH THE HILLS,
TO BE PICKED UP AGAIN FOR THE REST OF THEIR PLANNED
TRIP. THOUGH THE AREA IS SPARSELY POPULATED, ROUTES
TO MAJOR CITIES IN ANCASH AND HUANUCO DEPARTMENTS
PASS THROUGH THIS AREA. AS IN THE MUNICIPAL
ELECTIONS, THOUSANDS OF VOTERS WILL TAKE TO THE
HIGHWAYS ON OR BEFORE ELECTION DAY IN ORDER TO VOTE
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THEIR LEGAL RESIDENCE.

14. A MAJOR BLACK-OUT IN LIMA FROM DOWNED POWER
LINES IS EXPECTED IN THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING
THE ELECTIONS. AN ATTEMPT ON THE LIMA POWER GRID ON
MARCH 23 FAILED WHEN SL SABOTEURS SELECTED A TOWER
WHICH HAD BEEN WIRED UNDER THE INTERIOR
MINISTRY/ELECTOPERU PLAN TO PROTECT THE GRID. ONE
TERRORIST WAS BADLY WOUNDED. THE OTHERS FLED.

15. AN ARMED STRIKE HAS BEEN CALLED FOR LIMA ON
MARCH 28. SL ANNOUNCED THE STRIKE DURING AN ATTACK
ON A PUBLIC MARKET IN THE LIMA SUBURB OF CHORRILLOS.
FLYERS ALSO WARNED POTENTIAL VOTERS THAT THE
TERRORISTS WOULD BE GOING DOOR TO DOOR FOLLOWING THE
ELECTION, AND WOULD KILL ANYONE WITH A STAMPED VOTER
ID CARD. WE DOUBT THE ARMED STRIKE WILL BE
SUCCESSFUL, BUT THE STRIKES WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A
RASH OF THREATENING LETTERS DELIVERED TO OWNERS OF
MAJOR PLANTS. (SL-STYLE ASSASSINATION ATTACKS
AGAINST SENIOR PERSONNEL IN TWO MAJOR COMPANIES LEFT
ONE DEAD AND ONE CRITICALLY WOUNDED LAST WEEK.) IT
IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT SL WILL SEEK A SINGLE, MAJOR
TARGET, NOT NECESSARILY DIRECTLY ELECTION-RELATED.
PUBLICITY FROM SUCH AN INCIDENT WOULD NEVERTHELESS
HAVE ELECTION SPILL-OVER.

IN LIMA

THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

11. IN THE CAPITAL, THE SL CAMPAIGN BEGAN LATE.
PRIOR TO MARCH 18 THERE WAS LITTLE SL ACTIVITY IN THE
CITY. THEN, ON MARCH 19 SL APPARENTLY FIREBOMBED
FOUR OFF-DUTY STATE-OWNED CITY PASSENGER BUSES AND
BOMBED SEVERAL OF THE BUS COMPANY'S GARAGES. IN
SUCCESSIVE ATTACKS ON MARCH 23, SUSPECTED SL
TERRORISTS KILLED A FREDEMO CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE,
ATTACKED A LIMA RADIO STATION, KILLED A WELL-KNOWN
BUSINESSMAN, AND EXPLODED A CAR BOMB IN FRONT OF THE
FINANCE MINISTRY. THE CAR BOMB WAS REPORTEDLY MEANT
FOR THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING SIX BLOCKS AWAY, BUT THE
DYNAMITE EXPLODED PREMATURELY, KILLING THE DRIVER AND
ONE PEDESTRIAN.

16. THE NATIONAL POLICE WILL PROVIDE SECURITY FOR
LIMA AND OTHER NON-EMERGENCY ZONE AREAS BEFORE AND ON
ELECTION DAY. 80,
00, -589, -1 0918:3 4-73 733,
-86, 38 59 313:589, -RELATED SECURITY; 18,000 TO
COVER LIMA AND CALLAO. THOSE ARE THE OFFICIAL
FIGURES. THE ACTUAL NUMBERS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER,
DIVIDED IN HALF SINCE THERE ARE TWO WORK SHIFTS, AND
FURTHER REDUCED BY SICK OR OTHERWISE ABSENT COPS.
ALL LEAVE HAS BEEN CANCELLED. THE CITIES OF LIMA AND
CALLAO HAVE AGAIN BEEN PLACED UNDER A STATE OF
EMERGENCY, THE FIRST TIME SINCE DECEMBER, 1989.

12. POLICE OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THAT SL HAS
PLANNED ONE OR TWO ASSASSINATIONS OF HIGH VISIBILITY
POLITICAL FIGURES, PERHAPS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE.
THERE HAS BEEN NO KNOWN ATTEMPT TO DATE. GIVEN THE
DIFFICULTY SL HAS IN RUNNING OPERATIONS IN LIMA, AND
WITH THE LEVEL OF PROTECTION MOST POLITICAL VIPS
RECEIVE, WE DOUBT THAT SUCH AN ATTACK WILL
SUCCESSFULLY OCCUR. POLICE ARE ALSO CONCERNED THAT
SL MAY BE PLANNING DISTURBANCES AT CANTO GRANDE
PRISON (AS WELL AS AT PRISONS IN INTERIOR TOWNS) NEAR
ELECTION DAY, TO DRAW POLICE AND MILITARY MANPOWER
AWAY FROM ELECTION SECURITY IN ORDER TO QUELL PRISON
RIOTS.

17. IN LIMA POLICE COVERAGE WILL FOCUS PRIMARILY ON
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, THE PROVINCIAL ELECTION
COMMISSION OFFICES, AND THE POLLING PLACES, MOSTLY
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS. PROTECTION OF THE

13. WE HAVE RECEIVED INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION OF
THIS POSSIBILITY. A PRESS CONTACT TOLD US THAT HE
SPENT SEVERAL HOURS IN THE SL SECTION OF THE WOMEN'S
WARD AT CANTO GRANDE ON MARCH 14. HE SAID THAT THE
THEME THE WOMEN (THEIR SPOKESWOMAN APPEARS TO BE
JAILED "EL DIARIO" EDITOR JANET TALAVERA) REPEATED
MOST OFTEN WAS THAT THE POLICE HAVE PLANNED ANOTHER
"EL FRONTON-TYPE" MASSACRE IN THE NEXT SEVERAL
WEEKS. OUR SOURCE OPINED THAT THESE WOMEN APPEARED

SCHOOLS IS ALREADY IN PLACE SINCE SENDERO WAS
HISTORICALLY ATTACKED THE POLLING PLACES PRIOR TO
ELECTION DAY. NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR, GENERAL
RUBEN ROMERO ANNOUNCED IN EARLY MARCH THAT HE DID NOT
HAVE THE RESOURCES TO PROTECT ALL THE CONGRESSIONAL
CANDIDATES. BUT INTERIOR MINISTER MAKTILLA PROMISED
MARCH 24 THAT ALL LIMA CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES WILL
HAVE 24 HOUR, FOUR MAN POLICE PROTECTION. DEFENSE
MINISTER VELASQUEZ GIACARINI TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT
CANDIDATES WILL HAVE ONLY TWO MAN PROTECTION. IN ANY
EVENT, WITH APPROXIMATELY 2,000 SENATE AND HOUSE OF
DEPUTY CANDIDATES IN LIMA, THE COMMITMENT OF POLICE
RESOURCES IS VERY LARGE. THOSE WITH SUFFICIENT
FUNDS HAVE HIRED THEIR OWN PRIVATE
SECURITY. APRA CANDIDATES WITH OFFICIAL STANDING
WITH THE GOVERNMENT HAVE SECURITY PROVIDED THROUGH
THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR'S CONTRACT WITH THE PERUVIAN
SOCIAL SECURITY INSTITUTE.

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18. IN ADDITION TO GUARDING BUILDINGS AND CANDIDATES, LIMA POLICE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE MILITARY, WILL RUN PERIODIC SWEEPS OF LIMA NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A HISTORY OF TERRORIST INFILTRATION, MOSTLY POORER SUBURBS AND SHANTY TOWNS. SUCH AN OPERATION TOOK PLACE THE NIGHT OF MARCH 15. THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE DETAINED. THE THREE POLICE DELTA UNITS, "THE BLACK EAGLES", "RAMBO" AND "THE LEOPARDS" DID NOT CATCH A SINGLE SUSPECTED TERRORIST, BUT SUCH OPERATIONS ALERT SENDERO THAT AT ANY MOMENT POLICE MAY ENTER A NEIGHBORHOOD AND ARREST EVERY CITIZEN WHO LOOKS "SUSPICIOUS." ACCORDING TO THE POLICE, SL WAS ASSIGNED 150 OF ITS CADRE FROM THE INTERIOR TO LIMA FOR ANTI-ELECTION VIOLENCE. WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY SIGNIFICANT SL SUCCESS IN HALTING THE ELECTIONS IN LIMA.

19. IN THE RURAL EMERGENCY ZONES THE MILITARY WILL BE PRINCIPALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ELECTION SECURITY, BUT POLICE UNITS IN THESE AREAS WILL ALSO PLAY THEIR TRADITIONAL ROLE AS CUSTODIANS OF PUBLIC ORDER. IN ADDITION TO DISPLAYING THEIR PRESENCE IN THE CITIES, THE MILITARY WILL ALSO RUN PATROLS ALONG THE MAJOR INTERIOR ROADS BETWEEN TOWNS WHERE SENDERO IS NOW OPERATING AND WHERE THE DANGER WILL INCREASE AS ELECTIONS NEAR.

20. THE MILITARY WILL BE SPECIFICALLY CHARGED WITH PROVIDING SECURITY FOR PUBLIC UTILITY FACILITIES OUTSIDE LIMA AND POLLING PLACES WHERE THERE IS NO POLICE PRESENCE, MOSTLY IN SMALLER TOWNS OUTSIDE DEPARTMENT CAPITALS. BUT NO EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO HOLD ELECTIONS IN SOME JURISDICTIONS. THERE WERE NO ELECTIONS HELD IN NEARLY TEN PERCENT OF THE DISTRICTS (REPRESENTING 6 TO 8 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION) DURING THE NOVEMBER MUNICIPAL BALLOTING.

21. THE MILITARY WILL ALSO BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERING BALLOTS AND OTHER VOTING MATERIALS TO THE VOTING PLACES, AND FOR SUBSEQUENTLY BRINGING OUT THE RESULTS. BOTH OVERLAND AND AIR UNITS WILL BE USED. WITH FUEL AND SPARE PARTS IN DESPERATELY SHORT SUPPLY UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THIS "PONY EXPRESS" SERVICE REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT DRAIN ON MILITARY RESOURCES. ESPECIALLY IF A SECOND ROUND ELECTION IS HELD, SOME MILITARY SOURCES AVER THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT GAS, LUBRICANTS AND SPARE PARTS TO DUPLICATE THE DELIVERY AND EXTRACTION PROCEDURE IN A SECOND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION NEAR JUNE 3. IT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY IMPOSE A STRAIN, BUT THESE COMPLAINTS ALSO INCLUDE A SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT OF BUDGET LOBBYING.

THE ELECTION OUTLOOK

22. THESE ELECTIONS WILL BE SUCCESSFULLY HELD. AFTER APRIL 8 WE WILL HAVE A NEW CONSTITUTIONALLY EMPOWERED CONGRESS. SOME TIME AFTER JUNE 3 MARIO VARGAS LLOSA WILL BECOME THE PRESIDENT-ELECT. AND ON JULY 28 PERU'S THIRD CONSECUTIVE DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT WILL BEGIN ITS OWN FIVE-YEAR MANDATE. SENDERO LUMINOSO DOES NOT YET HAVE THE MILITARY MIGHT -- NOR THE POPULAR SUPPORT -- TO HALT THESE ELECTIONS OR TO SIGNIFICANTLY ALTER THEIR OUTCOME.

23. RECENTLY SEIZED SL DOCUMENTS SUGGEST THAT SENDERO LEADERSHIP THINKS IT CAN HALT THE DEMOCRATIC

PROCESS IN THIS ELECTION. THAT IS PURE FANTASY. BUT SL WILL PUMP UP THE CHILL OF FEAR IN THE PROCESS OF TRYING. THERE ARE NO OFFICIAL ABSENTEE FIGURES FOR THE PREVIOUS TWO PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, BUT RATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICIALS TELL US THAT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS NORMALLY HAVE A HIGHER TURN-OUT THAN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. APPROXIMATELY 28 PERCENT OF REGISTERED VOTERS WERE NO-SHOWS IN THE NOVEMBER MUNICIPAL BALLOTING. A MEASURE OF THE RELATIVE SUCCESS OF SENDERO'S ANTI-ELECTION STRATEGY WILL BE A COMPARISON OF APRIL'S ABSENTEEISM WITH NOVEMBER'S DATA.

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