

# Cory Aquino doing well, says Kris Noynoy hits absolute pardon request

by FE ZAMORA  
Inquirer.net

by AUREA CALICA  
Philstar.com

EXCEPT for some discomfort, former President Corazon Aquino is recovering well, 10 days after undergoing colon surgery at the Makati Medical Center, her youngest daughter said last May 15.

"There's slight post-op discomfort but Mom has a positive disposition," actress and TV host Kris Aquino said in a text message to the *Inquirer*.

The young Aquino said her older sister, Ballsy, has been taking care of the former president who has been battling cancer of the colon since early last year.

Aquino, 76, was operated on by a team of 10 doctors on May 4. She was discharged from the hospital four days later.

Her daughter said Aquino was given "pain management" medicines following the surgery.

"My mom is a very obedient patient. She follows her doctors," Kris also said. ■



Former President Cory Aquino

SEN. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III assailed last May 15 the request for absolute pardon by the convicted murderers of his father, Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., while President Arroyo awaited the recommen-

dation of the Board of Pardons and Parole on their petition.

Aquino said he would ask another forensic expert to belie the claim of Chief Public Attorney Persida Acosta that the former soldiers did not kill his father.

"I want to show through scientific means that these people were the ones involved (in the killing of my father) and not Galman," he said, adding, "So there will be no more doubts."

Aquino said he does not want the future generation to have a "wrong sense of history" and believe the claim of Acosta and the former soldiers that military-tagged assassin Rolando Galman shot and killed his father.

## Arroyo tops RP Presidents on economy-UA&P

by VINCENT CABREZA  
Inquirer.net

WHICH of the Philippines' most recent Presidents succeeded in strengthening the economy and has the chance of having his or her economic legacy appreciated by future generations?

Will it be the "the lawyer, the housewife, the general, the actor or the cute economist?"

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the cute economist, is the winner, according to economists from the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) at a briefing hosted by the Bank of Commerce in Baguio City last Thursday.

Each President's performance was assessed in the context of the historical environment in which they ruled, said UA&P professor Emilio Antonio Jr., who is also president of the Center for Research and Communication Foundation.

Ms Arroyo, who has often

said that she would want to be remembered for her contributions to the economy, may well be right, gauging by the relatively good health of businesses in northern Luzon, according to economist Ramon Quesada, former director of the UA&P School of Economics.

### Economy moves

Antonio said it was during Ms Arroyo's watch that the Philippine economy "definitely moved on" after the crisis of the martial law years.

According to Antonio, Ms Arroyo should be credited for the Philippines' improved income and spending balance and manageable inflation rate.

"Politicians who are positioning themselves for 2010 will insist that we are on the brink of a big economic disaster," he said.

According to Antonio, many economists subscribe to the conventional wisdom which states that when the US, a major trade partner, "sneezes, we catch pneumonia."

But he said an internal review of businesses in the country would reveal that the problem is an erosion of competitiveness, weak employment generation and the private sector's unwillingness "to bet on ourselves."

Antonio noted that the Philippines never caught the "recession virus" because the country's troubles are shaped by "perceptions and fears." ■

"This time it's going to be scientific, if that is what they want."

Aquino said he was able to speak with some witnesses, including one who saw what really happened at the airport tarmac on Aug. 21, 1983.

Aquino questioned Acosta's motives in seeking absolute pardon for the convicted killers of his father.

At Malacañang, Deputy presidential spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo said Mrs. Arroyo's role in matters related to the issuance of executive clemency and pardon is purely ministerial as the decision making and recommendations lie with the Bureau of Pardons and Parole and Bureau of Corrections.

"We understand the sentiments of the convicts," she said.

"The President maintains that due process must be followed. She will wait for the recommendation of the Board of Pardons and Parole."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he would meet with officials of the DOJ, BPP, BuCor and Department of Social Welfare and Development to discuss the legal and social implications of the grant of absolute pardon to the former soldiers. ■

## Ninoy soldiers want absolute pardon

by EDU PUNAY  
Philstar.com

AFTER receiving executive clemency and a commuted sentence, the convicted murderers of former senator Benigno Aquino Jr. and his alleged assassin Rolando Galman now want absolute pardon from President Arroyo so they can claim benefits from the military and move on as ordinary citizens.

This was confirmed by Chief Public Attorney Persida Rueda-Acosta who had earlier lobbied for the granting of executive clemency to the 13 surviving convicts in the Aquino-Galman

double murder case. The 13 members of the defunct Aviation Security Command were Master Sergeant Pablo Martinez; Sergeants Arnulfo Artates, Ruben Aquino, Rolando De Guzman, Rodolfo Desolong, Arnulfo De Mesa, Ernesto Mateo, Felomino Miranda, Rogelio Moreno, and Felizardo Taran; Technical Sergeant Claro Lat; First Lieutenant Jesus Castro; and Captain Romeo Bautista.

In a letter, they asked Bureau of Pardons and Parole executive director Reynaldo Bayang to request the President to grant them

absolute pardon.

"We would like to request for Your Honor's assistance in connection with the commutation of sentence that was given to each one of us, for it to be amended and upgraded to absolute pardon so that our civil and political rights could be restored," the letter signed by Acosta stated.

Acosta said the soldiers applied for absolute pardon because "they want to be able to vote, claim their retirement benefits being members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, to work, and acquire property under their names." ■



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Stephen H. Mattern is a cum laude graduate of Southwestern University School of Law, where he served as an editor of the prestigious Southwestern University Law Review.

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