

# KERISIS

an official publication of the UP Journalism Club

## Spot the Difference: Comparing GMA and PNoy's First 100

by Myra Cabujat

Former president Gloria Arroyo and incumbent Benigno Aquino III were already known in the political scene before they won the elections.

Arroyo was already serving as the president before the 2004 elections took place. She was completing Pres. Joseph Estrada's term after he was deposed in 2001. Her 2004 win marks her second term in office, summing up of almost a decade in power.

Aquino, on the other hand, was a senator and the only son of former Sen. Benigno Aquino, Jr. and Pres. Corazon Aquino. After the death of the latter, Aquino was prodded to run for presidency, and eventually got the seat.

### Addressing the Problems

After taking oath of office, both Arroyo and Aquino were left with debt, poverty, corruption and economic problems left unsolved by previous administrations.

To address this and her other plans for the country, Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (SONA) highlighted her accomplishments for her first three years in office, a 10-point which she cited as "practical, achievable, and could be accomplished on time" and proposed programs to boost the economy and help the growing number of overseas Filipino workers.

Meanwhile, Aquino's SONA was divided into two parts. The first was enumerating problems left by the Arroyo administration; including calamity fund allocation, National Power Corporation debts, National Food Authority and Manila Water Sewerage System controversies. The other half was concerned on public-private partnerships, case filing against tax evaders and smugglers and resolution for extrajudicial killings.

### Issues and Controversies

With just a hundred days in position, both Aquino and Arroyo had their fair shares of issues and controversies that rocked their administrations.

Arroyo, according to her critiques, was prioritizing power consolidation through ordering pay increases for the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police.

Likewise, Aquino's share of controversies stemmed from the failure to resolve the August 23 hostage drama that led to the death of eight Hong Kong nationals, alleged inclusion of a member of his cabinet as a gambling lord and his staunch support to pass a reproductive health law despite threats of excommunication from the Catholic Church.

### Succeeding Years

Bulatlat described Arroyo's first 100 days as "starting at a wrong foot." However, the criticisms and impression she got remained until her last day in Malacanang.

While Aquino also seems to face this situation, whether the criticisms will remain or not is yet to be seen. *With reports from Alex Austria and Liza Escano*

## PNoy displays mood swings over media

by Lindley Agustin

President Aquino is having mood swings towards the media -- from good to bad.

During the campaign period, Aquino became an instant television celebrity with his advertisements with two of his most unforgettable ones included a high-pitched voice of Regine Velasquez booming and his nephew, Baby James, echoing as the ad closed.

With his convincing advertisements, he has earned the voters' trust, but taking only a small chunk of credit from this.

Mood Swings/2

## Pagsulyap sa 100 araw

ni Bea Cruz at Eimor Santos

### Hulyo 1 (Day 2)

Inatasan ni Aquino imbestigahan ang status ng gobyernong iniwan ni Arroyo.

### Hulyo 26 (Day 27)

Pagbabatikos sa nakalipas na administrasyon sa SONA, ngunit hindi ang lubos na pagtalakay sa mga plano sa susunod na anim na taon at mga isyung tulad ng sa Hacienda Luisita.

### Hulyo 30 (Day 31)

Ang unahang Executive Order (E.O.), na lilikha sa isang Truth Commission upang imbestigahan ang nakaraang administrasyon, ay nilagdaan.

### Agosto 4 (Day 36)

Ipinag-utos ni Aquino ang pagpapataalsik ayon sa E.O. 2 sa lahat ng "midnight appointees" ng rehimeng Arroyo.

### Agosto 6 (Day 38)

Tikom ang bibig ng pangulo kaugnay ng pagkondena sa "kasunduan" sa pagitan ng mga magsasaka at Hacienda Luisita Inc.

### Agosto 23 (Day 55)

Umani ng batikos sa tila kawalan ng pakikialam sa gitna ng Manila bus hostage crisis. Ilang araw pagkatapos, tila sinisi niya ang media sa malagim nitong pagtatapos.

### Agosto 31 (Day 63)

Hindi isinama ang dalawang bilyong pork barrel sa panukalang P 1.6 trilyong badyet para sa 2011.

### Setyembre 9 (Day 72)

Sa pagharap sa media, pinahayag ang pagkadismaya sa mga namahala sa insidente at nangakong may mananagot dito.

### Setyembre 17 (Day 80)

26 na kaso ang inilinya laban sa mga hinihinalang tax evaders at smugglers upang madagdagan ang pondo.

### Oktubre 1 (Day 94)

Sa kabila ng banta ng Simbahang Katoliko, nanatiling matatag si Aquino sa kanyang posisyon na pro-choice sa pagpapaplano ng pamilya at sa patuloy na pamimigay ng contraceptives.

## Editorial

## Barely Passing

If we were to assess President Aquino's performance in his first 100 days in office, we would give him a 3.0 as he suffered more setbacks than achievements.

Looking back into his campaign promise of eradicating poverty and stamping out corruption, Aquino's promise of change has not been fully transformed into government policies.

The Truth Commission, whose task is to investigate alleged shady deals that Gloria Arroyo participated in is now currently hanging as its constitutionality is still in question. The creation of a truth body was one of the main promises that Aquino waged in the campaign: to make the former president accountable for her misdeeds during her term.

Aquino also has yet to deliver his pledge of distributing Hacienda Luisita. Instead of stepping up to resolve the decades-old dispute, he decided to wash his hands off in the issue.

With PNoy's seemingly evasive approach to the issue, doubts ensued on his sincerity to address agrarian reform.

His administration also figured a number of controversies like the botched hostage rescue operation last August 23



that killed eight Hong Kong nationals and brought international ridicule after the police mishandled the situation and exposed the country of its incompetency in handling crisis situations.

Jueteng also rocked the administration with interior secretary Rico Puno, accused of allegedly receiving million of pesos from jueteng money.

Despite these setbacks, Aquino, however, succeeded in running after tax evaders as the Bureau of Internal Revenue files complaints on a weekly basis against suspected tax evaders through its Run After Tax Evaders Program.

In his early days, Aquino banned use of "wang-wangs" or sirens and blinkers

that used to mark the arrogance of politicians traversing the streets. Although exempted, he took lead by obeying traffic rules and stopping on red lights.

But perhaps, the biggest achievement that the young Aquino administration had is its unwavering stand on reproductive health. Even before he took the position, Aquino as a senator, was already a staunch supporter of the bill that is supposedly aimed to decrease the population of the country.

In his first 100 days in office, P-Noy's promises have been barely fulfilled. The new administration must come up with more concrete policies, economic and political, in achieving its vision of change for this country.



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Krisis is an official yearly publication of the  
UP Journalism Club.

UP JOURNALISM CLUB  
College of Mass Communication  
University of the Philippines Diliman

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## Mood Swings/1

But Aquino was accused of overusing the medium. AC Nielsen and Pera at Pulitika Network reported that his ads in ABS-CBN have exceeded 120 minutes.

Following this issue, critics eyed his sister's home network ABS-CBN of alleged bias when he became president.

Two months after his inauguration, Aquino signed Executive Order No. 4 renaming the Office of the Press Secretary as the Presidential Communications Operations Office with its head receiving benefits similar to a cabinet secretary.

Two ABS-CBN newsmen were appointed to lead the communications group: host Manuel Quezon III, and anchor Ricky Carandang.

"During the last elections, it was more than obvious to many in the media that ABS-CBN showed its bias towards the candidacy of now Pres. Noy Aquino," Philippine Star columnist Valeriano Avila wrote, "When the Malacañang Press Corps held a presscon with Palace spokesman Edwin Lacierda, he kept the media waiting because he was with ABS-CBN giving an interview."

## Change of heart

A day after the hostage crisis, Aquino urged for the media to regulate itself in covering crucial events.

He said live coverage of the crisis let the hostage-taker snatch a "birds' eye-view" of the situation, the negotiations, and other events. The accusation came when officials said the hostage-taker was triggered to pull his gun's trigger because of footage by GMA-7 showing his brother's arrest.

Aquino suddenly expressed a want for a 'redefinition of limitations' set for the media to give way for better government negotiations.

The broadcast media then sought for an evaluation of their performance. They admitted there were lapses in the coverage.

Nevertheless, the report of the Incident Investigation and Review Committee proposed charging two media personalities with administrative and criminal charges.

As he marks his 100th day in office, media are to remain as watchdogs, as the plot unfolds – and thickens. *With reports from Eunille Santos*