

No more impeach raps vs GMA

By DELON PORCALLA

In the last year of her term, President Arroyo will likely be spared the rigors of having to fend off another impeachment complaint, months before the 2010 elections that will pick her successor.

Opposition legislators are not inclined to file what could be their

fifth impeachment complaint, since all four attempts from 2005 to 2008 were thwarted by administration lawmakers in the majority.

"I don't think the opposition will file an impeachment complaint because the elections are nearing," said Quezon

Turn to Page 11

No more From Page 1

Rep. Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III, who belongs to the House minority bloc that usually files the impeachment complaint against Mrs. Arroyo.

His colleague, Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño, told newsmen that they would instead wait for the President to step down in June 2010 after nine years in office and file criminal or graft charges against her before the Office of the Ombudsman.

"We can file the charges before the Office of the Ombudsman when her term ends in June (2010)," the party-list congressman said in an interview at Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, bailiwick of former President Joseph Estrada, a convicted plunderer pardoned by Mrs. Arroyo.

Casiño said there is a growing consensus among the minority congressmen to merely wait for Mrs. Arroyo to step down in June 2010 because many of them are now focused on next year's elections.

The militant lawmaker pointed out though that while they can initiate another complaint by September this year, or after the one-year ban has lapsed following the dismissal of the impeachment complaint in 2008, they would rather let Mrs. Arroyo vacate her office.

He said the impeachable offenses that could be included in the complaint are the recent alleged lavish P1-million dinner in a New York City restaurant of President Arroyo and her entourage, as well as her unexplained wealth.

Meantime, Bulacan Rep. Lorna Silverio told *The STAR* yesterday that President Arroyo indeed used to own a property in San Rafael, Bulacan around two years ago, and that the property was acquired in the early 1990s as reported by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ).

She said she first learned about the Bulacan property after reading a newspaper report on the President's Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN).

Even friends of the First Gentleman, including Ephraim Genuino who hails from Angat town, reportedly own or used to own property near the former property of the First Couple, she said.

Silverio also said that the improvement and concreting of roads leading to the former property of the President was part of the larger development program of the third congressional district of Bulacan, adding that local residents have long lobbied for the improvement of farm-to-market roads here for easy delivery of farm produce to Metro Manila markets. — With Dino Balabo