

# GMA visits Pampanga again

By DING CERVANTES

GUAGUA, Pampanga – Unfazed by talks that her unusually frequent visits to her home province was in preparation for her plan to run for Congress, President Arroyo once again scheduled a visit here today, in the home town of Prof. Randy David who vowed to challenge her in the 2010 congressional race.

The office of Mayor Ricardo River confirmed to The STAR that the President is expected here today at 10 a.m. to inspect a farm-to-market road in Brgy. San Matias before proceeding to Brgys. Bancal and Sta. Filomena to inspect government schools.

Mrs. Arroyo was here last June 15 to inspect projects, including a P15-million water system, barangay roads, multi-purpose buildings and flood mitigation projects.

Earlier, the President ordered the Department of Education (DepEd) to initiate the repair and rehabilitation of flooded public school buildings in all 30 barangays in Guagua following the release of P50 million for this purpose.

Guagua is within Pampanga's second district which includes the President's hometown in Lubao where she is a registered voter. Her frequent visits to the second district since last January has fueled speculation, neither confirmed nor denied by Malacañang, that she will run for congresswoman in next year's polls.

The second district is also comprised of the towns of Floridablanca, Sasmuan, Sta. Rita, and Porac.

The President's son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo who is only on his second term as congressman representing the second district, said he was willing to run for governor to give way to his mother, but insisted that the President had not intimated to him any plans to seek a congressional post.

Such speculation brought David, a native of Barangay Betis in this town, to declare that he will run against the President.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said yesterday he would support David's plan to run against President Arroyo.

"Prof. Randy David's declared readiness to challenge Arroyo should she run for a congress seat in the second district of Pampanga is very welcome," said Ocampo, the House's deputy minority leader.

He said that "since I come from the same district, I'll back up Randy."

"Last week the two of us talked briefly and agreed to mount a movement in the district to oppose Arroyo's devious plan and her gratuitous use of patronage to woo voters," said Ocampo, a native of Barangay Sta. Monica in Sta. Rita, also within Pampanga's second district.

Ocampo is serving his third and last term as Bayan Muna nominee and has announced plans to run for the Senate.

David stressed, however, that he would seek the political post only if the President will run.

In a text message to The STAR, David said, "This fight is not just about the second district of Pampanga. It is about the whole nation. I hope other Davids in other parts of our country will rise up against the Goliaths of corrupt politics."