

# Philippines' president warns against return of Marcos dynasty 30 years after 'People Power' uprising

President Benigno Aquino issues warning as son of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos rides high in election opinion polls



Philippine President Benigno Aquino III addresses the crowd during the 30th anniversary celebration of the "People Power Revolution" Photo: AP



By [Philip Sherwell](#), Asia Editor 3:11PM GMT 25 Feb 2016

Thirty years after Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Imelda were forced to flee the Philippines in the "People Power" uprising, the country's current leader has urged voters to stem the political renaissance of the late dictator's family.

[Ferdinand Marcos Jr.](#), the son and namesake, is the opinion poll front-runner to win the country's second most powerful post as vice-president in [May elections](#).

President Benigno Aquino condemned the refusal of the younger Marcos to apologise for or even his acknowledge his father's abuses at commemorations marking the 30th anniversary.

"If [his son] couldn't even see what was wrong in what their family did, how can we expect that he won't repeat these," he said at a re-enactment of the historic revolt. "Mr Marcos' rule was not the golden age. It was a very painful chapter of our history.

"Let us work together to ensure [the Philippines](#) will no longer go through a period of darkness."



Police scuffle with activists as they try to reach the EDSA Shrine during a protest along a highway in Manila, commemorating the 30th anniversary of a bloodless popular revolt that ended the iron rule of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. Photo: AFP

Mr Aquino's mother Corazon was a key figure in the mass protests that brought down the Marcos. Three years earlier, his father Benigno was shot dead when he returned to Manila from exile in the US.

The Marcos family became synonymous with human rights abuses, rampant corruption and the [extravagance](#) that was exemplified by the collection of shoes left behind by the former first lady.

But Ferdinand Jr, now a senator known universally by his nickname Bongbong, is a front-runner for the vice-presidency, a position that is elected separately from the top job.

Faced by the prospect of a Marcos return to the highest echelons of power, the commission charged with recovering ill-gotten gains is pushing ahead with [an auction of jewellery](#) worth an estimated £14 million that belonged to Imelda Marcos,

The government has estimated that the family plundered as much as \$10 billion from state coffers. It is currently seeking to recover about \$1 billion worth of assets accumulated through 100 court cases at home and overseas, an official said.



An anti-Marcos rally in 1986 Photo: The LIFE Images Collection/Getty Images

Human rights groups have also catalogued the cases of thousands of Filipinos who were thrown in prison and often tortured during the 20-year regime.

The younger Marcos is seeking to capitalise on so-called “golden age” by highlighting the persistent poverty and corruption that still plague the country.

Most important to his campaign is that among a young electorate in a dynasty-obsessed country, memories of the excesses of his father’s rule are fading fast.

Mr Marcos died in Hawaii in 1989. But his wife, who returned to the Philippines in 1991, is a congresswoman while their daughter is the provincial governor of the family stronghold.

Mrs Marcos has repeatedly insisted that the family fortune was amassed legally through gifts and investments. She has fought off most legal cases against her.

In a strange twist to the events marking her family’s overthrow, the matriarch was unwittingly wheeled her into a Church mass, not realising that [the service was honouring victims](#) of her husband.

Mrs Marcos sat quietly in a wheelchair at the front on the church as several martial law victims recounted their ordeal and related the importance of the uprising. She left quietly after the service.

Ref.: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/philippines/12173367/Philippines-president-warns-against-return-of-Marcos-dynasty-30-years-after-People-Power-uprising.html>

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