



# BANDILANG ITIM

a journal of anarchist thought  
in the philippine islands

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**Against a  
Quarantine with  
Martial Law  
Characteristics**

*by: Simoun Magsalin and the  
Bandilang Itim Collective*

# **The Opportunism of Martial Law**

In March 2020, the people of the archipelago known as the Philippines were alarmed at the rate of local transmission of the disease known as COVID-19. On March 12, police and military forces were mobilized to enforce a community quarantine for the whole of Metro Manila scheduled to start on the midnight of March 15. This quarantine was later generalized for the whole island of Luzon, a population of some 53 million souls. That the mobilization of the state's apparatus of violence was more noticeable than the mobilization of medical and social resources is telling of the administration's priorities.

A regime of violence is in place. Soldiers with *assault rifles* set up checkpoints; one questions the necessity of assault rifles against the coronavirus—do these people plan to shoot it? At these checkpoints, some women report being sexually harassed. Local police and barangay

officials took it upon themselves to creatively experiment in punitive measures like caging alleged lockdown violators in a small cage. A police officer was recorded threatening to shoot residents for purportedly breaking lockdown while hitting residents with a stick in a Muslim community in Quiapo. A homeless lola was violently arrested for being outside during curfew hours—essentially arrested for being homeless! Houses are still being demolished during a time when people urgently need homes to stay in. A teacher and her son in General Santos were arrested without warrants over Facebook posts. A congregation of people looking for relief goods in Barangay Bagong Pagasa were arrested. The National Bureau of Investigation is subpoenaing people for “unlawful utterances” on social media. President Duterte went on record threatening warrantless arrests against “disobedience” and in a later speech threatened to shoot people for going out of their homes. Indeed, someone was shot by police at a Bulacan checkpoint, the police washing their hands of it like they did with the drug war.

Under the state of things, it is not an exaggeration to say the government of the Philippines has

effectively imposed *martial law in fact*, if not formally declared in law. At a time of crisis, the gut instinct of the State was to mobilize and deploy its apparatus of violence. The deployment of medical resources is secondary to the assault rifles deployed. Instead of the deployment of increased medical resources, we have uniformed forces aimlessly and needlessly straying city borders with no other purpose than installing themselves as the false faces of the state's peace and order. It is *peace and order* and not *public health* that is the priority of the state.

This martial law is *extralegal*, not that legality has significance to anarchists in the archipelago. Activists of all stripes understand that the state apparatus of violence is not limited by what they prescribe in law. State violence has always been both legal and extralegal, never mind that legality is a pointless distinction when the balance of power favors the state. Legality is meaningless when what is violent can simply be legalized in an act of congress or municipal ordinance—indeed that is what happened with the *Bayanihan to Heal as One Act*.

The deployment of the apparatus of violence to

literally combat a medical emergency betrays a certain opportunism from the state. The state is opportunistically using the crisis to expand its police power. While the purported purpose of the lockdown is to quarantine, it is also a godsend to the fascists in the police and military as an excuse to crack down on dissent. And what of the new laws they put into place now? What guarantee do we have that the extreme measures the state takes today do not become the new normal after the end of COVID-19 crisis?

We have seen an unprecedented expansion of the surveillance state with drones and cameras being drafted to keep a close eye over public spaces. Instead of using their resources to feed people, they instead use this crisis as an opportunity to expand their ability to do surveillance!

In a special session, congress railroaded the *Bayanihan to Heal as One Act* with its controversial provisions on granting special powers to the Office of the President and dramatic jail time and fine penalization for dissenters.<sup>1</sup> This is the use of shock doctrine, or the opportunistic use of crisis to pass controversial or questionable laws. First described by investigative reporter Naomi Klein,



the shock doctrine is used specifically during crises like our own to take advantage of the

## **Solusyong Medikal, Hindi Militar!**

We anarchists in the archipelago do not contest the need for a quarantine. After all, a quarantine and social distancing is needed to protect the most vulnerable among us like the immunocompromised, people living with HIV, and our elderly.

With that said, a quarantine enforced by violence and guns is clearly the wrong way to implement a quarantine. It does more harm than good. The checkpoints are made up of squads of large men with guns with barely any medical equipment in sight, not to mention the repeatedly noted lack of trained medical professionals. Reports of the vagueness of protocol, sexual harassment, and sometimes outright robbery and extortion on the part of the police and military personnel are being posted by people who go through the ordeal of dealing with them. What is even more alarming is the possibility of the checkpoint officers becoming vectors for the diseases themselves with reports of

checkpoints without face masks or police and soldiers in close contact with the people they check. Checkpoints also risk becoming a place where people are forced to congregate, creating possible vectors for viral transmission. Ultimately, soldiers and police are trained in violence, not empathy or care-giving. Thus when confronted with homelessness, these people respond with violence—arresting the homeless instead of giving them a home, as was the case with Lola Dorothy Espejo.

The severe discrepancy between resources devoted to militarized policing versus medical needs is made even more apparent by this trend of “VIP testing.” Politicians, oligarchs, and elites are able to jump the line and gain priority access to COVID-19 testing all the while people are being turned away from critical treatment due to lack of testing.

On April 1, the elitism of the regime was apparent where people congregated at a national highway in Barangay Bagong Pagasa upon hearing a rumor that food packs would be distributed there. They were met with mass arrests, purportedly for breaking quarantine. Instead of meeting needs,

the state opts to just arrest them all. Meanwhile Senator Koko Pimentel who willfully broke quarantine protocol knowing that he was a patient under investigation is still a free man without any repercussion other than public outrage. Pimentel scandalously endangered critical medical personnel when it was revealed later he was positive for COVID-19. One also remembers that convicted plunderer and widow of the old dictator Imelda Marcos is still a free woman despite the courts deeming her criminal. It is clear that law and protocol only apply to toilers and dispossessed while the elites can live as they will, willfully endangering working people around them.

We also see the discrepancy in the dismal provision of relief packs. Endless emergency funds are activated but relief provided is paltry. These dismal relief goods are contrasted with images of agricultural traders in the Cordilleras destroying and discarding vegetables simply because they cannot sell these! Vegetables are being thrown away while people are being arrested for protesting their hunger. In these times of crisis the need for an economy to fulfill needs instead of

profits is increasingly urgent. One wonders why with all these emergency funds activated from the crisis, government agencies cannot simply purchase all these produce before they are discarded.

Against a militarized quarantine, the people of the archipelago demand in one voice: *Solusyon Medikal, Hindi Militar!*—Medical solutions, not military! Against the elitist privilege in accessing COVID-19 testing kits, activists cry out: free mass testing now! Against the paltry provision of goods, the people organize in mutual aid and *bayanihan* networks that seek to fulfill needs.

A quarantine needs to fulfill the needs of the people as a irreducible minimum for the reproduction of daily life, that is to say, to be able to access food, water, medicine, and other things needed to stay alive. But production under capitalism does not revolve around meeting needs, it revolves around meeting profits. Thus when a state of emergency shuts down the engines of profit, so does the engine of wages shut down, and with that the needs are left unfulfilled.

# **Capitalism and Quarantine are incompatible**

A quarantine needs to fulfill the needs of the people as a irreducible minimum for the reproduction of daily life, that is to say, to be able to access food, water, medicine, and other things needed to stay alive. But production under capitalism does not revolve around meeting needs, it revolves around meeting profits. Thus when a state of emergency shuts down the engines of profit, so does the engine of wages shuts down, and with that the needs are left unfulfilled.

Against the contradictions between capitalism and quarantine we need a system that meets needs instead of profits. We need a quarantine that ensures people do not starve. Without work and against the demand of rents and profits, our demands must be to distribute according to need, to cancel rent, and to cancel residential utility bills. And after the crisis, *to keep these canceled.*

During this time of crisis, it is increasingly apparent that quarantine and capitalism are incompatible. A quarantine requires people to stay at home, limit going out, and practice social distancing. But how can people stay at home if they are precarious workers under a no-work no-pay scheme and live paycheck to paycheck? How can people confine themselves to their homes if their needs are dependent on their paychecks? If workers are laid off, how will they afford groceries and rent while in quarantine?

## **For a Non-Militarized, Self-Managed quarantine**

In the face of a martial law dressed in medical gowns, what can we count on? *Each other.*

Regular people, people like you and me, are doing what they can to make sure that not only they survive, but to ensure the well-being of those around them, too. We see people practicing mutual aid, or as it is known in the Philippines, *bayanihan*. We see people making masks and medical gear, not for profit, but because there is a need for it. Mothers in Los Angeles are taking over

abandoned houses in search of quarantine like Kadamay did in Bulacan. Neighborhoods all over the world are helping each other out by pooling together what little they have, and like the political dissident Jesus breaking bread and fish, are able to fill each others' needs with the most shoestring of supplies. These are seeds for a future post-capitalist economy based on needs rather than profits.

It is clear we can expect no salvation from the state or capital. Against the quarantine with martial law characteristics, it is urgent that we forward a liberatory alternative based on solidarity and mutual aid instead of militarism and impunity. It is possible to have a self-managed quarantine that is not enforced with assault rifles. For example, residents among urban poor communities in Metro Manila have taken the initiative of setting up their own self-managed checkpoints, sans assault rifles and macho egos. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, quarantines are not enforced by force of arms but rather by the collective responsibility of everyone. A quarantine without coercion and violence is possible if we care to look.

Indeed, a better world is possible if we care to look.

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#ProtectThePeople**

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<sup>1</sup>. Against the co-option of bayanihan by the state to label its expansive powers, anarchists in the archipelago forward a genuine bayanihan in its original meaning of mutual aid.



**Detainment is Death  
in the Pandemic!**



*by: Simoun Magsalin*

*Umaapaw na raw ang kulungan.* [The jails are overflowing.] Nearly 30,000 people were reportedly arrested under the quarantine in the Philippines, with more than 4,000 of these arrested detained, based on a report dated April 18, 2020.<sup>1</sup> Doubtless, more have since been arrested and detained since then. The police even went on record saying there will no longer be any more warnings to the alleged “quarantine violators” and will arrest people as they see fit,<sup>2</sup> likely straining the capacities of the already overstretched jails and prisons.

As the recent proletarian demand “*tulong, hindi kulong*” [“aid, not detentions”] suggests, there is already a collective experience where the state is more felt in its punitive instruments of violence and policing more than its capacity to deliver aid. Indeed, every evening on the news we watch helpless as more and more injustices are wrought onscreen as police inflict more and more violence upon people and communities. A man suffering from PTSD was shot and killed by police in broad daylight.<sup>3</sup> There were mass arrests of people demanding food aid.<sup>4</sup>

Police maul a street vendor for not wearing a face mask.<sup>5</sup> Watching these unfold fill us with loathing for the police.

Instead of the state providing people with face masks when its agents see people without these, they detain them, putting them more at risk of contracting the dreaded COVID-19. Instead of providing enough food and medicine to remove the need for people to go out, the state and its agents arrest people for a smallest deviation of procedure when people leave their homes to get food and medicines. It is clear then the state cares little for the well being of the people under this pandemic—it only cares for its “peace and order.”

The framework of this martial law cloaked in quarantine is always the peace and order for the state; fulfilling the needs of those in quarantine are secondary, if they are even considered at all. This regime of policing would detain people for any little slight, regardless of personal context. The state narrative frames people as “*pasaway*” [stubborn and willful] or “*tigas-ulo*” [stubborn, literally hard-headed], deliberately erasing the contexts of people to fit their image of automatic guilt. Like Duterte’s “war on drugs,” this narrative that people are *pasaway*, or *tigas-ulo* justifies the harshest of

repressions. To these agents of the state, everyone is guilty until proven innocent. Installing a climate of fear and culpability seems to be the only method that this government knows in addressing issues.

Let us be clear: the state cares not about your lived experiences and motives. It cares not if you are at risk of starvation and you must leave your home to get food. It cares not that you have run out of medicines and you must obtain more. It only cares that you are outside your homes and thus breaking its pronouncements. What the state cares about most is punishing whom it pleases. The paltry provision of aid compared to the deployment of violence is testament to that.

The state is uncaring, and its prisons and jails more so.

Remember that it will always be the poor that bears the brunt of the state's policing and incarceration. Remember the arch-plunderer and widow of the dictator Marcos is still a free woman despite being already declared guilty.<sup>6</sup> Remember that the senator Koko Pimentel that brazenly risked infecting others with COVID-19 because he refused to quarantine himself is still free with the law taking its sweet, sweet time to prosecute this quarantine violation.<sup>7</sup> Quarantine violators among

the proletariat face warrantless arrests while quarantine violators among the privileged do not even face a slap on the wrists. The law will always take its time punishing the wealthy and privileged for they are the ones that drafted and adopted the laws and it is people of privilege who comprise the police to begin with. The state and its laws will always protect property and privilege for that is what the state was made for. They made the laws and they can break them. Only in rare circumstances where the balance of power goes against wealthy and powerful defendants that they are imprisoned.

The mass arrests and tortures inflicted by the state in the time of pandemic only convinces us more on the necessity of prison abolition. We are for prison abolition because the prisons are always machines designed to make those with less privileges to suffer. How many in prison are there for crimes motivated by need? How many are in prison because of the “war on drugs” whose addiction was penalized instead of treated medically? How many of those arrested for alleged quarantine violations were out of their homes due to need? We are under no illusion that arch-plunderers would go to jail anyway, so why

pretend that those who are imprisoned actually deserve it? Prisons and jails are overwhelmingly for punishing the poor.

In the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the institutions of imprisonment becomes institutions of death. There is no quarantine on the inside of prisons and jails. Detentions risks becoming death sentences as jails and prisons are all highly vulnerable in pandemics. People deprived of liberty do not deserve to die, much less die in such putrid conditions. Indeed, state has already practically sentenced many to die with its dragging of its feet on releasing people from detention. In some prisons the plague has already started to make its course, with 63 persons on the inside of a jail in Cebu City test positive for COVID-19.<sup>8</sup> In other prisons like in the New Bilibid Prison, bodies are starting to pile up—suspected to be because of COVID-19—but the Bureau of Corrections remains silent on their cause of death and of how many inmates have already been killed by their negligence.<sup>9</sup>

We demand the police stop its campaign of public harassment of people. We demand that the state cease its program of mass incarceration of so-called pasaway and alleged quarantine violators. We demand that the persons deprived of liberty be released at once, so that they may care for their health and their families without the violence of detention getting in the way. We demand that non-violent convicts be released back into society before the prison system destroys what is left of their humanity and before the pandemic kills them on the inside.

In time, we demand that prisons be abolished and instead of incarceration, a regime of rehabilitation. In time, we demand an end to policing and instead of cops, non-violent reconciliations based on care and need. But until that day, we struggle against the policing of the current order.

*Tulong, hindi kulong!*

*Bigas, hindi bala!*

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**QUARANTINE**

*akda ni: Malaginoo*

Una, nang lumala ang krisis, walang mass testing. Hindi raw kaya ng gobyerno. Hindi nila tuloy nalaman kung gaano kalala ang sitwasyon. Naubusan ng mga equipment ang mga ospital, kaya ang mga health worker na nag-aalaga, nagkasakit at pinauwi. Kada araw, nadadagdagan ang mga nagkakasakit, nauubusan na sila ng espasyo para sa bagong pasyente. Habang may mga politiko na kahit retirado na agad pinagpa-test, may mga namamatay nang hindi nalalaman kung COVID nga ang ikinamatay. Kapag may umaalma, may nagreklamo, pinaparatangan at inaaresto agad bilang terorista.

Pangalawa, kahit na may lockdown, may mga nagtatrabaho pa rin para may makain ang pamilya. Ilan sa kanila, isang kahig, isang tuka lang ang mga araw. Aasa pa ba sila sa relief goods na matagal pa ang dating? At kung sumuway naman sila sa pulis? Bubugbugin, pagbabayaran, ikukulong. Baka barilin pa sila ng hepeng makati 'yung daliri. Imbis na bigyan sila ng tulong pinansyal, kahit pagkain man lang, baril 'yung dinala sa barangay.

Pangatlo, may upa at utang pa rin. Wala na ngang trabaho, sumisingil pa rin 'yung may-ari ng lupa, ng bahay. Kailangan pa rin magbayad ng kuryente, ng tubig, kahit hindi pa nilalabas 'yung sweldo. May mga estudyante, manggagawa, buong pamilya na hindi alam kung magtitirhan ba sila pagtapos ng lockdown.

Pangapat, siksikan na ang mga bilangguan. 'Yung social distancing na pinapatupad ng gobyerno, hindi nakakarating sa Bilibid. Marami sa kanila, mga matatanda, may-sakit na. Kung matatamaan, mamatay agad at idadala pa sa ibang tao. May mga ibang bansa na pinalaya ang ibang preso, mga hindi pumatay, mga inaresto lang dahil sa politiko. Pero, iimbestigahan pa raw ng korte. Alam naman natin kung anong mangyayari. Hahayaan na lang silang mamatay sa loob.

Panglima, papaano na ang mga walang bahay? Oo, may mga mabubuti ang loob na tumulong. Kahit nga alkalde, inisip na pasarahin muna mga hotel para pagtirhan. Pero, bigla nilang sinara 'yung ibang tirahan. Pinasok nila ang mga bahay ng mahihirap dahil sumuway raw sila sa curfew. Pinarusahan nang walang pakundangan, halos tinotyur sa harap ng sambayanan.

Tanong nila sa isa't isa "Ba't antitigas ng ulo nila?  
Ba't hindi na lang sila do'n sa loob ng bahay nila?  
Mamatay na nga lang talaga sila, 'no?"

Oo, mamamatay sila. Kung hindi sa virus,  
mamatay sila sa gutom, sa hiras, at sa kamay ng  
pulis. Hindi nga lang nila namalayan, sila ang may  
hawak sa masong pumatay sa masa.

**covid-19 lockdown:  
quarantine  
reflections**

*by: sze-tao*

This is not martial law. Our enemy  
is the virus.

- some poor politician in  
Malacañang (living a simple life &  
shops at Jaeger-LeCoult<sup>1</sup>)

Inhale slowly 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004. exhale  
slowly 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004.

We are in 1984. the Marcos nightmare is back.

This is a practice of our social conditioning. a  
social conditioning to authoritarianism and its  
ultimate dream: an authoritarian society.

Poverty is a social condition that is characterized  
by the lack of resources necessary for basic  
survival or to meet a certain minimum level of  
living standards expected for each of us. This is us  
(Filipinos) being discriminated. And if you stretch  
your imagination, this is Class War.

Everyone is molded into accepting the

discrimination we all experience every day and to eventually give control of our lives to the government and its cronies. We are not simply asked to obey the rules that military personnel and politicians have outlined for us but to stop questioning them. Blind obedience spelled *#sumunodlangkayo* [just obey].

That is the goal of this lockdown, enhanced community quarantine and 8PM to 5AM curfew hours. It is not de facto martial law, it's simply *Martial Law*.

When the current president regurgitates from enforcing a community quarantine to an 'enhanced' community quarantine and finally to 'extreme enhanced' community quarantine; your eyes blink in confusion. As the excuses and denials about enforcing Martial Law accumulates, Duterte assigns all retired army generals (not doctors/medical personnel) to the committee for the "Covid-19 National Action Plan." Finally, the granting of 'Special Powers' via the signing of "Bayanihan Act of 2020" seals the autocratic hand that will address the crisis spawned by COVID-19 pandemic.



Ultimately, authoritarianism is a personality trait<sup>2</sup> that reflects certain values, preferring social conformity over personal autonomy. *And this is where the anarchists come to play.*

We are under attack. our humanity is being attacked. Our fundamental attitudes towards the world: conformity versus autonomy, nurture or discipline is *forced* into our being.

The imposition of community passes, illegal arrests of curfew violators, nationwide relief goods distribution corruptions, privileged/VIP prioritization, suppression of press freedom and later an overall murder of dissent (online or offline) are mere consequences.

It is not unusual for us to burst in anger for the daily assault on our human rights while we are contemplating our own fear, our life in danger amidst this imposed isolation. Most, if not all of us have long accepted the inability of governments worldwide to provide all our needs in crisis. And yes, we have long understood the limits of capitalism and its unhealthiness to our planet.

So, we are anarchists. Descendants of geographer Kropotkin who advised that the basic biological

drive to mutual aid is definitive of humans; that the not so visible side of success in species survival is in collaboration with other species. Anthropologists have long discovered that primitive societies have *almost always* practiced some form of 'gift economies' (whose competitive drive is not to accumulate goods but give them away!<sup>3</sup>) and have preferred to share resources. That what really matters is the relations between people, that exchange is about creating friendships or working out rivalries.

How does it apply here? When a *question about status of testing kits to address the COVID-19 cases becomes a platform for creative poems*<sup>4</sup> and other creative pursuits; we nod our heads in agreement. We do not need to bury the state further down the rabbit hole, they've done it a long, long, long time ago. In crisis, anarchist values get activated. You just need to look around, we're at work (or play) and getting away with doing the things we love. And yes, this a rhetoric. We are everywhere.

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**An Anarchist and  
Filipino Diaspora  
Perspective on the  
COVID-19 Pandemic**

*by Adobong Anarkiya, an  
anarchist from the Filipino  
diaspora in the United States*

It has been 2-3 months since the COVID-19 virus had spread across the world infecting hundreds of thousands and killing tens of thousands, leading the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it a pandemic. Within that span of time, places of work and schools here and abroad have shut down, effectively leaving people at risk of losing their jobs and becoming evicted from their homes.

The bosses are forcing workers—especially those working in supermarkets, warehouses, factories, retail etc.—to continue to work causing potential spread of infection. Many of which don't have health insurance to cover the treatment of COVID-19 should they be infected. Even those imprisoned are coerced to work for little to no wages to produce masks and hand sanitizers. They are trapped in prisons that are incubators for infection which will only exacerbate this pandemic. All this in the name of saving the economy, which of course is on the verge of heading into a recession. (By the

time you're reading this, we've probably arrived to a recession.)

The Trump administration claims to be handling to the situation perfectly. If this is true, then why are there so many accounts of doctors, nurses and other health care workers claiming that they are running dangerously low on personal protective equipment (PPE) such as N95 masks needed to protect themselves while tending to those infected?<sup>1</sup> Like many of us in the Filipino diaspora in the so-called United States, many of our loved ones are health care workers, specifically nurses and even caregivers. They, themselves are on the frontlines of this pandemic. Each day, these nurses enter the hospitals and nursing homes to tend to the infected and the elderly who are at higher risk of infection. Without proper equipment, they risk bringing the virus home and potentially infect their families.

Not only that, Trump's calling of the COVID-19 virus, the "Chinese Virus" has fueled racist attacks on the Asian American community. Reports of hate crimes against Asian-Americans<sup>2</sup> have arisen here and elsewhere in the world,<sup>3</sup> some of which the victims are members of the Filipino diaspora.<sup>4</sup>

Our concern as Asian Americans is not only just the threat of the virus but also racism and xenophobia.

Time and time again has shown that the state is incompetent in times of crisis, only to bail out the capitalists and bureaucrats while leaving ordinary people in the dust. That is a given for us anarchists. But we shouldn't despair. Rather than relying on the state and corporations to save us, many of us across the country and around the world have formed autonomous mutual aid projects,<sup>5</sup> from volunteering to help gather groceries and other supplies for the elderly and immunocompromised and pitching in financial support for others.

Not only that, workers in big grocery and retail chains like Whole Foods, Amazon and Instacart have planned on walking out of their jobs in protest for better safety equipment and paid sick leave.<sup>6</sup> Even General Electric factory workers are walking out of their jobs manufacturing jet engines and opting to manufacture much needed ventilators to help in the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>7</sup> On April 1st, there will also be tenants across the country who

It is quite obvious that we hold the power to keep this system in place; we also have the power to destroy this system. A return to normal is unthinkable because it is this normalcy that brought this situation on us to begin with. Solidarity to everyone organizing against the state and capital and against this pandemic!

Another world is possible.

Love live anarchy!

Mabuhay ang anarkiya!



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**What Happens to  
Them:  
Photo Essay of the  
Homeless  
Community In Long  
Beach**

*Photo essay by O'Shovah, a  
Filipinx comrade in Long  
Beach.*

There is an issue that is being neglected, a homeless issue. It is an issue that has long been present before this pandemic. While the current situation is to stay at home, many of the homeless people living in the city do not have the privilege to "stay at home." Whether it be the cold gray pavement or a metallic bus bench to sleep or rest, it cannot be denied that they are the unfortunate victims of this COVID-19 pandemic.



He only spoke Tagalog and I regularly saw him anytime I went to get some groceries at a nearby Filipino store. I have not seen him since last week and I presume him to be dead after hearing the paramedics circle the area that he resides in near my neighborhood that same week. Taken at Tambuli. Supermarket in Westside Long Beach.

This is especially due to the fact that the United States, built on stolen land, did not guarantee its people the right to housing. Although many cities' attempts at addressing the "Homeless Question"



He asked me for the bus direction while he was resting.  
Taken in the Bus Station in Downtown Long beach.

have mitigated the situation by recommissioning parks as ad hoc homeless shelters, it is not enough. Many more of the homeless are still in danger of exposure and the lack of effort by politicians have proven ineffective.



A man after a round of hunting bottles for recycling. Taken near The Pike.

Mainstream media has been lacking in covering the issue that homeless people face. There are more than eighteen thousand homeless people attempting to take shelter and surviving, and the situation is critical in ensuring that they're not forgotten in this human right conversation.





You can't see it from here, but he was wearing some protective gear while he was traveling the area. Taken at the Bus station in Downtown.

The threat that this virus has posed to the homeless is extreme — many of whom are weak and frail due to the harsh conditions of living in squalor each night. Luckily with the support of



A homeless person asking for change by the side of the curb. Taken next to Yoshinoya at Willow and Atlantic

many local organizers in the States as well as my city, Long beach, have helped reach out to the homeless and provided them with food, supplies and temporary shelter as the cases of homelessness ramp up in the States.



He was shambling across a local gas station coming to folks for some spare change, he looked shaken and tired especially after going through one of the coldest nights of the week.

Whether or not the city would be willing to expand these shelters to libraries or other parks is still ongoing. But as it stands on the precipice if the



A Homeless man sleeping with a cigarette carton as a pillow. Taken near Los Altos Park in East Long Beach.

homeless question is taken care of, the situation looking forward may very well deteriorate as more and more become exposed to this epidemic.





Although I am not sure if the one of the right was homeless, the one of the left surely was since they were discussing having issues finding food and money with the other homeless being next to the Long Beach Convention Center

# **Survival of the Fittest in the Time of Pandemic**

*Written and initially published  
by Safehouse Infoshop on  
Facebook<sup>1</sup>*

People often equate Charles Darwin's notion of "survival of the fittest" with competition. People think that the natural way of the world requires some sort of battle. This is also often translated in how we deal with other people. "It's either myself or others," that's how many people justify cruelty and domination. But if we think closely, survival of the fittest does not always mean competition.

Survival of the fittest simply means that if a specie is not able adapt to the changes in the environment, that's when it starts to die out. If your fur is not thick enough, then you might die in the winter of Alaska. If your fur is too thick, then you would die like a Siberian Husky in the tropics. If you can not grow claws, you might not be able to catch prey, or be able to climb trees to avoid predators. Strength is not enough in survival. If we only consider strength, then no animal now can match the dinosaurs who were much bigger in size and appetite. They have walked the earth for millions of years, but eventually, they became

extinct because they were not able adapt to climate change.

As pointed out by a former Russian prince turned biologist and anarchist named Peter Kropotkin, few people realize that mutual cooperation is as much a factor of evolution as competition. If we think about it, there are quite a number of species which might have not survived if they did not practice cooperation amongst themselves or with other species. Canines work in packs. Gigantic sea mammals like whales and sharks may die of parasites if they did not allow smaller fishes to ride on their backs. Bees (which are prehistoric in origin) or ants can not survive without the hive or colony.

Another misconception which may arise here is the conception of the alphas. Herds and packs tend to have alphas but these alphas are not there to terrorize their own specie. Alphas become alphas because they have the capacity to protect and search for food. Their position is not permanent. Being alpha in the animal kingdom does not have a time frame. Quite different from the human conception that alphas should reign for



as long as six years even when he or she is not capable of feeding and protecting the group. We should also take note that in many species, alphas are of the female gender.

In the bee or ant colony, there are also roles taken by each individual. There's the "queen," the "soldiers," and the "workers." But this is entirely different to how we look at queens, soldiers, and workers in the human context. In the colonies of such arthropods, the queens are also replaceable, the soldiers do not harass the workers, and in contrast, the workers can become the heroes. In colonies, the queen or the soldiers do not have authority over workers. They do not make rules and they do not assert self-righteousness. Each individual act on their own will and understanding to preserve the colony. When a worker finds a good tree to establish shelter, it dances, to tell the others of the location, so others can verify if the claim is true. They require a constant check and balance similar to how internet open-sources work. Dictatorship does not work in nature.

Of course, there are instances where competition is evident in many species. But take note that this is only true when resources are scarce. In the human world, resources are more than enough to feed everyone in the world for multiple times. Scarcity is a myth repeatedly told by hoarders. Competition is only acceptable in scarcity, not in the abundance that we have now. Poverty and hunger, therefore, are crimes committed to the poor, most especially during a pandemic. Thankfully, instead, we witness cooperation almost everywhere during these times.

Survival of the fittest is not only about competition. Survival is also about adaptation and mutual cooperation.

1:

<https://www.facebook.com/safehouse.infoshop/posts/1119886541703643>



**Ang COVID19**

*Isang pahayag mula sa Local  
Autonomous Network.*

## **Introduksyon**

Kasalukuyan nating nararanasan ang isa sa pinakamatinding pandemya ng ating panahon. Hindi maikakaila ang matinding epekto (at magiging epekto pa) nito sa halos lahat ng aspeto ng ating buhay; mula sa pinakabatayang pinagkukunan ng pagkain at mga hanapbuhay, hanggang sa kung paano natin isinasagawa ang ating pang araw-araw na mga gawain tulad ng pamamalengke, pag-aaral, paglilibang at maraming pang iba. Tinatantsa ng mga siyentista na hindi basta-basta matatapos ang pandemyang ito sa mga susunod na mga buwan at maari pa ngang tumagos ang epekto nito sa mga susunod na taon. Maaaring sabihing ang COVID19 ay hahati sa modernong kasaysayan sa dalawang yugto; “bago ang COVID19” at “matapos ang COVID19.”

Sa ganitong entablado gustong ilatag ng Local Autonomous Network(LAN) ang ilang obserbasyon, saloobin, at mga ideyang maaaring makatulong sa ating mas malinaw na pag-unawa sa mga nangyayari sa paligid, at sa patuloy nating pag-agapay sa mga pagbabagong idudulot ng nasabing pandemya sa ating kolektibong kinabukasan.

## **Ang Pandemya (at/ay) ang Gobyerno**

Malinaw na maraming naging sablay na desisyon ang gobyerno ng Pilipinas sa usapin ng COVID19 at kung paano nitong napiling rumesponde sa krisis na ito.

Una, kitang-kita ang pagwawalang bahala nito sa mga hinaing ng mga mamamayang nag-uudyok na magpataw ng “immediate travel ban” noong unang pumutok ang balita tungkol dito sa China noong mga huling araw ng Disyembre ng nakaraang taon. Matatandaang nanindigan ang gobyernong hindi basta-basta maaaring magpataw

ng travel ban sa China dahil baka ma-offend ito (Go at Duterte) at hindi din daw mainam para sa turismo ng Pilipinas ang nasabing travel ban (Duque). Malinaw na hindi ang kapakanang pangkalusugan ng mga mamamayan ang prayoridad ng gobyerno kundi panlabas na relasyon at turismo. Sa ganitong ganap malinaw na mas inuuna ng pamahalaan ang mga bagay na magsusulong ng mga pansarili nitong interes tulad ng kita at panlabas na relasyon (o pagkatuta) kaysa pangalagaan ang mismong buhay at kaligtasan ng mga mamamayang umaasa dito.

Pangalawa, malinaw na ang COVID19 ay isang problemang pangkalusugan. Bagkus, maaari lamang itong malutas gamit ang mga solusyong medikal tulad ng malawakang testing ng mga pinaghihinalaang may sakit at ng mga tinatawag na hot-spots (mga lugar na may pinakamataas na bilang ng mga pwedeng mahawa), mabilis at maagap na contact tracing (paghahananap ng mga nakasalamuha ng mga natukoy na may sakit), pagmomobilisa ng mas maraming mga health workers, at pagbibigay prayoridad sa pagsegura ng mga kagamitang maaari sanang makatulong sa mga frontliners tulad ng mga

Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) at mga mas epektibong pasilidad pangkalusugan. Nakapagtataka na imbes na ang mga ito ang unahin ng gobyerno eh mas pinili nitong i-mobilisa ang pulupulutong na armadong pulis at militar na para bang ang COVID19 ay isang problema ng seguridad at kapayapaan imbes na problemang pang kalusugan. Mananatili ding hilaw ang Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) kung walang magaganap na malawakang testing dahil ang mga datos na makukuha dito ang tanging pwedeng maging batayan kung naging matagumpay ba ang ECQ sa pag-contain ng pagkalat ng impeksyon. Dito naman ay makikita nang malinaw kung paanong mas pinapahalagahan ng gobyerno ang pagpapanatili at pagpapalakas ng kapit nito sa kapangyarihan imbes na paglaanan ng nararapat at napapanahon na solusyon ang krisis na kinakaharap. Maari pa ngang sabihing tila sinasadya ng gobyernong hindi maging maagap at mas lalo pang lumala ang problema kung magbibigay ito ng dahilan at katwiran para gumamit ng sobra-sobrang pwersa at kapangyarihang mamulis lalo na ng mga pumupuna.



Pangatlo, nauunawaan natin ang pangangailangang magsagawa ng Community Quarantine para mabawasan ang paggalaw ng mga tao at kasabay nito ay mas madaling ma-contain ang virus. Pero kaakibat sana nito ay ang mas maagap na pagbibigay ng ayuda sa mga pinakabunerableng miyembro ng populasyon, mga arawan ang sahod o yung mga tinatawag na “no work, no pay”, at mga nasa di pormal na ekonomiya (mga naglalako sa lansangan, mga nagtrabaho sa palengke, at mga drayber ng pampublikong sasakyan). Pinapatunayan ng mga ganap na ito na wala sa sentralisadong kapangyarihan ng gobyernong walang unawa o paki-alam sa danas ng mga nasa lapag at lalaylayan ang kaligtasang inaasam ng nakararami bagkus ay maaring matagpuan sa mga inisyatibang naka-ugat sa mga mismong pamayanan at mga sektor ng lipunang may tunay na paki-alam.

Sa panahong ito ay naglabasan din ang ilang mga hinaing at panawagang direktang tumutukoy sa kagustuhan ng mga tao. Ang mga panawagan tulad ng #MassTestingNowPH, #StopVIPTesting, #SolusyongMedikalHindiMilitar, #CancelRentPH ay mga praktikal na panawagan sa panahon ng COVID19. Sinusuportahan ito ng LAN sa

paniniwalang ito ay nararapat at napapanahon. Sa kabilang banda ay naniniwala ang LAN na hindi ito sasapat at maari pang lagpasan patungo sa mas maayos na kinabukasan.

## **Ang Hinaharap at Hinahanap**

Malinaw na ipinakita ng sanga-sangang krisis na idinulot ng COVID19 ang mga bulok na katangian ng namamayagpag na sistemang umiiral sa mga lipunan ng mundo sa konpigurasyon ng Pandaigdigang Kapitalismo. Maaaring ito ay mas ramdam at mas malinaw sa mga mahihirap na bansa tulad ng Pilipinas ngunit hindi maikakaila na maging sa mga bansang may higit na mas mauunlad na mga ekonomiya tulad ng Estados Unidos at Italya ay nagdulot din ito ng matinding dagok.

Gustong linawin ng LAN na hindi tayo dapat maghangad na makabalik lang basta sa kung ano ang dati. Hindi uubrang pagkatapos ng pandemyang ito ay bumalik tayo sa “business as

usual” na pagtanaw sa araw-araw. Mismong ang sistemang iyon ang isa sa mga pangunahing dahilan kung bakit tayo naging ganito kabunerable sa banta ng mga pandemya at sa mga krisis na dulot nito. Hangga’t ang mga tao ay umaasa sa sentralisadong kapangyarihan ng estado at sa pang-ekonomiyang pangako ng mga korporasyon para sa kani-kanilang kaligtasan ay mananatiling limitado ang kanilang kakayanang mag-organisa ng mga sariling inisyatiba para i-angat ang kanilang antas ng pamumuhay at isulong ang pansariling determinasyon sa usapin ng personal na kaligtasan at batayang mga pangangailangan para mabuhay.

Oo, marami pa ding nanatiling bingi at bulag sa kalagayan ng marami at mas piniling maging makasarili sa panahong ito pero ito ay direktang epekto ng mal-edukasyon at mahabang panahon ng pamumuhay sa ilalim ng isang sistemang nagbibigay gantimpala sa pagiging makasarili at mapanlamang. Hindi ito dapat tignan bilang natural na konpigurasyon ng tao dahil ang ating mga kilos at paniniwala ay madalas na repleksiyon lamang ng kung anong kalagayan ng lipunang kinabibilangan natin.

Sa ganitong lente, nais isulong ng LAN ang mga alternatibong pagtanaw sa hinaharap na mas naka-angkla at nakasentro sa mga mismong komunidad na kinabibilangan ng bawat isa. Hindi na lang ito basta usapin ng kanya-kanyang pananaw natin sa pulitika o ekonomiya, kundi ng mga “values” o mga pagpapahalagang tinitindigan ng bawat isa. Maraming inisyatibang hindi nakaasa sa gobyerno ang namayani sa panahon ng krisis na ito; mga donation drives para sa mga pinakanangangailangan, libreng sakay sa mga walang masakyan, pagbabahagi ng pagkain sa mga nagugutom, community farms, mga online classes para sa mga bata at matatanda, libreng pagbabahagi ng mga likhang sining, at marami pang iba — dahil sa huli’t huli ang tanging maaasahan natin ay ang ating mga kapwa, ang ating mga kapamilya, mga kaibigan, at mga mismong kasama sa komunidad na siyang tunay na nakakaunawa sa ating kalagayan. Ang kultura ng pagbabahagi, kooperasyon, at pakikipamuhay sa kapwa-tao ay nananatiling mas may bigat sa mga panahon ng krisis tulad nito. Nawa’y sa hinaharap ay mas maging maigting ang ating mga inisyatibang pagtibayin ang ating mga komunidad. Mula sa mga alternatibong pagkukunan ng

pagkain sa pamamagitan ng mga community farms, mga alternatibong porma ng palitan na hindi nakasandal sa itinutulak na halaga ng pandaigdigang merkado tulad ng barter, hanggang sa mga alternatibong relasyon sa trabaho, pag-aaral, at pakikipagkapwa. Sa ganitong gawi natin unti-unting mapawawalang bisa ang estado bilang sentro ng kapangyarihan, sa pagsusulong na unti-unti itong mawalan ng silbi.

Tandaan nating kailan man ay hindi pinag-arian (o naging prayoridad) ng ano mang gobyerno o nang sino mang namumuno ang kaligtasan ng mga tao. Ito ay nananatili sa personal na kakayanan at kabukasan ng mismong mga tao na makipagtulungan at maghangad ng mas mabuting mundo.

**#MutualAidNotCharity**

**#CommunityCare**

**#AbetterWorldIsPossible**

**#KomunidadHindiAwtoridad**

**#KapwaTulunganKapwaRebolusyon**

# **Kontra Corona, Kontra Pulitika**

*Sinulat ng isang anonymous na anarkista sa kasalukuyang krisis ng COVID-19. Inilathala namin ito sa Bandilang Iitim para sa kahalagahan nito sa mga anarkisista sa kapuluan.*

Tiyak na nabago ang buhay mo sa pagdating ng virus. Bumuti o lalong naging masama ang lagay mo? KUNG SUMAMA ANG BUHAY MO, isa ka sa napakaraming mahihirap na dumaranas ngayon ng stress dulot ng pagkabahala sa impeksyon ng virus. Napa-praning dahil baka walang kainin ang pamilya at hindi makakilos upang makamit ang pangangailangan sa inyong bahay.

Higit na pinalutang ng TAKOT at PANIK ang DISKRIMINASYON hindi lang laban sa mga Chinese nationals maging sa mga health workers na NAGTATAYA ng BUHAY para tumulong sa pagkontrol ng pandemya.

Sa gitna ng takot bunga ng paghihigpit at kawalan ng mga tao sa akses para ma-testing; itong mga pulitiko ay walang kahiya-hiya na unahin ang mga sarili at pamilya at buong yabang pang

binabalewala ang mga protocols sa pag-kontrol ng virus. Hindi malaman kung saan sila kumukuha ng lakas ng loob na mandohan ang mga tao na makipagtulungan habang wala namang kasiguruhan na may sapat na supply para sa pangangailangan ng milyong pamilyang apektado.

Natural na sasama ang loob mo sa gobyerno at mga pulitiko dahil sa kanilang kapabayaan at sa halip magpakumbaba ang kanilang arogansya ay parang asin sa sugat na lalong nakapagpapainit sa ulo ng tao kung saan kapag mahirap ang may paglabag dahil naman sa lehitimong dahilan ay napaparusahan. Matatapang lang ang PNP at AFP sa mga mahihirap na walang laban pero 'pag senador o congressman ay lagi silang may dahilan. Idagdag pa ang ulat ng pangha-harass ng ilang kapulisan sa mga kababaihan sa mga checkpoints sa daan.

Hindi natin alam kung hanggang kailan tatagal ang lock down habang ang bilang ng mga positibo ay tuloy-tuloy at ang pagdami nila ay ating asahan. Sa kabila ng mga ito, isang malaking positibong epekto ang PAG-LINIS ng HANGIN at PAGKAPAHINGA NG INANG-KALIKASAN. Ang



malusog na kapaligiran ay nakakatulong sa pagpapalakas ng resistensya ng ating mga katawan sa pag-protekta ng ating well-being sa kabuuan.

Kahit banas na banas ka sa mga pa-VIP na pulitiko at sa mga taong sa kanila ay sunod-sunuran may oportunidad tayo para magtulungan upang makamit ang ating mga batayang pangangailangan sa iba't-ibang paraan. Sa panahon ng enhanced community quarantine ay may pagkakataon tayo na magnilay-nilay kung paano natin mapapalusog ang ating mga relasyon sa pamilya, komunidad at paano tuturuan ng leksyon ang mga pabebeng pulitiko.

Ito rin ang magandang pagkakataong upang muli nating hasain ang ating mga kakayahan na lumikha ng mga bagay na pangunahin nating kailangan. Magpraktis magtanim ng iba't-ibang uri ng halaman, pagkain, gamot o pagpaganda ng ating kapaligiran. Mag-improvise ng mga kasangkapan upang ang virus ay labanan. Magsabwatan upang makapagbahagi ng mga gamot, pagkain at mga bagay na pang-proteksyon sa katawan. Pag-aralan ang mga kaganapan at

pagbabahagi ng mga napapanahong impormasyon. Ang pagbabahagi ng mga skills at kakayahan ay epektibo ring paraan.

Higit na malaki ang tsansa nating malampasan ang krisis pangkalusugan kung tayo ay may kani-kanyang pamamaraan at **HINDI TAASA SA GOBYERNO ANG ATING PANGANGAILANGAN.** Lalo tayong may adbentahe kung papairalin natin ang pakikipagkapwa-tulungan.











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Bandilang Itim aims to be a banner that rallies together anarchists and libertarians in the archipelago known as the Philippines.

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*Para sa pagpapalawig ng kaisipan ng kalayaan!*