ALL TOGETHER AGAINST THE UNSEEN ENEMY

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The Corona Virus Disease (CoVid-19), on 11th of March 2020 was declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization has laid the healthy life of people at risk. At first, it seems like a common disease in Wuhan China, with symptoms like dry cough, tiredness and fever. The infected person reportedly suffered difficulty in breathing and soon died. People from all nations are frightened when it became pandemic. In some countries, like China and Italy, these governments were the first ones to declare a lockdown, in which people were ordered to limit going outside their respective homes. Restrictions on travel coming from other countries were imposed to contain the virus.

In the Philippines, the lives of many have been affected by this pandemic. At first, the Philippine government did not take firm precautionary measures right away. Though there is a high risk of spreading the virus in our country due to the incoming tourists who were exposed to countries that already have severe CoVid-19 cases. Many Filipinos have questioned the government. Most of us were asking: Why tourists coming from Wuhan China were the only ones restricted to enter the Philippines? Some said that our current administration was protecting its relationship with other countries, while others thought that it would badly affect our economy.

As anticipated, more and more Filipinos got infected as days went on. The President had no choice than to implement Community Quarantine in Metro Manila, the very first place where a great number of people were infected.
Along with stay at home policy, people who need to go out for special reasons were ordered to follow social distancing and wear face masks for the protection of themselves and the people around them.

According to Assistant Professor at the University of Health Policy and Administration at the University of Philippines Manila, Emirito Faraon in an interview on 14th of March 2020 with Foreign Policy, “I think our government should have done it earlier, but because we follow protocols, we had to wait for tipping points”.

Considering the status of our country, we cannot deny the fact that many Filipinos would not be able to follow those rules. One factor of this is that our transportation system, as we have noticed, especially in Metro Manila, there is a frail system. Those working in Manila normally depend on transportation like trains and busses. Every day these transportations get crowded during and even when not in rush hours. It clearly shows that social distancing in crowded cities would be hard to sustain.

Another factor is that many Filipinos are considered minimum wage earners, in which, they are obliged to continue working for them to be paid. Since many are daily paid and under a no work no pay status, they still head to work and do not mind the alarming spread of the CoVid-19.

It seems like the first community quarantine failed. Aside from those factors, rules that were first imposed were vague which of course aroused confusion on many of us. That is why President Duterte thought of another strategy. He then mandated the whole Luzon to be placed under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). The word enhanced means it is much stricter and clearer provisions were publicly stretched out.

The first day of the said community-wide quarantine caused a ruckus since people were still not complying and cooperating with the new set of rules. Notwithstanding the government’s promises, people insisted on going to work, risking their own lives and their families as well, just to make a living.
As a result, the President instructed the leaders of Local Government Units (LGUs) to ensure that their constituents should strictly follow precautionary measures to contain the virus and make use of their available resources that will help those affected by the said quarantine. Some LGUs have allotted enough fund but some had a hard time due to limited resources. It had been observed that in the outbreak of this dreaded disease, LGUs had been resourceful enough to feed the hungry mob.

We cannot deny the fact that we do not have an advanced healthcare system compared to other countries. It would be a great help for our healthcare workers if we will all cooperate and take precautionary measures seriously for us to win the fight against this invisible and deadly enemy.

Mitigating the spread of the virus is a crucial function of our public servants in the National Government, in every LGUs and especially of our front liners. With limited resources of PPE and test kits, they are still positively carrying their duties. All the same, it is not only their fight. It is a fight for all of us whether we are at home or in the front line, this fight is equally ours.

ECQ directly affects our economy. Our tourist economy has been affected since there were travel restrictions. Importations and exportations have been likewise affected since other countries have also closed their borders. There was a decline in the consumption of non-essential commodities except health-related commodities because people would prioritize biological necessities, medical supplies, and commodities. With that, sectors producing non-essential necessities, have incurred losses.

This pandemic should be a lesson for each one of us. We have seen shortcomings from our government but some leaders are continuously making much effort to win this global battle. This seems to be more than World War Three where guns and bombs are useless. Unity more than anything else is much needed at this time of difficulties.
Obedience and trust to the leaders we had once entrusted our country as we voted for them during the election are in demand.

With this experience, may it serve as a tool for our government to enhance the quality of serving its people. May the government truly act with passion and honesty for us not to be threatened again as we are caught unprepared when history repeats itself.

People should now be aware of the importance of our leaders. May they also think more than twice as they cast their votes for the people whom they will entrust their survival against unseen enemies. It could have been easier to fight if you can see your enemies. Unfortunately, our eyes are useless with this foe. Hence, we must use our hearts and intellectuals. Keep ourselves safe and others too, by following rules.

All together, we can win this war!

References:
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