

## **‘Napakasahol’: Terror bill passage sparks social media, on-ground protests**

Filipinos took their ire to both social media and in the streets to condemn the passage of the anti-terrorism bill in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, making #OustDuterteNow and #JunkTerrorLaw top-trending topics on Twitter.

A day after the passage, widespread dissent on social media was further echoed on-ground as rights groups staged an indignation rally in the University of the Philippines Diliman and raised placards condemning the law’s passage, while still observing physical distancing.

Moreover, critics of the certified-urgent law reiterated their concerns against the unconstitutionality of some of the law’s provisions, and how it is likely to be abused by state forces in arresting just about anyone whom they deem ‘terrorists’ and supporters of terrorism.

Joseph Benedict Cinco, public administration and governance student and campus journalist, said that the law has an adverse effect on free speech and the people’s freedom to conduct and join antigovernment rallies, as the Duterte regime is known to go after individuals and institutions critical of the president.

“Our government will only have to wait until they realize how the bill's ambiguous provisions will be abused by its implementors. The same thing our lawmakers waited for the COVID-19 pandemic to finally realize the significance of the proposed Pandemic Bill which was authored by the late Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago,” Cinco noted.

Meanwhile, a netizen under the twitter handle of @LTRecacho urged the public to never forget.

“Remember this date as the day the Duterte administration starts abusing their power more than ever against innocent Filipinos all over the country. Don't forget the traitors who made this happen. Napaka-sahol nyong hayop kayo,” the netizen expressed.

On the other hand, another netizen voiced his sentiment on the terror bill’s passage, but took the view that this day was not a success for the Duterte government, but that it only added fuel to the fire of the Filipino people’s resistance.

“July 3, 2020 is not the day this government killed democracy. it's the day they added more fuel to the raging fire burning within us all. it's the day we reaffirm ourselves of our desire to serve the people. it's the day we decide to continue our fight,” @pagaaklas said.

The law is expected to come in full implementation on July 19, the Department of Justice said in an official statement.

*\*preview photo is courtesy of Rappler*