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ASSIGNMENT

QUESTION: Write a report of not more than two pages on the coronavirus pandemic and the effect of the lockdown and restriction of movement of Nigerians.

ANSWER

REPORT

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC: EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS.

By Oinu Grace Ene

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The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the new coronavirus outbreak, which originated in Wuhan, China, a pandemic on the 11th of March 2020 and said it was “deeply concerned by the alarming level of spread and severity” of the outbreak. As of 16th April 2020, the WHO confirmed 1,995,983 cases, 131,037 deaths and 213 countries, areas or territories with cases of coronavirus. Since the coronavirus outbreak in Nigeria, the country has taken drastic lockdown and restriction measures to prevent further spread. However, all these measures have their negative effects on Nigerians which will be discussed here.

WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS

According to WHO, coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. In severe cases, it can cause pneumonia, multiple organ failure and death. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when the infected person coughs or sneezes.

CORONAVIRUS IN NIGERIA

There are currently 323 confirmed cases of coronavirus in Nigeria, with 71 percent of them registered in Lagos and the capital territory of Abuja. 10 people have died so far. However, it is believed that the statistics is far more than what is documented. The Federal Ministry of Heath confirmed the first case of coronavirus in Nigeria on the 27th of February 2020. The case is an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria and returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos, Nigeria on the 25th of February 2020. He was confirmed by the Virology Laboratory of the Lagos Teaching Hospital, part of the Laboratory Network of the Nigerian Centre For Disease Control. The patient is clinically stable with no serious symptoms and being managed at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Lagos.

EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTIONS ON NIGERIANS

The actions taken by the Nigerian government to contain the virus has unfortunately led to economic hardship to both the economy and its citizens. First, it has caused the Naira to fall to $1 to N387.0722, not to talk of China who for the first time in 60years is getting a GDP growth of 0.1%. The prices of food stuffs and other products have increased, all over, leading to a national and even global recession. The lockdown has also affected schools in the country, especially tertiary institution, were asked to close on the 23rd of March 2020, for fear of this virus. Churches and mosques were ordered to accept only a limited number of people or be closed for worship, all to maintain social distancing. The extension of the lockdown is expected to add to the hardship of millions of Nigerians living hand-to-mouth, often on less than one dollar a day. President Buhari said that he was “fully aware of the great difficulties experienced especially by those who earn a daily wage”. “But despite these realities, we must not change the restrictions,” he added. Although, the government has pledged a series of support measures to ease the financial pain for the vulnerable, there have been widespread complaints that not enough is done for those facing hunger. During this lockdown, Nigerians are staying at home with no work and no chance of getting money to feed themselves and their families. Meanwhile, the police reported that they were bolstering forces in Lagos and Ogun state after almost 200 suspects were arrested amid fears of a spike in crime during the lockdown.

Conclusively, coronavirus is a deadly disease affecting not just Nigeria but the whole world at large. Nigeria is partnering with other countries to find the cure for this virus which have taken the lives of over a million people all over the world with the numbers increasing daily. In containing this coronavirus, Nigeria has resulted to the order of a national lockdown and restriction of movement which has led to the drop of the Naira, economic recession and growth; suspension of jobs; places of worship and academic activities and increase in crime rate in the country.

Although, the population of those infected with the virus in Nigeria is low compared to other developed European countries, Nigeria suffers seriously. Poverty and religion are the major issues at play, with some saying obeying the government’s say-at home order will mean dying of hunger at home. The government should try to combat the problem of hunger, crime and ways to improve economic activities for citizens during this period of lockdown. Also, Nigerians should also continue to take precaution and take care of their health and maintain hand and respiratory hygiene to protect themselves and others from being infected with coronavirus.

REFERENCE

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