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DEPARTMENT: LAW

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QUESTION: WRITE A REPORT OF NOT MORE THAN TWO PAGES, ON THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND THE RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS

DATE: 20-04-2020

 The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (SARS-COV-2). Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Disease (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Diseases (SARS). It was not until recently discovered by humans. Detailed investigations show that SARS-COV was transmitted from civet cats to humans in China in 2002 and MERS-COV from dromedary camels to humans in Saudi Arabia in 2012. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. As surveillance improves around the world, more coronaviruses are likely to be found.

 The symptoms depend on the virus, but there are common signs. Such as, fever, tiredness, dry cough, other symptoms are shortness of breath, aches and pains, sore throat, and rarely diarrhea, nausea or a runny nose. The symptoms show themselves after fourteen days of contact with an infected person. Some persons may have very mild respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older persons and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop serious illnesses. Infection can cause pneumonia, SARS, kidney failure and even death.

 The virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

 At this time there is no known vaccine or treatments which can put a stop to this killer virus, so there are methods of preventions put in place by the World Health Organization

* First of all, persons who have been in contact with infected persons, but show no signs must self-isolate in order not to spread the disease.
* Washing of hands regularly with water and soap or an alcohol based hand rub (sanitizers)
* Maintain at least 1metre distance between you and people coughing or sneezing.
* Avoid touching your face.
* Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
* Stay home if you feel unwell.
* Refrain from smoking and other activities that weaken the lungs.
* Practice physical distancing by avoiding unnecessary travel and staying away from large groups of people.

Coronavirus in Nigeria from the Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC)

 The NCDC is Nigeria’s leading national public health institute. It is the Nigerian Federal Government Agency under the Federal Ministry of Health and is headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria.it is currently headed by Chikwe Ihekweazu. On the 28th of February 2020, the very first case of coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in Nigeria. The index case was found in an Italian businessman who arrived in Nigeria from Milan, Italy. The case was confirmed at the Virology Laboratory of Lagos University Teaching Hospital on the 27th of February 2020. The index case had mild symptoms, and is being managed at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Yaba, Lagos. Research commenced immediately and the NCDC found out the rate at which the virus can spread especially in populous cities. So they devised prevention techniques to help mass populations escape the virus. Coupled along with the instructions from the WHO, the NCDC included a mass lockdown on the country and very strict ones in the most populous cities with cases on the high rise, such as Lagos State. The lock down closed the churches, schools, workplaces and all places where people may gather in high population such as social gatherings and airports. Citizens were advised to suspend all travel plans and to call all residing family members back to the country. The police helped the government in enforcing this lockdown as all activities educational, religious and social are moved to online platforms to ensure little or no movement. Even though these measures were taken for the masses safety, there repercussions we can’t overlook.

 Firstly, the less privileged of society are in turmoil as to how to get food or adequate shelter for themselves and their family members. The government allegedly shared money to the underprivileged but this doesn’t solve the mass hunger problems or the now prominent percentage of poor people. Secondly, the persons of the working class such as voluntary services such as the cleaners, the hairdressers, the nannies, the drivers, hawkers, retailers, these persons who operate a hand to mouth feeding. That means that they work to eat and due to the lockdown and the close of all businesses they are in big trouble. Thirdly, the economy is on a standstill, even the oil barrels are at sea with no one to buy considering the global lockdown. The people who work are either currently working from home or not even sure they have jobs. Fourthly, all the schools have been closed which has brought a standstill to the educational journeys of the students and pupils of all respective educational institutions. Children are sent home and this has put the minds of parents in constant prayers that they never lack or want during this period. But it is not all bad news. The disease has brought forth a sense of humanitarianism in the peoples of the world as it affects millions every day and as a good number are recovering an equally sad number is dying or suffering from the disease. People are beginning to understand the values of lives and everyday mass prayers are said by all religions of the world to put an end to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).