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**DEPARTMENT: LAW**

Write a report, of not more than two pages, on the Corona virus pandemic and the effects of the lockdown and restriction of movement on Nigerians.

**Preamble:** This report will explain what corona virus is all about, that is, its origin, causes and why it is a pandemic. An attempt shall be made to not only uncover what a lockdown is and the rationale behind it and the associated restriction of movement, but the socio-economic and political effect of such governmental policy/ measure on the Nigerian society.

**Introduction; its meaning and origin:** Corona virus is an infectious disease originated from Wuhan, Hubei in China in the year 2019 December, hence the name COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019). In less than four months, the disease, COVID-19, had spread to about 210 countries and territories with 2,351,886 confirmed cases, and a death toll of 161,283. This disease is a pandemic because it is a worldwide spread. The cause of the virus is still facing a lot of debates: some saying it’s bio-chemically caused, another source claims it’s an animal transmission.

**The lockdown:** This is the confining of people to their residence or place of habitation in order to contain the spread of the corona virus. A lockdown is an emergency protocol preventing people from leaving a particular area, initiated by the government of the affected country. This is what leads to the restriction of movement in FCT, Abuja, Lagos State, and Ogun State as pronounced by president Buhari on the 30th of April 2020. This lockdown was supposed to last for just two weeks but it was extended by another two weeks on the 13th of April 2020 because of the rapid increase in the rate of the virus.

**Coronavirus and its coverage in Nigeria:** COVID-19 had spread to about 20 states including the Federal Capital Territory in just four months due to its spiral nature, most of the states of the federation, had declared a lockdown to contain the spread. The implication of the total lockdown are that ministries, industries, banks, hotels, recreational centers, general market remained un-operational

**Effect of the lockdown and the restriction of movement on Nigerians:** The coronavirus initiated the lockdown which has affected people in diverse ways, it has caused discomforts to Nigerians especially the low class citizens who highly depend on their daily income for survival. To be candid, I find it absurd that the government failed to put this into consideration while initiating the lockdown, to worsen it, provisions are not made to ease the burden on citizens. Though many Nigerians had stocked up their homes with food items in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak, the government must provide free electricity and water services to the people during this lockdown. Some state governments had begun distribution of food packages to people of the state, efforts must be intensified at ensuring even distribution of the packages to virtually all indigent residents of their states. A large part of the population depends on a daily trade for survival; therefore, asking Nigerians to stay indoors for weeks in the name of lockdown will be so difficult and bring so much damage to their finances. Though health is wealth, and effective lockdown will no doubt reduce the prevalence of Covid-19, but the government must as a matter of priority provide effective palliative measures for Nigerians. Policymakers and other stakeholders must use the effects of the lockdown to address many challenges confronting the wellbeing of the masses, most especially the poor state of the healthcare system, epileptic electricity supply, provision of potable water and good road network.

**Economically**, international trade is on halt, countries are struggling for survival, it’s a real deal. With COVID-19 impacting negatively on global economy and leaving Nigeria’s monocultural economy badly hit, what would be the impact of this, especially when a large chunk of the 2020 budget will be funded through borrowed money? Looking at it from two sides, COVID-19 is a big problem for all countries of the world and it is going to affect Nigeria more. Nigeria is a monocultural economy and it is already affecting our commodity, which is crude oil, very significantly now. Since crude oil price is what we base the budget on, it is obvious that we have a big challenge in our hands. The problem is that many of the officials are theoretical in managing the economies and nations. So, a nation that is realistic will bring down the cost of governance by maybe 50 per cent. Let the income of everybody in government come down and anyone who knows they can’t take the reduced income should leave the place for others who can take it. What I’m trying to say in essence is that, we might not have an economy after the coronavirus. There is negative multiplier effect on the Nigerian economy. There are threats of retrenchment all over especially the Aviation Industry proposing such a measure after May 2020 if the lockdown still persists.

**Social** danger results from economic threats. The first two weeks of the lockdown experienced both night and day-Robbery. This is strange in the social life of Nigerians. Rubbers moving in hundreds at the same time in many locations of Lagos and Ogun state of Nigeria. Landlords could no longer sleep, turning them into “vigilantes” overnight. Religious gathering is prohibited, recreational activities is no more. What people love most becomes an aberration. Our culture is facing a great challenge of social distancing. Relations and well-wishers could no more relate again. Coronavirus has bought tension into our social live and there is a doubt if the centre can hold after the lockdown.

**Politics and Administration** in Nigeria has been facing a lot of challenge in Nigerian. Civil servant from grade 1 to 12 are made not to go to work, ministries, parastatals and government agencies are not performing to optimal level. Weak political machineries/mechanism will inevitably lead to mal-administration. This is dangerous for any country of the world.

**Conclusively**, Coronavirus and the Lockdown with its associated restrictions of movement has brought hardship (Economically, socially, culturally, politically/ political administration) that may be unquantifiable, which if not addressed objectively, may turn to be a great threat to our existence as a country.