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A REPORT ON CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTION OF THE MOVEMENT OF NIGERIANS

CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus affecting about 210 countries of the world. It is believed to have originated from Wuhan, China. Animal to man, and man to man transmission was reported.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special 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.

The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently and not touching your face.

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it’s important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).

At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments.

CORONA VIRUS IN NIGERIA

The first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on the 27 February 2020 in Lagos, Nigeria’s commercial capital with a population of 21 million. The index case arrived from Milan, Italy, then the fourth country with high incidence (371 cases), and came into the country via Lagos Airport on 25 February 2020 where nothing serious was on ground to check or track new entrants into the country from suspected places with acute infections. It was at the Lafarge’s medical centre in Ewekoro that the case was flagged when he presented sick, and was sent for testing and confirmed COVID-19.

More cases were thereafter discovered, a number of them being high ranking politicians and senior government officials. Among these were President Buhari’s Chief of Staff, Abba Kyari; the Governors of Bauchi, Kaduna and Oyo States; the nation’s Comptroller General and Head of Immigration; Deputy Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly and son of former Vice President Atiku Abubakar (the main opposition party’s presidential candidate at the 2019 elections). What was also revealed was that these political elites clearly shamefully refused to follow the public health advice of social distancing and a minimum of 14-day self-isolation expected of all recent travellers, which invariably led to infection of their contacts, and of course their contacts’ contacts. This no doubt contributed to the leap in COVID-19 cases from less than 10 in two weeks to over 300 confirmed cases now.

LOCKDOWN IN NIGERIA

It is in this vein that the leadership of labour must come out in defence of the workers on the issue of lockdown. As parts of the efforts to curtail the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government ordered a lockdown on Lagos, Ogun and the FCT Abuja, for an initial period of two weeks starting 11:59pm, 30 March 2020, now extended by another 2 weeks from 13 April 2020. Many other states are already applying one stay-at-home rule or the other up to state boundaries closure.

The effects of the lockdown and restriction of movement in Nigeria

The lockdown in Nigeria has brought many changes to the people, the economy and even the government. Some of the positive effects of corona virus are:

* It has brought families together.
* It has made us to be more innovative and less dependent.
* It has brought about teamwork in the sense that we are all looking for ways to stop the continuous spread of corona virus and finding a way to the pandemic.
* It has revealed the bad condition of our health sector and the fact that our government has not done anything in the past years to improve the health sector and this will make the policy makers to work on this in the future.
* We now realise that we do not need to travel to other countries to develop our country, we just have to come together and work towards developing the country, if our country had been developed with all the proper medical kits, we would have been able to manage this better.

There are also some negative effects which are:

* Inability to buy food stuffs because most Nigerians depend on day to day income mostly from buying and selling, since they are on lockdown they cannot afford to buy food stuffs and even other important things.
* It has even affected Nigeria’s main source of foreign income, from 120$ a barrel, it reduced to 13$ a barrel which has informed us that we should not only rely on petroleum that we should also work on the other sectors like agriculture.
* The price of goods in the market as inflated and makes it difficult for the poor to eat three times daily.
* It has really paralysed the education system in all the institution especially the tertiary institutions.

In conclusion, it is better to be prepared for the unknown in other not to be caught off guard when a pandemic should break out, cause if one fails to prepare one must prepare to fail.