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THE CORONAVIRUS

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 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. These are trying times for billions of people across the world. In the wake of the [coronavirus](https://guardian.ng/tag/coronavirus/) pandemic, nations are taking measures to combat the deadly disease as it spreads rapidly and cripples the global economy. There are various effects of the lockdown which are:

Pollution:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that about [3 million people die each year](https://www.nature.com/articles/nature15371) from ailments caused by air pollution, and that more than 80% of people living in urban areas are exposed to air quality levels that [exceed safe limits](https://www.who.int/phe/publications/air-pollution-global-assessment/en/). Given unreliable electricity supply, having citizens staying home amid a lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus likely means millions of electricity generators will be working overtime to power homes, worsening pollution in residential areas.

**Businesses Will Shut down:**  
Although many businesses have been shuttered or left operating a low capacity mode in the past few weeks, especially in Lagos, the new restriction order will see many more businesses shut down with the exception of hospitals, medical and healthcare-related establishments; food processing, distribution and retail companies; petroleum distribution and retail entities; power generation, transmission and distribution companies; private security companies and the press. These businesses will, however, be monitored.

**Food price hike**  
The three affected states are some of the most populated states in Nigeria hence demand for food will be high. The president assured Nigerians that food processing, distribution and retail companies would be exempted from the lockdown.  
Buhari also promised that relief materials will be provided for residents of satellite and commuter towns and communities around the affected states.

**Security Concerns**  
The lockdown may spike security concerns as security agents would be tasked with the double duty of enforcing the restrictions while protecting lives and properties.

A few security challenges have been reported in other African countries that have imposed similar restrictions.

In Rwanda, the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to impose a lockdown, police have denied that two civilians shot dead Monday were killed for defying the new measures, saying the men attacked an officer after being stopped.

In Kenya, dozens of people were reportedly injured as paramilitary police tear gassed and beat passengers trying to board a ferry in order to make a curfew imposed by the authorities.

**Overwhelmed Healthcare**  
Indeed all lives matter, but it is safe to say that priority will be given to coronavirus cases. The healthcare sector will be overwhelmed as doctors, nurses and other healthcare practitioners fight to save the lives of coronavirus patients as well as those with other health issues.

It is not all gloomy as these measures have been proven to be effective.

Chinese health officials announced that the country passed the peak of the coronavirus epidemic less than two months after the lockdown went into effect.

A week after the lockdown was implemented in China, Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of the World Health Organization (WHO) commended the Chinese government.

These measures may cause hardship but it is a matter of life and death and so should be upheld.