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

Recognition of a new coronavirus as the cause of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) was certainly remarkable, yet perhaps not surprising. The cadre of investigators who have worked with this intriguing family of viruses over the past 30 years are familiar with many of the features of coronavirus biology, pathogenesis, and disease that manifested so dramatically in the worldwide SARS epidemic. Advances in the biology of coronaviruses have resulted in greater understanding of their capacity for adaptation to new environments, transspecies infection, and emergence of new diseases. New tools of cell and molecular biology have led to increased understanding of intracellular replication and viral cell biology, and the advent in the past five years of reverse genetic approaches to study coronaviruses has made it possible to begin to define the determinants of viral replication, transspecies adaptation, and human disease.

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. However, locking people down at home in the Nigerian context is like asking people to go hungry for the duration of the lockdown. A lockdown means their means of daily livelihood have been locked down. Many private employers have maintained a 'no salary during lockdown' stance, or at best a 50 per cent pay cut. Labour must agitate for full pay for workers, whether private or government employed, for as long as the lockdown lasts. Pangs of hunger will lead to widespread anger. Protests in different forms are already being seen within the communities. People are protesting against a lockdown without palliatives and even rejecting all manner of palliatives that smack of insult to their intelligence, such as packs of food that are not enough to feed a family of six in 2 weeks being distributed to be shared among 60-80 families in a cluster. It could also get a lot worse, as we see in some places in Lagos and Ogun States where a layer of lumpen youth, go on mass looting of shops and houses, carting away ordinary people's food and belongings.