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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND RESISTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS

INTRODUCTION:

The World Health Organization (WHO) describes Coronavirus disease otherwise known as COVID-19 as an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus. It is referred to it as a novel virus – a new disease.

It is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by a severe acute respiratory syndrome, which emerged in Wuhan, China in late 2019. It killed more than one thousand eight hundred persons and infected over seventy thousand individuals within the first fifty days of the epidemic.

People infected with the virus experience mild to moderate respiratory illness but older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, cancer and diabetes are more likely to develop serious illness

The COVID-19 virus spreads through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person sneezes or coughs.

The WHO has said there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19 but there are several ongoing clinical trials to discover potential treatments. It also declared it a pandemic disease.

As at 10am of Monday, April 20, 2020, the world has confirmed cases of two million, four hundred and six thousand, seven hundred and forty five; Six hundred and twenty-five thousand and one recovered cases and One hundred and sixty five thousand, two hundred and fifty seven thousand deaths.

Nigeria has six hundred and twenty seven confirmed cases; one hundred and seventy recovered cases and twenty-one deaths.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES:

The WHO recommends the following preventive measures:

- ✓ Wash your hands regularly with soap or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- ✓ Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing
- ✓ Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth

- ✓ Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- ✓ Stay home if you feel unwell
- ✓ If you have a fever, a cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention
- ✓ Follow the directions of your local health authority
- ✓ Practice respiratory hygiene

EFFECTS OF LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENTS ON NIGERIANS

Lockdown all over the world have social, political and economic effects on Nigerians.

- In Nigeria, the significant effect is on economic life of people. Many businesses especially the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are affected. According to the UN, the 80% of Nigerians that earn an income are active in the informal sector. Most of them depend on daily income to survive.
- The lockdown has worsened the poverty rate in Nigeria. The vulnerable are not protected as they scampers to feed. The gap between the rich and the poor has widened.
- It has also increased crime rate. We have reported cases of increase in crimes especially in Lagos where a group known as 1 Million boys attack residents.
- The lockdown has also exposed the inadequacies in Nigeria social protection systems. The N20, 000.00 meant for the poor and vulnerable families did not get to most of them.
- It has also brought about increase in food prices and other essential necessities, which the poor bear the brunt.
- Unemployment figure will increase because of scarcity of daily paid work.

CONCLUSION:

No doubt, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to her knees. Our country Nigeria, which is a mono economy, is in bad shape. The oil price has gone very low in recent times making our 2020 budget unrealistic. The International Monetary Fund, IMF has predicted the world's worst recession is imminent.

Nigeria post-COVID-19 era must diversify her economy. Government must put in place workable mechanisms to grow the economy. Basic amenities should be provided for Nigerians.

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