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

**INTRODUCTION/ORIGIN**

The Corona virus, also known as the COVID-19 originated from Wuhan, a city in China on the 31st of December, 2019. The corona virus biologically belongs to the Coronaviridae family in the Nidovirales order. At the end of 2019, Wuhan experienced an outbreak of the Corona virus that killed more than eighteen thousand and infected over seventy thousand individuals within fifty days of the epidemic. Anybody with the virus usually showed symptoms between two to fourteen days after been infected. Those symptoms are; fever, cough, shortness of breath and fatigue. The virus is highly infectious and can easily be spread when an infected person is in close contact with a non- infected person which makes it easy to spread in crowded places. There is currently no proven vaccine or cure for the Corona virus, so the only way to keep yourself safe is to prevent the virus by all means possible. Washing your hands regularly following the twenty seconds rule, maintaining social distancing, using of masks, hand sanitizers and so on are all means of preventing the virus.

The Corona virus is now a pandemic which has affected 210 countries and territories around the world with a total of 2,503,385 confirmed cases and a death toll of 171,850 deaths. Only around 100,000 people have managed to be cured from this virus but the number of confirmed cases continue to rise week by week.

**CORONA VIRUS IN NIGERIA**

In Africa, the WHO has recorded a total of 23,517 confirmed cases and 1,160 deaths across 52 countries of which Nigeria is among. Since its first case was confirmed on the 27th of February 2020, the number of infected people in Nigeria continue to rise and this as put the country in a state of emergency. The President on his first speech to the nation put a mandatory lockdown on the three most infected states in Nigeria namely, Abuja, Lagos and Ogun states. Several state governments followed the procedure and put their own states on a mandatory lockdown also. The number of known cases in Nigeria continued to rise amidst the lockdown and this prompted the Federal government aided by the NCDC and the Presidential Task Force on corona virus to extend the previous two weeks lockdown.

This stirred up a negative reaction amongst Nigerians who could barely withstand the first two weeks of the lockdown. The country was also in turmoil as some states failed to comply to the lockdown initiative of the government. In Warri, Delta State an army man was killed by several civilians for trying to send them back to their homes and this caused a conflict between the army and fellow civilians in Warri. Even though the government and few philanthropists volunteered to help the civilians by providing foodstuffs and money, the civilians still expressed their discomfort with staying at home.

**EFFECTS OF THE LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS**

The lockdown has had both positive and negative effects on Nigerians. Many workaholics in Nigeria have expressed their pleasure with the lockdown and have seen it as an opportunity to rest and have quality time with their family. Others see it as an opportunity to learn online businesses or empower themselves electronically. Amidst all these, there has also been many negative effects of the lockdown. They are;

* It introduces vices such as theft, armed robbery and especially cyber crimes.
* It has a negative effect on the countries economy. Economists have predicted that at the end of this pandemic, the world will experience a global recession.
* This has led to an inflation of prices in the market, especially the price of foodstuffs, surgical masks, gloves and hand sanitizers.
* The lockdown has affected and seriously altered the school calendar for both primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.
* Individuals who cannot afford sufficient foodstuffs throughout the lockdown or those who are paid on daily basis may find it hard to care for themselves.

In conclusion, the Corona virus is a deadly and highly infectious virus which is causing disasters globally. The Nigerian government has formed the initiative of putting the country on a lockdown to curb the spread of the virus and as urged every Nigerian to try and heed to this protocol for ‘success can only be guaranteed if we can all make sacrifices.’ The NCDC, PTF on COVID-19 and our doctors are all working hard to stop this virus in our country and worldwide, let us all do our parts by enduring and complying with the lockdown. With God everything is possible.

Dare Benedict.

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19th April, 2020.