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**Coronavirus Pandemic**

 Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Victims are said to experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment but 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 Nigerian government in view of this has placed the whole country under lockdown. The question now is how deeply this lockdown and virus has affected our country Nigeria.

 The imposed lockdown has been tightened due to the emergence of 2000+ cases in Nigeria. Locking people down at home in the Nigerian context is like asking people to go hungry for the duration of the lockdown.  More than 60 per cent of Nigerians survive on daily pay from menial jobs and petty trading. A lockdown means their means of daily livelihood have been locked down. The plight of the private sector employees is no better. Many private employers have maintained a ‘no salary during lockdown’ stance, or at best a 50 per cent pay cut. Some have even completely laid the workers off. The government has made an effort to distribute foodstuff, domestic essentials as well as sanitizers and soap to the poor masses to cushion the effect of the lockdown but the food is not enough. The masses are hungry and protest against a lockdown without palliative. It has given rise to chaos and an increase in crime rate.

 The world-wide lockdown has taken a toll on the Nigerian economy as the price for crude oil has dropped below $20 per barrel from what used to be around $60. This would eventually see the country plummet into recession as crude oil cater for approximately 90% of the Nigerian economy. Due to this Nigeria’s foreign reserves have been set at an all-time low. Sometime in the month of March, the Nigerian economy was evaluated as the most overpriced currency in the world and the CBN was forced to devalue the currency to #380 for a dollar and this is estimated to rise in coming days. Things are not looking good for the Nigerian economy.

 The coronavirus pandemic has largely affected our country and exposed our weaknesses. It has exposed the ineffectiveness of the Nigerian health sector. Nigeria has an estimated population of 200 million people, a very poor doctor to patient ratio of 4 doctors to 10,000 patients, worsening daily because doctors, including the newly graduated ones, continue to emigrate. This is due to lack of opportunity to practice their field within Nigeria. It is no surprise that Nigeria is ill-prepared to tackle a pandemic of this scale. Even the research centers are both ill-equipped and inadequately funded to conduct any research towards the pursuit of a vaccine to this horrible disease.

 The situation in our country is quite tragic but all we as citizens can do at this point is obey the directive of the federal government and stay at home but there are a couple of thing the government can fix to help the country during and after the coronavirus pandemic. Being perfectly realistic, the government does not have the financial power to support all the unemployed citizens like the case in the United States of America but should find a way to support for the needy population with more attractive palliatives. Medical workers should be well supported with the much needed equipment to keep the population safe and healthy while also safe guarding their health. After the lockdown, the government should see it fit to diversify the economy to help the country jump out of recession.

 The situation in the country is hard and is estimated to get even harder as time passes. As citizens we should practice what is best for the country during this pandemic. We should all stay indoors and help flatten the curve of people infected by this deadly virus.

REFERENCE

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