

Lockdown: Full Speech By President Muhammadu Buhari

by Anthony Nlebem On Apr 27, 2020



ADDRESS BY H.E. MUHAMMADU BUHARI,
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ON THE CUMULATIVE
LOCKDOWN ORDER OF LAGOS AND OGUN STATES AS WELL AS THE FEDERAL
CAPITAL TERRITORY ON COVID- 19 PANDEMIC
AT THE STATE HOUSE, ABUJA
MONDAY, 27th APRIL, 2020

1. Fellow Nigerians
2. I will start by commending you all for the resilience and patriotism that you have shown in our collective fight against the biggest health challenge of our generation.
3. As at yesterday, 26th April 2020, some three million confirmed cases of COVID nineteen have been recorded globally with about nine hundred thousand recoveries. Unfortunately, some two hundred thousand people have also died as a result of this pandemic.
4. The health systems and economies of many nations continue to struggle as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.
5. Nigeria continues to adopt and adapt to these new global realities on a daily basis. This evening, I will present the facts as they are and explain our plans for the coming month knowing fully aware that some key variables and assumptions may change in the coming days or weeks.

6. Exactly two weeks ago, there were three hundred and twenty three confirmed cases in 20 States and the Federal Capital Territory.
7. As at this morning, Nigeria has recorded one thousand two hundred and seventy-three cases across 32 States and the FCT. Unfortunately, these cases includes 40 deaths.
8. I will useam using this opportunity to express our deepest condolences to the families of all Nigerians that have lost their lives loved ones as a result of the COVID nineteen Pandemic. This is our collective loss and we share in your grief.
9. Initial models predicted that Nigeria will record an estimated two thousand confirmed cases in the first month after the index case.
10. This means that despite the drastic increase in the number of confirmed cases recorded in the past two weeks, the measures we have put in place thus far have yielded positive outcomes against the projections.
11. The proportion of cases imported from other countries has reduced to only 19% of new cases, showing that our border closures yielded positive results. . These are mostly fellow Nigerians returning through our land borders. We will continue to enforce land border arrival protocols as part of the containment strategy.
12. Today, the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has accredited 15 laboratories across the country with an aggregate capacity to undertake 2,500 tests per day across the country.

13. Based on your feedback, Lagos the State Government and the FCT with support from NCDC is have established several sample collection centers in Lagos and the FCT. They are also reviewing their laboratory testing strategy to further increase the number of tests they can perform including the accreditation of selected private laboratories that meet the accreditation criteria.

14. Several new fully equipped treatment and isolation centres have been operationalised across the country thereby increasing bed capacity to about three thousand. At this point, I will commend the State Governors for the activation of State-level Emergency Operation Centres, establishment of new treatment centres and the delivery of aggressive risk communication strategies.

15. Over ten thousand healthcare workers have been trained. For their protection, additional personal protective equipment have been distributed to all the states. Although we have experienced logistical challenges, we remain committed to establish a solid supply chain process to ensure these heroic professionals are can work safely and are properly equipped.

16. In keeping with our Government's promise to improve the welfare of healthcare workers, we have signed a memorandum of understanding on the provision of hazard allowances and other incentives with key health sector professional associations. We have also procured insurance cover for five thousand frontline health workers. At this point, I must commend the insurance sector for their support in achieving this within a short period of time.

17. Nigeria has also continued to receive support from the international community, multilateral agencies, the private sector and public-spirited individuals. This support has ensured that critical lifesaving equipment and materials, which have become scarce

globally, are available for Nigeria through original equipment manufacturers and government-to-government processes.

18. The distribution and expansion of palliatives which I directed in my earlier broadcast is still on going in a transparent manner. I am mindful of the seeming frustration being faced by expectant citizens. I urge all potential beneficiaries to exercise patience as we continue to fine tune our logistical and distribution processes working with the State Governments.

18.19. I have directed the Central Bank of Nigeria and other financial institutions to make further plans and provisions for financial stimulus packages for small and medium scale enterprises. We recognise the critical role that they play in Nigeria's economy.

19.20. Our Security Agencies continue to rise to the challenge posed by this unusual situation. While we feel deeply concerned about isolated security incidents involving hoodlums and miscreants, I want to assure all Nigerians that your safety and security remains our primary concern especially in these exceedingly difficult and uncertain times. As we focus on protecting lives and properties, we will not tolerate any human rights abuses by our security agencies. The few reported incidences are regrettable, and I want to assure you that the culprits will be brought to justice.

20. I urge all Nigerians to continue to cooperate and show understanding whenever they encounter security agents. Furthermore, for their protection, I have instructed the personnel of the security agencies be provided with the necessary personal protective equipment for their own protection.

21.

21.22. As we continue to streamline our response in the epicenters of Lagos and the FCT, I remain am concerned about the unfortunate developments in Kano in recent days. Although an in-depth investigation is still ongoing, we have decided to deploy additional Federal Government human, material and technical resources to strengthen and support the State Government's efforts. We will commence implementation immediately.

22.23. In Kano, and indeed many of other States that are recording new cases, preliminary findings show that such cases are mostly from interstate travel and emerging community transmission.

23.24. Drawing from these, I implore all Nigerians to continue to adhere strictly to the advisories published by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control. These include rRegular hand washing, social physical distancing, wearing of face masks/coverings in public, avoidance of non-essential movement and travels and avoidance of large gatherings remain paramount.

24.25. Fellow Nigerians, for the past four weeks, most parts of our country have been under either Federal Government or State Government lockdowns. As I mentioned earlier, these steps were necessary and overall, have contributed to slowing down the spread of COVID nineteen in Nigeria.

25.26. However, such lock downs have also coame at a very heavy economic cost. Many of our citizens have lost their means of livelihoods. Many businesses have also shut down. No country can afford the full impact of a sustained lockdown while awaiting the development of vaccines or cures.

26.27. In my last address, I mentioned the Federal Government will develop strategies and policies that will protect lives while preserving livelihoods.

27.28. In these two weeks, the Federal and State Governments have jointly and collaboratively worked hard on how to balance the need to protect health while also preserving livelihoods, leveraging global best practice while keeping in mind our peculiar circumstances.

28.29. We assessed how our factories, markets, traders and transporters can continue to function while at the same time respecting adhering to the NCDC guidelines on hygiene and social distancing.

29.30. We assessed how our children can continue to learn without compromising their health.

30.31. We reviewed how our farmers can safely plant and harvest in this rainy season to ensure our food security is not compromised. Furthermore, we also discussed how to safely transport food items from rural production areas to industrial processing zones and ultimately, to the key consumption centers.

31.32. Our goal was to develop implementable policies that will ensure our economy continues to function with while still maintaining our aggressive response to the COVID nineteen pandemic. These same difficult decisions are being faced by leaders around the world.

32.33. Based on the above and in line with the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19, the various Federal Government committees that have reviewed socio-economic matters and the Nigeria Governors Forum, I have approved for a phased and gradual easing of lockdown measures in FCT, Lagos and Ogun States effective from Monday, 4th May, 2020 at 9am.

33.34. However, this will be followed strictly with aggressive reinforcement of testing and contact tracing measures while allowing the restoration of some economic and business activities in certain sectors.

34.35. The highlights of the new nationwide measures are as follows;

- a. Selected businesses and offices can open from 9am to 6pm;
- b. There will be an overnight curfew from 8pm to 6am. This means all movements are will be prohibited during this period except essential services;
- c. There will be a ban on non-essential inter-state passenger travels until further notice;
- d. There will be Partial and controlled interstate movement of goods and services will be allowed to allowed for the movement of goods and services from producers to consumers; and
- e. We will strictly ensure the mandatory use of face masks or coverings in public in addition to maintaining physical distancing and personal hygiene. Furthermore, the restrictions of on social and religious gathers shall remain in place. State Governments, corporate organisations and philanthropists are encouraged to support the production of cloth masks for citizens.

35.36. For the avoidance of doubt, the lockdown in the FCT, Lagos & Ogun States shall remain in place until these new ones come into effect on Monday, 4th May 2020 at 9am.

36.37. The Presidential Task Force shall provide sector specific details and timing guidelines to allow for preparations by Governments, businesses and institutions.

37. The above are guidelines. State Governors may choose to amend adapt and expand based on their unique circumstances provided they maintain alignment with the guidelines issued on public health and hygiene.

38.

38.39. These revised guidelines do will not apply for to Kano State. The total lockdown recently announced by the State Government shall remain enforced be enforced for the full duration. The Federal Government shall deploy all the necessary human, material and technical resources to support the State in controlling and containing the pandemic.

39.40. I wish to once again commend the frontline workers across the country who, on a daily basis, risk everything to ensure we win this fight. For those who got infected in the line of duty, be rest assured that Government will do all it takes to support you and your families during this exceedingly difficult period. I will also take this opportunity to assure you all that your safety, wellbeing and welfare remains paramount to our Government.

40.41. I will also recognize recognise the support we have received from our traditional rulers, the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and other prominent religious and community leaders. Your cooperation and support has significantly contributed to the successes we have recorded to date. I will urge you all to please continue to create awareness on the seriousness of coronavirus among your worshippers and communities while appealing that they strictly comply with public health advisories.

41.42. I will also thank the Nigeria Governors' Forum and the Presidential Task Force for all their hard work to date. Through this collaboration, I remain confident that success is achievable.

42.43. I also wish to thank corporate organisations, philanthropists, the UN family, the European Union, friendly nations, the media and other partners that have taken up the responsibility of supporting our response.

43.44. And finally, I will thank all Nigerians again for your patience and cooperation during this difficult and challenging period. I assure you that government shall continue to take all necessary measures to protect the lives and livelihoods our citizens and residents.

I thank you for listening and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria



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