



PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON COVID-19  
Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation

## Daily Press Conference Summary

April 3, 2020

### Secretary to the Federal Government, Boss Mustapha

- Non-governmental organisations and civil society are free to deploy their resources to help combat COVID-19.
- The Federal Government is currently structuring medical and life insurances for health workers in COVID-19 emergency response.

### Minister of Health Dr. Osagie Ehanire

- The Ministry is compiling a list of trained workers in health sectors to manage various laboratories in Nigeria.
- The Federal Government is exploring local alternatives for the production of medical supplies.
- 3000 samples have been tested so far since the outbreak in Nigeria.
- Clinical trials and other procedures are ongoing to validate various treatments and/or cures for coronavirus.
- An 18-man team of Chinese medical experts will come to Nigeria with medical equipment to assist Nigeria in the fight against COVID-19.

### National Centre for Disease Control, Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu

- Only people with symptoms as outlined in NCDC case definition on [www.covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/guidelines.php](http://www.covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/guidelines.php) will be tested.
- Ongoing conversion of tuberculosis testing machines for coronavirus testing.
- There are now 8 laboratories testing for coronavirus in Nigeria.
- The private and public sectors are working with NCDC to increase laboratory testing capacity in three more states.

### National Coordinator of Presidential Task Force Dr. Sani Aliyu

- The Task Force will publish guidelines for the shutdown.
- This will include protocols for food and groceries sellers among others.

### Minister of Aviation Sen. Sirika Hadi

- The Ministry will provide allowance for crew rest, however, crew members must adhere to the protocol published on Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and Ministry of Aviation website.
- There will advance approval for landing and parking of cargo.

### Minister of Information and Culture Mr. Lai Mohammed

- The Presidential Task Force Committee has not and does not receive any cash donations.
- We appreciate the private sector for mobilizing funds to support the fight against COVID-19.

- The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has directed that national radio and TV stations be cautious in broadcasting unverified claims for the treatment of coronavirus.
- Free TV has offered everyone on the 35 channels free viewing from April 1 - May 31, 2020 (<https://www.freetv.ng/channels.html>).

### **Minister of Foreign Affairs Geoffrey Jidefor**

- Government has been asked what they are doing to evacuate Nigerians stuck during this pandemic abroad.
- The Ministry will ascertain from Nigeria in Diaspora Associations abroad to ascertain if these claims are true, and the number of Nigerians needing evacuation. They will then access and validate the list and make necessary plans as applicable.

### **Questions & Answer Session**

- 1. Are there plans to curb politicians from hijacking the testing protocol and announcing their result in the media?**

**Answer:** At the moment, no politician is hijacking the testing protocol. NCDC is doing targeted testing only. For example, testing returning travelers from high-risk countries who have shown symptoms, those who came in contact with confirmed cases and are now showing symptoms and those who are showing symptoms from any of the 3 states in Nigeria with the most number of spread.

- 2. Are there plans to enforce the wearing of masks for all Nigerians since there are new claims that the virus can be spread simply by talking to one another?**

**Answer:** At the moment, there is no national policy on this when one is determined, it will be communicated. For now, the wearing of masks is being enforced for medical practitioners and those that have tested positive.

- 3. Are there punishments for the suspected official in Bauchi who escaped from the medical facility while undergoing the COVID-19 testing procedure?**

**Answer:** The Ministry of Health is yet to receive an update on this. We would have to verify this claim.

- 4. How do we ensure that imported test kits are original?**

**Answer:** All test kits are validated before it's purchased and used.

- 5. What is the level of sensitization at the grassroots?**

**Answer:** Government ministries and agencies are reinforcing information dissemination to ensure sensitization reaches the grassroots.

- 6. What efforts are being put in place to ensure Nigeria doesn't go into food crisis?**

**Answer:** Trucks distributing fertilizers and other agricultural products are part of essential commodities so they are exempted from the lockdown.