



## **BPS ALERT**

### **COVID-19 RESPONSE: LOCKDOWN NOW not later.**

The Bureau of Public Safety have taken notice of and commend earlier and further measures announced by the President and the COVID-19 Response Committee. However, having followed developments and data from other countries in Africa and the rest of the world, the Bureau of Public Safety is of a firm conviction that unless Government take immediate drastic and decisive measures, in addition to already taken measures the COVID-19 numbers may continue to go up in the country and the consequences will be dire.

We have independently assessed the fears, facts and available figures relevant to COVID-19 in Ghana and are fully convinced that despite all measures in place to avoid lateral or community spread and ensure public safety, the health system lacks the capacity to contain a mass outbreak in the event of occurrence. We specifically reference physical space,

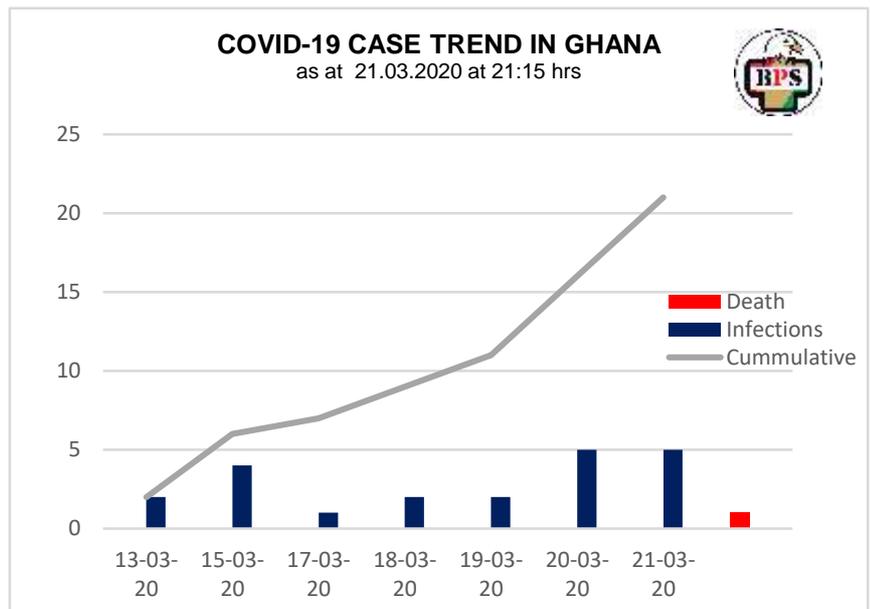
personal protective equipment, expert manpower required to manage (advance) cases of Covid-19, expert physicians, support logistics such as ventilators, among other equipment and consumables.

The Bureau also considered several social welfare issues, and identified basic ones such as housing, supply of portable water and electricity services, as inadequate, and/or unreliable. The Bureau thus concluded that, in the face of current realities, effecting a (partial or total) lockdown later will be ineffective at discontinuing a further spread and subsequently pose significant threat to human security.

With the list of traceable contacts increasing by the day in their hundreds, the task of tracing and effectively monitoring contacts may become overwhelming as confirmed cases increase by the day.

On the basis of the foregoing arguments, the Bureau of Public Safety strongly recommends immediate discriminated lockdown of the following with exception to essential services aspects only:

1. Greater Accra, Tema and Ashanti Regions for at least 21 days after which it should be re-evaluated
2. All Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) for at least 21 days after which it should be re-evaluated
3. All Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) for at least 21 days after which it should be re-evaluated



We further recommend that Government immediately works out a social support package for population groups that may be hard hit by these measures.

While these actions will definitely have negative impact on the economy in the immediate to short term, our country and its citizens stand to benefit in the medium to long term as we collectively work to break the chain of COVID-19 infections.

Finally, we call on the President to draw from lessons from countries such as China, Italy, etc which have been hard hit by the pandemic and timely actions of Rwanda which has fewer cases yet has taken that bold decision to lock down.

**Authorized for Immediate Release**

**Date: 22/03/2020**

Media Discussions:

**026-647-0386** : Nana Yaw Akwada, Executive Director

**024-281-9018** : Etonam Korda, Research/Advocacy Director