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CHAPTER 3

The Third 50 Days: A Detailed Chronological Timeline and Extensive Review of Literature Documenting the COVID-19 Pandemic From Day 100 to Day 150

INTRODUCTION
The past 100 days of the COVID-19 pandemic had been eventful, as the reality of the disease was clear globally, where no single continent had been spared. The next 50 days (day 100 to day 150) were marked with major milestones, challenging and most trying in different spheres of life as is demonstrated in succeeding sections. To start with, during this period, the number of confirmed cases increased from slightly above 100,000 to a high of 3 million and counting (Spotlight, 2020), with the number of casualties increasing from 3809 deaths to over 215,000 deaths across the globe by the end of the 150 days. In addition, the number of affected countries increased from 105 countries to 210 countries and territories (Worldometer, 2020). Another change that was witnessed within the third 50 days is the shifting of the COVID-19 pandemic epicenter from Europe to the United States, where the numbers of confirmed cases in the country, being—by that time—more than a quarter of the confirmed cases in the rest of the world (Kirby and Stewart, 2020).

As the impacts of the coronavirus continued to be felt, there was evidence of an economic downturn in different countries, including in developed economies, where the number of people filing for unemployment claims increased. Due to the economic hardships, it became apparent that many countries were trying to ease the lockdown restrictions to allow for reopening of economies, but in a gradual and cautious manner to avoid the reemergence of cases. It is within these 50 days that governments were seen to propose economic stimulus packages to bail out their citizens and economies, including companies that were already struggling due to reduced activities. At the same time, due to the economic and social strives, there was evidence of political tension between countries as they trade blame on responsibilities toward containing the coronavirus before it spread, and become global pandemic (Business Today, 2020a; Davidson, 2020a; Smith, 2020).

During these 50 days, it also became clear that the world was a long way before a vaccine could be developed and thus, the demand for personal protective equipment (PPEs) would continue, and we see countries and regions formulating policies to control the exportation of PPEs and medical supplies to other countries. With the increasing scarcity of PPEs and other basic, medical essentials, these were seen to rely on the World Health Organization (WHO) and well-wishers for the supplies.

Within these 50 days, there is also evidence of there was no safe-haven against coronavirus, as even those in cruise ships and aircraft carriers were infected and with cases in such places spreading faster (CNA, 2020c; Gajanan and Mansoor, 2020; Kaneko and Kim, 2020; Willsher and Sabbagh, 2020). It also dawned that even those in positions of power and authority are not immune to the virus, where some even succumbed to their injuries. Within these 50 days, it also became apparent that every single sector is highly dependent on the health sector, as those like sports and entertainment, religious sectors and others remained “grounded” with some high profile events such as professional football leagues, Olympics, and Wrestling being canceled, postponed, or suspended indefinitely (BBC Sport, 2020; Cacciola and Deb, 2020; Schad, 2020).

During this period also, it becomes apparent that it is possible for technology companies to set aside their
competition and come together for the common goal of humanity (Apple, 2020). Therefore, even as events of these third 50 days had been devastating and heartbreaking, there is much that humanity can learn, and have learned, and going forward, even after the COVID-19 is finally phased out, as people, governments, regions, and economies embark on rebuilding, some of the positives that have been learned will need to be kept alive. The following sections document the unfolding of the pandemic.

**DAY 102—MARCH 11, 2020**

During this month, every effort counted in the fight against the spread of COVID-19, and this was emphasized by the events of March 11. On this day, finally, the WHO conceded that without a doubt, coronavirus amounted to a global pandemic (WHO, 2020ad). The build-up to this global pandemic announcement saw a national wide lockdown declared in Italy on 9th following an uncontrollable and astronomic increase in the number of new cases and deaths in the country (BBC, 2020c). Following this, the country was beginning to experience unprecedented abandonment by its neighbors and country members of the EU who had continued to issue a travel advisory to their citizens against traveling into or from Italy (Gov.UK, 2020a). Unsurprisingly, by 10th, all 26 EU member states had experienced the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease, and most of the first cases were related to travelers fleeing Italy after the situation therein started to worsen (WHO, 2020ad).

In North America, the situation in the United States was also getting out of hand, with over 24 states including Arizona, Washington D.C., Michigan, Colorado, Vermont and Rhode Island, and others declaring states of emergency (Razek, 2020). Here, on March 10, the United Nations Headquarters in New York closed its doors to the public for fear of spreading the virus (Krisel, 2020). As the situation escalated, with over 1000 confirmed cases in the country, and over 31 deaths from the virus, the National Basketball Association (NBA), one of the most popular and fancied sporting activity in North America abruptly suspended its season, as of March 11, when a player of the Utah Jazz tested positive for coronavirus, just before their game with Oklahoma City began (Cacciola and Deb, 2020). These unfolding attracted a host of intervention measures in the country to ensure people would observe the health guidelines, especially by staying at home and keeping social distancing. First, on March 10, Vice President Pence announced that medical insurance companies had agreed to waive all copayments on COVID-19 testing and also extended their coverage for the treatment of the disease (Office of the President, 2020b). Similarly, the country, through Homeland Security, announced a level 3 travel advisory and subsequently temporarily restricting entry to all foreign travelers from China, Iran, and certain countries of Europe. The restrictions also demanded that all American citizens and legal permanent residents and their immediate families returning from countries already affected by the virus must undergo a self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days upon arrival (Homeland Security, 2020). This announcement was affirmed by the Oval Office address by President Trump stating that travel advisory applied to all the 26 countries in the Schengen Area (Collinson, 2020). The decision by Trump was disapproved by the EU leaders (Gaouette et al., 2020).

Elsewhere, to control and reduce the spread of the virus, the schooling system in different countries was seen to be disrupted. As of March 11, a UN report indicated that about 20% of students across the globe were out of school and this included countries like Italy, Czech Republic, part of Spain (Madrid region), Greece, and Austria among many others that took the decision of closing the school to protect students and their families, as a mean to comply with WHO’s health guidelines (WHO, 2020p). Surprisingly, as countries hastened to close down schools—highlighting the worsening of this situation, reports from China indicated that normalcy was returning to a point that some schools were reopening especially in Qinghai Province (CGTN, 2020).

In regard to financing efforts against this disease and supporting technological advancement in the development of test kits and vaccine development, on March 10, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mastercard, and Wellcome together committed approximately $125 million (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2020). On the same date, The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations on its part committed an extra $4.4 million to render the organization’s total investment in vaccine development to $23.7 million, with the funds expected to help both the company Novavax and the University of Oxford to research and develop a vaccine for this disease (KFF, 2020). Furthermore, on March 11, the United Kingdom announced more funding ($192.4 million), this time from its national budget to aid vulnerable countries in their efforts against COVID-19 (Gov.UK, 2020b).

**DAY 104—MARCH 13, 2020**

Two days after declaring the coronavirus a global pandemic, circumstances in the western part of the globe have led the WHO to make another declaration; this
time, the new epicenter of the outbreak of coronavirus was Europe (WHO, 2020ae). This announcement was not surprising as of then, Italy was already overwhelmed (17,660 cases and 1266 deaths already) (Snuggs, 2020), and Spain had in the day declared a state of emergency (CNBC, 2020). Things in other member countries of the union were also worsening, with the region recording over 300 deaths in a span of 24 h from the disease, and over 6000 new cases in the same period (WHO, 2020c). And surprisingly, from the situation report by the WHO (WHO, 2020c), all the cases in each of these countries were of local transmission; thus, warranting the decision different countries were making to restrict movements, and where possible, instituting total lockdowns like the case of Italy.

On the western side of the globe, more states in the United States were declaring a state of emergencies, restricting the number of people in gatherings, closing all learning institutions, and restricting movements among other things. These happenings were more pronounced on March 13, and when the worse came to worst, Present Donald Trump, under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stanford Act), declared a state of National Emergency (Office of the President, 2020a). By then, the number of cases in the United States had increased to 1678 and those who died from the disease reached 41 deaths, with transmission happening locally (WHO, 2020j).

In total, the global number of confirmed cases had reached a high of 142,534 cases, with 9764 of those reported in the past 24 h. Of the sum, 61,513 had been confirmed from 134 countries, of which 12 were reporting their first cases. The remaining cases were reported in China, where situations were coming back to normal, with only 18 new cases reported in the populous country, and 14 deaths were reported in the 24-h period. Wuhan, the former epicenter only recorded five confirmed cases (Reuters, 2020c). Outside China, the deaths increased by 423, raising the total tally to 2198 cases (WHO, 2020c).

Following these unprecedented unfolding globally, economies were facing numerous challenges, as most economic activities had stalled or were nonexistent. For instance, in the United States, the stock exchange recorded the lowest point, only reminiscence with situations of 1987 (McCabe and Ostroff, 2020). For this reason, different agencies introduced financial packages to offer some support. For instance, the ADB announced a $200 million package that could be accessed by companies to supply critical essentials for combating COVID-19 (ADB, 2020). In Europe, The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is reported to have approved a $1.1 billion financial package to help companies in the region to remain afloat during this period.

Amid the challenges of COVID-19 and its impacts, some countries like Taiwan found some solace in the use of technology to track and instill the mandatory quarantine, especially for those coming from certain areas. With technology, enforcement officers were able to know those who were flaunting rules and their whereabouts, and this helped reduce the spread of the virus, despite it being just kilometers from China where things were worse some days ago (Yun, 2020). In Europe, there was some use of technology, especially mobile Apps, that helped in mapping and tracking cases, and to bolster this even further, the European Commission (EC) was offering funding to a tune of €164m ($177.46) for start-ups or Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) developing technologies with capacities to treat, test, monitor, or offer other aspects that could help in the fight against COVID-19 (European Commission, 2020a).

DAYS 105—MARCH 15, 2020

In the past 1 month since the first case was confirmed in Africa, the number of countries affected in the continent increased to 26 by March 15, with seven reporting their first case in a span of 24 h. Also, a week prior, the number of cases in the continent was only 27, but they increased to 273 with six deaths reported to have been imported, except for South Africa, Algeria, Senegal, and Cameroon (WHO, 2020k).

In Europe, most countries were receiving unprecedented numbers of new cases, especially in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany, which recorded 3497, 1,522, 828, and 733 new cases, respectively, and almost all cases in most of these EU countries were locally transmitted (WHO, 2020k). The number of deaths in the region was also rising with Italy losing 173 people in a single day (Snuggs, 2020), while Spain lost 16, France 12, and the United Kingdom lost 11 lives. In Germany, which was reported to have embarked on mass testing as early as the situation warranted so, the number of deaths was relatively low (only two reported by 15th) (WHO, 2020k). Following the dire state in the region, the European Commission published guidelines (European Commission, 2020b) on the exportation of PPEs out of the region. Among such guidelines were the restriction of exportation of the said equipment unless with express green light from the EU member states.
However, the EU was categorical that the measures taken were only within a specified period, especially during that period when those PPEs were greatly needed locally; and thus, it was not a total ban on export, which would contravene the region’s international obligations in matters of trade (European Commission, 2020b).

In the Middle East, the severity of the disease was still present in Iran, which until 15th had a total of 14,991 confirmed cases and 854 deaths, with a high of 245 deaths having been reported in a period of 24 h. The situation in other countries within the region was controlled with only 13 deaths reported (9 in Iraq, 3 in Lebanon, and 1 in Bahrain). In the American region, only a few confirmed cases were reported, and only 2 deaths were reported in Ecuador. However, the government there continued to institute proactive response measures to ensure the spread would be contained. For instance, the CDC announced that no gathering would be allowed in the United States that have more than 50 people, thus putting into disarray functions such as weddings, concerts, and sporting events among others that are known to attract a large crowd (The New York Times, 2020a). More states declared a state of emergencies, while more schools in different states (more than 30 states), including New York City with over 1.1 students (Shapiro, 2020) calling for the closure of schools. One major news in the United States on that day was the negative test results for the country’s President, who a few days ago had some contact with a Brazilian official who turns positive after the test—prompting President Trump to undergo testing (Education Week, 2020).

In other places, country borders were being closed. For instance, after confirming their first COVID-19 cases, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan closed their borders (Reuters, 2020i). Colombia also closed its border with Venezuela, while Turkey, with one of the leading airline services globally, suspended flights to nine European countries (Liptak, 2020). Lebanon reported to have called for a 14-day lockdown in the entire country to curb the spread of the virus, which for the past week had claimed the lives of three people (France 24, 2020b).

The other goods news of the day came from South Korea, which had shown a great resolve in bringing down the number of new cases, and this was bearing fruits after it implemented a number of strategies that involved the use of advanced technologies. First, it adopted the use of drive-thru clinics where people could be tested within 10 min and receive their results the following day. This allowed them to test over 300 people per hour, as there were 50 such clinics countrywide, where six people were being tested in an hour per clinic (Choon, 2020). The strategy also reduced local transmissions as contacts were greatly reduced. The country also implemented the use of mobile Apps to enforce quarantines and track the spread of the virus (Park, 2020). The success of the drive-thru clinics and Apps were later adopted by the United States and Germany (Yamey, 2020).

**DAY 108—MARCH 17, 2020**

By March 16, the situation globally had worsened such that the number of deaths outside China was increasing at alarming rates (3388) to a point of exceeding those who died in China (3218). In only a period of 24 h, China reported 14 new deaths, while the rest of the world reported 848 new deaths, with a majority of these coming from Europe. The global number of confirmed cases had increased to 167,515, with 13,903 reported in a period of past 24 h (only 29 new cases in China) (WHO, 2020i).

On 17th, the health landscape in different regions changed even further, with the Western Pacific Region having the highest number of confirmed cases, mostly because of China. The European Region was on its knees, health-wise, with 64,188 confirmed cases, with 8506 of these being reported in a single day. The number of deaths in this region had also increased by 428 to take the region’s tally to 3108 deaths. Both North and South American regions had 4910 cases, and a total of 68 deaths (18 deaths reported in a day). The African and the South-East Asia regions were relatively saved until then, with only 228 and 508 confirmed cases, respectively, and total deaths for both regions being 13 (WHO, 2020j).

Following the dire need in the European region, the EU closed its borders except for essential travels. Russia also closed its borders, only allowing its citizens and legal permanent residents to travel back. Spain was also reported to have instituted border restrictions for all noncitizens and residents. In France, besides instituting border restrictions like a majority of its EU counterparts, it also announced a countrywide lockdown, which meant that no gathering of any size would be allowed, with people expected to remain at home with some exceptions (Onishi and Méheut, 2020). Similar events of widespread lockdowns and border restrictions were also observed in Latin America, with countries such as Venezuela and Peru leading the cue in countrywide lockdowns. Colombia and Costa Rica also instituted border restrictions and control. However, Brazil, which by then (March 16) had the most
confirmed cases in the region, overlooked all the measures that the rest of the world were implementing, and had a section of its population (supporters of their president; Jair Bolsonaro) demonstrate against his opponents (Harris and Schipani, 2020). In Iran, the government was forced to release over 85,000 prisoners as a way of curbing the spread of the virus in the country, which was already at alarming levels (Hawkins, 2020).

As the global social fabric was being dismantled by the disease, its impacts were being felt in the economic sphere. For instance, on 16th, the airline industry in the United States was seeking government financial assistance of up to $50 billion to help them remain afloat (Sider and Mann, 2020). The Dow Jones Industry also recorded its historical low after dropping 2997.10 points; the worst day crash since the 1987 “Black Monday” crash (Millhiser, 2020).

Following those uncertainties and the threat COVID-19 posed to the global fabric, a number of well-wishers and philanthropists were seen to be in the frontline of helping countries win this war. On 16th, the Jack Ma Foundation donated assorted PPEs and testing kits to the United States (Ward, 2020), which greatly needed these following the increasing demand, and the disruption of supply chain following the slow activities in China. On 17th, the World Bank Group committed another $2 billion to help in the fight against the diseases (The World Bank, 2020b), while on the same day, Bloomberg Philanthropies gave a financial package of $40 million, especially to help low-x and middle-income economies (Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2020).

DAY 110—MARCH 19, 2020
As the dark crowd of coronavirus continued to spread in Italy, its impacts were becoming evident, as in a month, the number of deaths (3405) in the country surpassed those in China (3242) since the onset of the outbreak to March 19 (Quinn, 2020b). Its health sector was completely overwhelmed with images of dejected nurses trending on social media, and while that was happening, China reported no new confirmed cases attributable to local infection, as the 34 new cases that it confirmed were suspected to have been imported from other countries (Siobhán O’Grady et al., 2020b), as it had started to ease its border restrictions. The number of new cases in Italy also increased by 5322 cases, bringing their country total to 41,035, becoming the second most affected country after China.

As for the European regions, Italy recorded a total of over 10,000 cases on both 18th 19. The number of deaths for both days totaled 1195, far much more than the rest of the regions combined. In the Americas, new cases on 19th were 4166: almost double of what was recorded the previous day (2243 new cases on 18th). The Eastern Mediterranean region recorded 1430 new cases to push their region total to 19,518, and the number of deaths in the region reached 1161 after (150 died on 19th), with most of these coming from Iran. In total, the global confirmed cases had increased to 209,839 cases on 19th after 16,556 more cases were reported. The number of total deaths globally increased by a total of 828 to reach a global tally of 8778 cases (WHO, 2020m).

On local scenes, the disease affected some prominent people, celebrities, and sports personalities. For instance, in the US NBA teams, Denver Nuggets (Wimbish, 2020), Los Angele Lakers (Whitcomb, 2020b), Philadelphia 76ers (Zagoria, 2020), and Boston Celtics (Ward-Henninger, 2020) reported that each had some of their players confirmed positive, but they decline to give the names of those players. On the same land, Congress Representatives, Ben McAdams (D-Utah) and Mario Diaz Balart of Florida, confirmed that they had also contracted the disease (Helsel, 2020). In Washington, two employees of the World Bank Group tested positive on the 18th with fears that more could have been affected. On the 19th, there were reports that Prince Albert of Monaco also tested positive for COVID-19 (Romo, 2020). Another person is the Executive Director of the World Food Program, David Beasley, who also tested positive after returning from Canada (World Food Program, 2020).

To respond to the numerous cases and scenarios prompted by the COVID-19 case, different regions, individual countries, and agencies adopted different and diverse measures. For instance, in India, the government was reported to have banned any export of PPEs, ventilators, and certain medications and supplements as such were not enough locally (Suneja, 2020). In addition to this, to reduce further spread, especially from imported cases, it closed its borders for incoming flights (Business Today, 2020b). In the United States, the number of interventions was observed, for instance, the two June scheduled party primaries in Connecticut were postponed (Pramuk and Dzhanova, 2020). President Trump also signed into law the Family First Coronavirus Response Act that would see most Americans receive a family relief of $2000. The act also gave $300 billion to be accessed by SMEs (Erica Werner et al., 2020). The University of Hong Kong received $620,000 from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations to continue with
vaccine testing for COVID-19 (Galford, 2020). On the 19th, the Rockefeller Foundation committed a $20 million to assist in response to COVID-19, especially in cities such as Nairobi, New York, Washington, Bangkok, and Bellagio (Rockefeller Foundation, 2020).

**DAY 111—MARCH 20, 2020**

Since the onset of the coronavirus, there had been a theory that it was mostly affecting older people, but the WHO debunked this, by indicating that data on those affected in different countries and regions have shown that a significant proportion of those in hospitals are aged below 50 years; hence, calling the younger generation to be also extra cautious. The organization also launched a health alert messaging services through WhatsApp and Facebook, demystifying the importance of technology in the fight against COVID-19, especially in sharing data and information (WHO, 2020d). The organization also reported that it had reached an agreement with different producers in China who were ready to supply the organization with PPEs, so that it could continue supporting countries in need of such across the world (Schnirring, 2020). While that was going on, they delivered an extra 1.5 million laboratory test kits for COVID-19 to different parts of the world (Watts and Simon, 2020). There was also news that first vaccine trials had begun, and the WHO together with its partners was to organize an international study dubbed Solidarity Trial in different countries aimed at trying different treatments that could be adopted to win over COVID-19 (WHO, 2020d).

Regarding the reports on the spread and impacts of the coronavirus on this day (March 20), the situation reported by World Health Organization indicated that the world was still in great danger of recording even more cases. For instance, Italy reported the single largest number of deaths, where 627 people died, and those confirmed increasing to 47,021 cases. The number of new deaths in those 3 days was "also increasing at an average of almost 1500 each day, and by 23rd, the total number of deaths had reached 14,500 globally (WHO, 2020n). Of great concern on those numbers is that most of them were coming from the European region, which by 23rd had reached a high of 171,424 confirmed cases and 8742 total deaths. The only regions that had shown a lot of resilience were the African region with only 990 total confirmed cases and 23 total reported deaths. The South-East Asia Region was also relatively spared having confirmed only 1776 cases and 58 total deaths. The Region of Americas was showing worrisome trends, having reported a high of 17,331 new cases in a single day (March 23) to push its total tally of confirmed cases to 37,016 cases and a total tally of 465 deaths (213 deaths) reported in a single day (WHO, 2020n).

While a majority of countries, especially in Europe, writhed in desperation from the impacts of COVID-19, China reported a third consecutive day with no local new case of coronavirus (The straits Times, 2020c). This meant that they could slowly transition back to their previous economic routine, and it also gave hope to those whose situation was worsening. In the other regions, including Africa where confirmed cases were low, they were responding to the spread by escalating lockdowns and border restrictions (Aljazeera, 2020b). Other countries followed this trend. For instance, on March 21–23, Bolivia (Reuters, 2020b), Greece (Stamouli, 2020), Cuba (Oppmann, 2020), and the United Kingdom (Sparrow et al., 2020) imposed total lockdown in their countries (Aljazeera, 2020b). Egypt on the other hand called off all religious activities in mosques and churches for 14 days (Mourad, 2020). During this period still, other countries including Pakistan (Reuters, 2020m), Vietnam, Singapore (Benner, 2020),...
UAE, Panama (Aljazeera, 2020b), India, Nigeria (Reuters, 2020m), and Zimbabwe (The Citizen, 2020) closed their borders to all foreign travels and nonresidents and banned international flights to or from their soils for a minimum of 14 days. Germany, on the other hand, banned gatherings of more than two persons, as cases in the country started to soar, while on the same day, Spain extended the state of emergency for 15 more days, as the situation internally was getting out of hand, with thousands hospitalized, and cases soaring each day (Picheta, 2020).

The decision taken by each individual country was meant for the good of the citizens, but such also had a far-reaching impact on the economy. For instance, the banning of the international flights in these 3 days, and others that had been instituted earlier mean that sectors such as tourism, hospitality industry, and others are grounded, with millions of workers employed in those sectors uncertain of what the future holds. In such circumstances, governments were forced to rely on external organizations—like the Jack Ma Foundation, which on 22nd delivered a consignment of assorted PPEs, and test kits to African countries to fight the COVID-19 (Meseret and Meldrum, 2020). On 23rd, the World Bank Group’s President was also pleading with bilateral creditors to extend debt relief to low-income economies to help them build some capacity that could allow them to fight the disease (Bank, 2020). While this was going on, African finance ministers were pleading for a $100 billion economic stimulus in addition to the suspension of external debt to allow their individual countries to fight the coronavirus pandemic (UNECA, 2020).

DAY 115—MARCH 24, 2020
China’s progression toward containing the virus received a boost after the province of Hubei was freed from the lockdown after almost 2 months since the lockdown was instituted (Associated Press, 2020). It was a relief to the residents who, for such a long period, lived in fear and uncertainty of when they would return to their previous routines. The good news was that Wuhan, the first epicenter of coronavirus was to open a month later, as the number of new cases had reduced significantly. In the last 24 h, the entire country of China reported on 78 new cases, of which, 74 cases were reported to have been imported (CNA, 2020a). The number of deaths had also increased, with seven reported in the city of Wuhan (The Star, 2020).

The other good news came from Germany where the Chancellor’s, Angela Merkel, the first test came back negative for coronavirus, but would undergo the same process a few days later to confidently confirm this result (Mischke, 2020). The fear that she would have contracted the disease came after a doctor who had attended her turned positive, forcing the Chancellor into a safety procedure of self-isolation (Mischke, 2020).

The day however did not present the good news to everyone, especially to governments, health workers, and security forces implementing lockdowns and other measures in different countries and to the general global population. On this, in the past 24 h alone, the number of newly laboratory-confirmed cases neared 40,000 and the deaths on a single day accumulated to 1722 globally (CNA, 2020a). The most unfortunate report on this is that half of the new cases and deaths reported came from European countries (24,085 cases and 1447 deaths), with the American regions also experiencing a high of 12,428 new cases and 100 deaths (WHO, 2020e). Regarding the accumulation of confirmed cases, it took at least 3 months for cases to climb to 100,000 confirmed, and only 12 days to reach 200,000 cases. From here, it only took 3 days for the global total to surpass 300,000 confirmed cases, and even more startling, only 2 days for the total to reach almost 400,000 confirmed cases.

Such trends prompted the International Olympics Committee and Japan’s Olympic authority, led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, to postpone the Olympics scheduled for summer 2020 to 2021 as more countries had expressed their fears of the virus (Ramsay, 2020), while others cited lack of preparation and other technicalities (Aarons, 2020). They also prompted the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, to lock down the country for 21 days, only a day after the later declared an immediate grounding of all flights in or out of India (Shroff, 2020). New Zealand also went into lockdown (BBC, 2020e), as Australia announced a ban on all overseas travel (Whiteman and Sharma, 2020). While in the United States, a troop of 11,400 US National Guards was mobilized in 50 states to help in response to the disease (Gresik and Altman, 2020), as it had already infected more than 50,000 people countrywide. While those were being mobilized, three of their colleagues in the navy (sailors) contracted the virus, when an aircraft carrier they were boarding—together with approximately 4000 other people—set sail from Vietnam.

DAY 117—MARCH 26, 2020
By now, the situation of COVID-19 globally reached fever-pitch where the U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres argued that the disease was ravaging the whole
of humanity, with approximately one-third of the population experiencing one or more COVID-19-related restrictions (UNICEF, 2020). Following this, there was shortages in all sectors, with the WHO warning that already, the world was facing a “significant shortage” of assorted medical supplies. On the social sphere, there was a shortage in the health sector prompting the UN to launch a $2 billion financial package on March 25 targeting global humanitarian responses, especially to be advanced to vulnerable countries (UN Secretary-General, 2020). With the funds, those countries would manage to bolster their laboratory equipment, build and increase available sanitation (handwashing) stations, and increase medical supplies among other things. Besides the financial package, the WHO was calling on developed economies to assist African countries with health machines such as ventilators and respirators as the continent cannot satisfy the demand for such, especially if cases of COVID-19 were to increase (Ighobor, 2020).

Those calls and interventions come at a time when most countries, especially in Europe and America, were experiencing one of the darkest moments of their history. For instance, in Spain, as of 26th, the number of reported deaths (3434 deaths) surpassed those reported in China (3293). But still, Italy was leading in the number of people who had died with a total of 7505, with 685 having died in a span of only 24 h. France had also started to lose a significant number of people as a result of the COVID-19, with 231 already having succumbed in the past 24 h. The Islamic State of Iran and the United States were also affected with 143 (total deaths 2077) and 211 (total deaths 884) deaths having died in the past 24 h. In regard to the number of confirmed cases, which were averaging 40,000 cases per day in the past 4 days, the global total had increased to 462,684 by 26th according to the WHO data. Africa was still showing some resilience despite reports of weak health system, with only 31 deaths reported coming from 1937 confirmed cases across the globe (WHO, 2020).

The economic situation globally was worsening, but even more in the United States where it was reported that by March 26, over 3.3 million American had filed for their employment benefit (Casselman et al., 2020); a figure that is thought to be the highest in the history of the country. This could be attributed to the increasing number of people who were contracting the coronavirus especially in New York, which had become the epicenter of the outbreak in the Northern American region, with the United States having more cases than any other country (Kirby and Stewart, 2020; The New York Times, 2020b). But, fortunately, the Trump Administration’s stimulus plan—worth $2 trillion—was unanimously passed the Senate (Carney, 2020), thus allowing the government to offer some financial support, especially to those who continued to lose their livelihoods. Elsewhere, more countries were responding to the pandemic by instituting lockdowns or other strict measures that would somehow suppress the local transmission. On this, on March 26, Panama was reported to have suspended any form of domestic flights (Moreno et al., 2020), 4 days after, it had suspended international flights (Aljazeera, 2020b). In Thailand, the government declared a state of emergency forcing more areas within the country to shut down (Techakitteranun, 2020), while Iraq and Lebanon extended their curfews by 14 days in each country. In Russia, Moscow shut down all forms of businesses and activities for a week (March 28 to April 5), except for essential businesses such as pharmacies and grocery stores (Astapovich, 2020).

**DAY 118—MARCH 27, 2020**

The highlight of the day was the testing positive for coronavirus of UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, which he announced to the world via a video on Twitter (BBC, 2020g). He reported that, henceforth, he would be in self-isolation and will continue working from. But, while this was breaking news, the greatest and most unfortunate news came from Italy and Spain. In Spain, it had earlier been reported that it had recorded the highest number of deaths in a single day (769) (RTVE, 2020), but later only Italy released its official report of the day where it indicated that approximately 919 (WHO later reported 971 (WHO, 2020f)) people had died within a span of only 24 h. Italy had also confirmed 5959 new cases while Spain reported 7871 new cases bringing the total confirmed cases to 86,498 and 64,059 cases, respectively. However, the United States reported the highest number of new confirmed cases (16,894), taking its total tally to 85,228 according to the data by WHO (WHO, 2020f) but according to the US CDC data (CDC, 2020), the total number of cases reported in the country by 27th had reached 103,321, thus leading globally. In the Middle East, Iran was reporting the highest numbers of new cases, with 2926 cases reported within 24 h and 144 new deaths during the same period (WHO, 2020f). Other countries in the region were relatively calm with no other reporting more than a 100 cases a day. In Africa, Algeria reported the highest number of deaths (4) (WHO, 2020f) while South Africa reported the first
death from the virus. This death and the increasing number of confirmed cases in the country prompted the government to announce a 3-week nationwide lockdown (Neuman, 2020b). Elsewhere, China reported 117 new cases and 5 new deaths, in what seemed like a signal to a second wave of infection. Following this, the government announced a ban on all foreigners, suspecting that they were the cause of this new trend in rise of cases, as out of those new cases, none were from local transmission (BBC, 2020a; Mai, 2020).

On the same date, the African Development Bank (AFDB) provided aid to the continent with a $3 billion social bond targeted to economic and social sectors facing stiff challenges from the impacts of COVID-19 (AFDB, 2020). At the same time, the WHO announced that the vaccine trial dubbed Solidarity Trial—that it had announced about on March 20—was to begin shortly, with the first trials administered to patients drawn from Norway and Spain, but overall, the trials would be extended to more than 45 countries that had agreed to be part of the program (WHO, 2020af). In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration authorized the use of a 15-min diagnostic kit for coronavirus intended to speed-up the testing process, but a shortage of necessary equipment for collecting specimens was feared to derail the use of this kit (Azad, 2020). On the same land, Donald Trump, President of America, signed the $2 trillion stimulus that was passed the previous day by the Senate (Foran et al., 2020).

DAY 121—MARCH 30, 2020

Even as the month of March came to an end, the incidences related to COVID-19 continued almost unthwarted. For instance, the number of new confirmed cases for the past 3 days has been increasing at an average of above 61,000 each day, and the number of deaths occurring each day likewise increased at an average of 3250 deaths. Within the 3 days, the total number of confirmed cases globally increased from 571,659—as captured by the WHO on March 28 (WHO, 2020)—to 693,224 by March 30. Another astonishing occurrence—especially on March 28—was the number of people that died in a single day in both Spain and Italy, which recorded 832 and 889 new deaths, respectively (WHO, 2020p). This happened while the number of patients being admitted to different hospitals in both countries exceeded their bed capacity and human resources allocation (Cheng, 2020). The United States was also going through thick and thin, as the number of new cases in the country continued to soar at alarming rates. Even in Africa—which had shown some levels of resilience against the spread of this pandemic—the numbers for the past 3 days seemed to increase at an average of almost 300 daily, with Egypt, Algeria, and South Africa being the most affected (WHO, 2020q). In fact, the WHO’s Director-General highlighted the plight of the global health system and argued that there was a chronic global shortage of medical supplies such as PPEs, ventilators, and other basic amenities required to saving lives (WHO, 2020af).

These unfolding events were happening amidst numerous responses and interventions both at local, regional, and international levels by government, international organizations like the WHO, the World Bank, and others. Among the new interventions that countries were implementing include the extension of the social distancing guidelines in the United States by President Donald Trump until the end of the following month (April 30), and perhaps with a possible extension to June (Shear, 2020). The country had also accelerated the testing of individuals, and by 30th, the President announced that over one million people had been tested despite earlier hiccups in regard to faulty testing kits (Tirrell et al., 2020). In Africa, on 29th, Nigeria was reported to have directed the cessation of movement in two of its most populous cities, Lagos and Abuja, to reduce the chances of importation of the coronavirus to rural areas (Akwagyiram, 2020a). In Mexico, in a bid to reduce the soaring confirmed cases and growing number of deaths as a result of COVID-19, the government declared a health emergency (Reuters, 2020l). In Portugal, the government had resulted in treating everyone including foreigners with pending applications as permanent residents of the country so they could access public health facilities without encountering hitches (Reuters, 2020o).

But despite all those negatives, there was good news from the city of Wuhan, which after undergoing a “dark moment” in the past 2 months, saw authorities relaxing some quarantine measures, including rail services in and out of the city, meaning that people could eventually access the rest of the country (Beaumont, 2020). Authorities in the province of Hubei also announced that they would allow domestic flights to resume in all airports, except Tianhe International Airport in Wuhan (Xinhua, 2020c). The other good news is that on 29, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Wellcome, and Mastercard together granted three institutions (the University of Washington, University of Oxford, and La Jolla Institute for Immunology) financial support worth $20 million to facilitate clinical trials for immunotherapies they were developing (Mastercard, 2020).
DAY 124—APRIL 2, 2020
In the wake of the new months, the reality of devastation of the COVID-19 in different countries, regions, and globally was becoming clear. For instance, in Spain, by April 1, the number of those affected reached 102,136. But, by then, Italy had more than these cases with 110,574 confirmed cases, while the United States, which had become the new epicenter, had 213,144 confirmed cases, as per the CDC data (CDC, 2020), while the WHO reported 187,302 (WHO, 2020r). Regionally, cases in Europe reached more than half a million people (503,006), where 33,604 of those had succumbed to the virus. The region of the Americas was the second most affected with a total of 216,912 confirmed cases and 4565 deaths. The Western Pacific region was the third hardest hit, with 107,626 infected and 3723 deaths. The Eastern Mediterranean regions had 58,168 confirmed cases and 3279 recorded deaths, while the African region had 4702 confirmed cases and 127 reported deaths from the virus. Overall, the global total number of confirmed cases had reached 896,450, and an addition of 72,839 from the previous reported numbers. The number of deaths had also reached 45,525, with a high of 4923 dying in the past 24 h (WHO, 2020r). By April 2, the global total exceeded the 1,000,000 mark as per the John Hopkins data, nCoV2019.Live, and other websites, but WHO reported the total numbers at 972,303 confirmed cases (WHO, 2020g).

The reality was reflected in the economic sector with the World Bank reporting that the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic would force more than 11 million people into poverty (The world Bank, 2020a). The reality of this statement was affirmed in the happenings in the United States, where it was reported that in a period of just 1 week, 6.6 million more people filed for unemployment benefits, taking the number of those who had filed for the benefits to over 10 million people (Long and Dam, 2020a). The same trends of unemployment were also being experienced in Austria where the unemployment levels jumped to 66% in the country within the 3 months since the onset of the pandemic (Reuters, 2020).

The said reality prompted several unprecedented actions in different countries and organizations. For instance, on April 1, the UN announced the postponement of the climate conference (COP26) scheduled for November due to COVID-19 (UN, 2020). In the sporting world, the All England Club announced that the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament was canceled due to COVID-19, and this was the first time since World War II that the championship was called off. On the same day, the Health Minister in Italy announced that the countrywide lockdown would continue to be in force until the 13th of the month as the number of confirmed cases, and deaths continued to increase (Reuters, 2020i). The announcement was also confirmed by the country’s Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said that the situation in the country forced him to sign the decree to extend the measures (Orihuela et al., 2020). The same measures were taken by Germany. On April 2, more actions continued, with Saudi Arabia extended its curfew to 24 h on its most visited and the holiest cities in Islam: Mecca and Medina (Aljazeera, 2020c). A similar action was taken in Thailand involving the entire country, with exception of medical personnel, and those transporting essential products, and for people moving to quarantine or health facilities (The Nation, 2020). Peru and Panama establish a different strategy for reducing the number of people outside by imposing a gender divide, where certain days were set aside for only men and the others for men. This way, it would be impossible for those living together leaving their homes together (Aquino and Moreno, 2020). In the United States, the white house was encouraging people going out to wear masks (Sun and Dawsey, 2020), and this came while most of the citizens were trying to come to terms with stay-at-home orders that had been declared in almost 12 states in the country (Nottingham, 2020).

DAY 128—APRIL 6, 2020
The highlight of the day is the worsening health status of the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, prompting him to be moved into intensive care. He was taken to hospital in London the previous day (April 5), after the COVID-19 symptoms persisted, 9 days after he tested positive (BBC, 2020g). On the same day, in the same country, 439 new deaths were reported, taking the country’s total death toll to 5373 while the total number of confirmed cases increased to 51,612 after 3802 new cases were reported in a period of 24 h. Within the European region, the total number of confirmed cases had increased to 686,338 after 30,999 more cases were reported in a span of 24 h. The number of deaths also had increased by a total of 3330 deaths to take the total tally for the region to 52,809, and these were far much more than the total deaths of all other regions combined. On the same day, the United States reported 26,493 new cases to take their country’s total to 333,811 (WHO, 2020s) and also reported a high of 1201 deaths increasing the total deaths recorded in the country to 9559, while other data showed that
deaths had reached 10,530 (Siobhán O’Grady et al., 2020a). In the previous day (April 5), it had reported 1300 cases and 33,510 new cases; the highest reported data in the region since the onset of the pandemic (WHO, 2020a). As these occurred, President Trump reported that hydroxychloroquine, an antimalaria drug, could be used against COVID-19 (Crowley et al., 2020). In the Middle East, the total number of confirmed cases in Iran increased to 60,500 after 2274 more people tested positive. Globally, the total confirmed cases stood at 1,279,722 and the total deaths reported were 72,614 (WHO, 2020s).

In Africa, where cases had started to increase significantly—reaching 7092 and 294 deaths, it was reported that the former Libya Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril died of coronavirus the previous day after fighting the COVID-19 disease for approximately 2 weeks (Aljazeera, 2020d). In China, which reported 75 new cases and only 2 deaths, fears were that the country would be experiencing asymptomatic transmissions of the virus; hence, the increase in newly reported cases. These were experienced though the country had already introduced border restrictions with other countries, and following the fear of asymptomatic cases, the government vowed to tighten border control measures even further (Zhang and Munroe, 2020). The most astonishing news reported on April 5 was that of the positive testing for coronavirus of four tigers and three lions in the Bronx Zoo, bringing the total number of cats reported to have contracted the virus to 9 (Daly, 2020). This raised alarms as no known research had shown that the virus could be passed from humans to animals.

This far, a report by the WHO indicated that more than 90% (approximately 1.5 billion) of students globally had had to remain at home following the closure of school. To offer some intervention on this, the organization, together with UNICEF and the International Publishers Association, launched the "Read the World" initiative to allow student access learning materials even during the difficult times (WHO, 2020a). In the sport sector, to safeguard the lives of participants and to comply with the health guidelines of social distancing and others, the Open Golf Championship was called off; being the second time, it was canceled since 1945 during the WW2 (The Open, 2020).

**DAY 130—APRIL 8, 2020**

After 76 days of uncertainties, the Chinese authorities finally lifted the lockdown on Wuhan as promised, after the city successfully saw a reduction in the number of new confirmed cases for the coronavirus (Aljazeera, 2020a). In fact, the report from the entire country was that the new cases that were being reported were all imported ones, and the government had vowed to take extra measures to control its borders (Zhang and Munroe, 2020). The good news on the country is that on the previous day (April 7), despite reporting 66 new confirmed cases—which were all imported, the country reported zero death for the first time since it started publishing figures of the death related to COVID-19 (WHO, 2020b). Even on 8th, the number of new cases was only 86: all imported and only two deaths. The situation was, however, totally different in other regions, especially in Europe where France, on a single day, reported 1417 new deaths to push its total death toll to 10,313, while those whose tests turned positive in the past 24 h increased by 3738 to take the country’s total to 77,226 (WHO, 2020t). This total was however smaller compared to Germany, Italy, and Spain whose totals had increased to 103,228, 135,586, and 140,510 cases, respectively. Belgium and the Netherlands also witnessed an increase in the number of deaths with 403 and 234 new recorded deaths, respectively (WHO, 2020b). On this, despite Germany having more confirmed cases, it had managed to keep the death toll relatively low, with reports showing that it is due to the mass testing initiative it had embarked on; thus, cases were getting identified before becoming critical (Perrigo, 2020). Until eighth, it had only lost 1861 people, while its European counterparts were worse off (WHO, 2020t).

The other nation that saw the number of casualty increase was the US, which, since a few days ago had started to witness numerous deaths, and confirmed cases. On this day, the country lost 1286 lives to the disease, and 29,510 were the newly confirmed cases taking the country’s total to 363,321, according to WHO data (WHO, 2020), but the US CDC reported the total number as 427,460 cases (CDC, 2020), where the difference could be due to difference in reporting time between WHO on Central European Time (CET) and US EDT time zones. While this was happening, the country’s President, Donald Trump who had frequently attacked the WHO for failing in its mandate in detecting the virus earlier threatened to withdraw funding to the agency (Sevastopulo and Manson, 2020). He categorically said that the organization had withheld information about the virus and was wrong about the outbreak in China (Davidson, 2020a). But, in a quick rejoinder, the WHO’s Director-General warned that it would be disastrous to politicize the fight against the pandemic (Wise, 2020).

Following the health situation in France, authorities announced that they were imposing a ban on daytime
outdoor exercise in Paris, which had allowed its citizens to enjoy despite the country being on lockdown (BBC, 2020f). On the same day (April 7), the Egyptian authorities announced that the ban on mosques and churches would still continue even during the Ramadan period as the country was still facing the challenge of coronavirus, with new cases increasing and more deaths being witnessed (Egypt Independent, 2020). In the Asian region, Japan joined the list of many other countries who had declared a state of emergency as the number of cases in the country had started to rise in the month (Rich et al., 2020). In Singapore, to contain the spread of the COVID-19, the Health Minister Gan Kim Yong announced that the government was banning any form of social gathering whether at home or in public (Zhang, 2020). The ban came just a day after a motion to outlaw social gathering in the country was rushed and passed to the law in Parliament the previous day.

Elsewhere, as the impacts of the virus continued to be felt, the Wellness Trust, on April 7, started an initiative aimed to raise a minimum of $8 billion from the private sector by the end of April to fill the financial gap being experienced in search vaccines, drugs, and tests for COVID-19 (Wellcome, 2020). A similar initiative dubbed “AfroChampions Initiative” was launched by African Union and Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to raise over $400 million for medical responses, with $150 million required urgently for the same purpose (Africanews, 2020).

D AY 132—A P R I L 1 0, 2020

After spending three nights in the intensive care unit, the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was finally discharged from the unit and transferred to a normal ward where he recovered. In fact, it was reported that he could manage short walks, though he needed some time to feel better (The Sun, 2020). While the report of his improvement was encouraging, it was not the case for over 980 families in the country, from England who had lost their loved ones as a result of the disease on that particular day. In Italy, a total of 570 people lost their lives on 10th (WHO, 2020h), while 612 had died the previous day (WHO, 2020u). In total, the number of deaths in Italy had reached a high of 18,851 by 10th with 100 of these being doctors who had contracted the virus while in line of duty (Aljazeera, 2020g). In Spain, hopes of flattening the curve were high after the country saw a decline in the number of deaths for the third consecutive day (Landauro and Keeley, 2020). However, the number of new cases in the country was increasing and had climbed to 157,022 cases after 4576 more cases were confirmed on 10th. The renewed hope was also being experienced in China after it continued to witness a reduced number of deaths in the country, as well as more recoveries, which had reached 77,000 (Regencia et al., 2020).

While that was happening, the spread of the virus has gone as far as in deep rural areas where a 13-year-old boy from the indigenous tribe of Yanomami found in Brazil, Amazon forest was confirmed with the coronavirus on 9th, and on 10th, unfortunately, he passed away (Phillips, 2020). Another rare place where the virus was reported was in the Cook County Jail in Chicago where 450 new cases involving inmates and staff were reported (Whitcomb, 2020a). In America still, the number of death from COVID-19 were increasing at an alarming rate, where 1931 new deaths were reported on 10th (WHO, 2020b) and 1895 more had died the previous day (WHO, 2020u). Following these increases, with most of them coming from New York cities, the state had resulted in burials in mass graves as the numbers kept on increasing (Anderson, 2020), with its confirmed cases being more than any other country globally (BBC, 2020d). The situation in the United States prompted the German Foreign Minister to criticize the US handling of the virus (Connor, 2020). Another rare place that was affected by coronavirus is a French navy airplane carrier, where 50 servicemen tested positive to COVID-19 (Aljazeera, 2020e).

As the cases globally increased to over 1.6 million people, the economic impact of the virus continued to bite. For instance, in the United States, another 6.6 million people filed for unemployment claims bringing the total number of those in the same predicaments into almost 17 million in only 3 weeks (Long and Dam, 2020b). In Vietnam, it was reported that the country was in dire need of almost $1 billion to caution its economy against the budget deficit that continued to widen (Reuters, 2020r). Albania was also trending on a tight economic path, prompting it to seek financial support from the IMF, which extended a loan of $190.5 million (IMF, 2020). In Zimbabwe, following the ban on all international flights in or out of the country, Air Zimbabwe sent its employees on leave, which was, unfortunately, unpaid (The Herald, 2020). On the same continent, Senegal adopted a directly opposite approach of protecting its workers against being laid off by companies in excuse of the COVID-19 crisis (France-Presse, 2020).

On other news, there were reports that Google and Apple would cooperate to develop a mobile app that would help in tracking coronavirus spread (Apple, 2020). Although that was good news especially coming
from the tech world, in Singapore, the use of technology faced concerns when online learning platforms that the government had initiated were suspended after the video conferencing ZOOM platform was hacked during a learning session, and the hackers displayed explicit images to the students (Lee, 2020).

DAY 136—APRIL 14, 2020

Although the death tolls in at least four countries crossed the 15,000 mark, others have witnessed significant declines in the number of new cases being reported daily, and thus planning to ease lockdown stances and other strict measures that had been put in place. Until April 14, countries like the United States (23,476 deaths), Spain (18,056 deaths), Italy (21,069 deaths), and France (15,708 deaths) were most affected, with the situation in the United Kingdom worsening (12,107) (WHO, 2020w). Indeed, a report by the Office for National Statistics highlighted that UK numbers were underreported by 52%, the number in the country would be reading over 20,000 cases (Bruce, 2020). On this, it was highlighted that the number of deaths reported did not reflect the actual number represented in over 232 care homes, where most of the elderly population were (McIntyre and Duncan). Although those numbers are many, there was hope in Spain and Italy as the number of deaths kept on decreasing each day, and from the report, these were optimistic that they would ease their stand on lockdown—Spain by end of June (BBC, 2020h). On this, other more countries including Greece (by May 4) (Tugwell, 2020), Portugal (by May 3), Australia (had already started by then), Pakistan, and Austria (with already thousands of shops reopened (Niesner and Murphy, 2020)) were considering this move (DW, 2020).

Although those countries were eager to lift lockdown measures, Germany was considering reintroducing it after community infection cases over the past few days started to rise after the country had cautiously tried to ease the lockdown (Mayberry et al., 2020). In Moscow, President Putin strengthened the lockdown measures until May 11 to counter the rising cases of infections (Davidson, 2020b). Similar measures were also being taken in China, in the Heilongjiang province bordering Russia, where 79 cases were reported on April 14, where Chinese nationals who had fled to Russia tried to return home (Wu, 2020). Following this, the cases in the province increased to 409, and Chinese authorities in the province promised to reward locals who would report the “illegal migrants” (The straits Times, 2020b). Georgia, on its part, was planning to lock down four of its largest cities, including its capital Tbilisi for 10 days (Today, 2020a) as local transmission started to increase with the country’s total cases reaching 306 (WHO, 2020w), an addition of 10 more confirmed cases (WHO, 2020v).

On the economic front, the IMF warned that the global economy would shrink by approximately 3% following unprecedented measures like lockdowns, and ban on transportations, and closing down of manufacturing and other industries (Rapperport and Smialek, 2020). In a way to ease the economic pressure, President Donald Trump started issuing stimulus checks to Americans, amid some delays after he realized that his name did not appear on the checks (Rein, 2020). The situation of the economy is also pointed by activities in Heathrow Airports where passenger demands were expected to reduce by almost 90% this month (April), after having plummeted by 52% last month and cargo volume reduced by 32.5% (Rojas, 2020). The economy was worsening also for the WHO after President Trump retaliated that he was halting funds to the agency following its mismanagement of the coronavirus (Mayberry et al., 2020).

On the societal fronts, the racial discrimination of blacks in China continued, with the McDonald outlets in China forced to apologize after the store displayed posters banning black people from accessing the China store (Folley, 2020). Elsewhere, Turkey was planning to temporarily release over 45,000 inmates, after getting approval from Parliament to ease overcrowding; thus, void the risk of coronavirus infection in the facilities (Wilks, 2020).

DAY 138—APRIL 16, 2020

As of 16th, COVID-19 had spread to 210 countries and territories across the globe with over 2,074,529 confirmed cases and 139,378 deaths reported. Of those cases and deaths, 50% were reported in Europe, while more than 80% of the remaining cases (743,607 confirmed cases and 33,028 deaths) reported in regions of the Americas. The Eastern Mediterranean region had 115,824 confirmed cases and 5662 deaths while the South-East Asia region had a count of 23,560 confirmed cases and 5662 deaths while the South-East Asia region had a count of 23,560 confirmed cases and 1051 deaths. Africa, which had started to experience some significant increase in infections, had 12,360 confirmed cases with 517 of those newly reported and 586 deaths of which 36 of those occurred in a span of 24 h (WHO, 2020aa). Still in Africa, it was noted that 11 out of the 17 countries that had reported cases of COVID-19 were drawn from the Western and Central part of the continent, and WHO officials reported that they had teams on the ground to establish the real reason why this was happening.
Of the total reported deaths, the highest number occurred in the United States with a high of 2350 deaths, while the United Kingdom had the second tally of the day with 861 cases. France had 753 cases while Italy and Spain, two countries that had for past days shown remarkable improvement, had 551 and 525 cases, respectively (WHO, 2020aa). On 10th, the days shown remarkable improvement, had 551 and while Italy and Spain, two countries that had for past tally of the day with 861 cases. France had 753 cases est number occurred in the United States with a high of (WHO, 2020ac). Of the total reported deaths, the high- sher and Sabbagh, 2020).

Although reports in the health sector showed that the world was still unsafe, as had also been warned by the WHO, other issues were coming up in other sectors. For instance, in Japan, whose total confirmed cases tallied to 9167—which included three cabinet officials—and the number of deaths increasing to 148, the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared a nationwide state of emergency (McCurry, 2020). He also advanced a handout worth ¥100,000 to every resident of the country regardless of their economic status to caution them during the period of this emergency (The Japan Times, 2020a). In the United States, on the same day, 5.6 million people filed unemployment claims bringing the total number of those in this situation to more than 22 million people in a period of only 4 weeks (Long, 2020). Following this, President Donald Trump unveiled guidelines aimed to help some economic activities in the country to resume, but he left the final decision of opening the economy, by easing the restrictions on each individual state, to the individual State Governors (White House, 2020). In Germany, after experiencing prior issues after easing lockdown measures resulted to increased number of confirmed cases, the government was planning to reopen the economy as from April 20 by allowing some nonessential stores to open and also allowing schools to resume as from May (Morris and Beck, 2020). In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro fired the Minister for Health after the minister insisted on strict social isolation guidelines, a move that the president was against. Unfortunately, the president had been seen to have regularly downplayed the outbreak of the virus in his country despite the country having 28,320 confirmed cases and 1048 deaths by April 16 (Quinn, 2020a).

In sports, following the situation in France, the Tour de France scheduled for June and July was postponed to a tentative date between 29th August and 20th September, as the government banned public gatherings to reduce the spread of the coronavirus (Tour de France, 2020). For World Wrestling Entertainment, the company was planning to lay off some employees including wrestlers and producers such as Kurt Angle (Russell, 2020). The move was to caution the company against the financial decline it was facing following the impacts of the pandemic.

**DAY 141—APRIL 19, 2020**

After months of extreme pressure, anxiety, and uncertainties, Wuhan settled and revised its official data relating to the coronavirus. After the review, the death toll from the COVID-19 pandemics increased by 50% meaning that its number increased from 1290 deaths to 3869 deaths, pushing the country total by April 17 to 4642 deaths. The errors in reporting were attributed to delays, omissions, and incorrect reporting that are understandable following all the many things that are happening during that period (Neuman, 2020a). The number of reported deaths also increased in the African continent after 55 more deaths were reported, taking the total tally to 1080, while new confirmed cases increased by 1047, pushing the continent’s total to 21,317, according to Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) (Xinhua, 2020a), but data by the WHO for the same period show a total of 13,892 cases and 628 deaths (WHO, 2020x). Death tolls were rising by higher margins in the European regions and had exceeded 100,000 deaths, from 1,122,189 cases reported in the region. This increase, observed throughout Spain and Italy, however, continued to experience improvements with death rates reducing each day. The United Kingdom, France, and Belgium still reported increasing numbers of deaths (888, 635, and 290, respectively). However, the United States still leads in the number of confirmed cases (695,535 on April 19) and death tolls (2043 on the same day) per day for more than two consecutive weeks (WHO, 2020x). Globally, the total number of cases had increased to a high of over 2.3 million, with the number of deaths exceeding 157,000 by April 19 (WHO, 2020x).

Despite the risk of the disease being live, the Orthodox churches in Georgia were observed to flaunt the state of emergency declaration to hold Easter masses, where hundreds of congregants attended (Antidze, 2020). In the United States, a day after the President had outlined a set of rules for reopening the economy, but left the final say on the hands of the Governor, some protesters were observed in States of Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio and others, calling their Governors to lift the restrictions in their states (Gabbatt, 2020). At the same time, Texas Governor is said to have signed an executive order to allow a reopening as from May (Office of the Texas Governor, 2020). This was happening, even
as the US Secretary of Defense extended the travel ban for one more month to void the earlier expiry scheduled for May 2; thus, showing that the country was still not ready to ease the restrictions it had set. Further South, in Chile, the government started issuing “immunity cards” for all those who had infected and recovered from the virus. With the card, these could comfortably return to their work stations (Thomson, 2020). As this was happening, the number of cases in the country rose to 10,888, taking the country as the third most affected in Latin America (WHO, 2020x). However, the WHO, through Dr. Michael Ryan, one of the executive directors, warned that there was no evidence that those who were recovering from COVID-19 were developing any immunity that could prevent them from being reinfected (WHO, 2020ab). During the same press conference, the Director-General emphasized that as Chinese authorities allowed the wet market to reopen, they would ensure conformity to food safety and highest levels of hygiene and that the law banning any trade in wildlife for food was to be implemented strictly to save the world from future pandemics like the coronavirus (WHO, 2020ab).

Elsewhere, more countries were slowly and cautiously easing restrictions, with France allowing visitors to care homes, albeit some conditions (DodMan, 2020). Croatia also eased some restrictions allowing people to travel within their districts. In other countries such as the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe, the lockdown measures were to remain intact until when the government is confident the situations are controlled (Today, 2020b). In Saudi Arabia, despite the start of Ramadan, the top religious authorities of the country were recommending people to pray at home to reduce the spread of the virus among the faithful (Reuters, 2020p). This was necessary, as already, deaths were not sparing countries’ leadership. For instance, in Nigeria, President Buhari’s Chief of Staff, Abba Kyari became the latest top-ranking official to die from COVID-19 (Akwygiram, 2020b). A similar case was reported in Guinea where a top official and ally of the President Alpha Condé also died (AFP, 2020a).

**DAY 143—APRIL 21, 2020**

Within a period of 48 h (April 19–21), the number of infections globally increased from 2.3 million cases to over 2.5 million, while the number of deaths increased to above 170,000 globally (Reuters, 2020g). In Europe, the number of those infected increased over this period to over 1.2 million, with a daily average increase of approximately 35,000 new cases, while the number of new deaths in the areas also increased by an average of above 3200 each day—taking the total deaths in the region to 109,952 according to data by the WHO (WHO, 2020y). In the American regions, cases increased by an average of 33,000 confirmations pushing the total confirmed cases to 925,291 cases (WHO, 2020y). The number of deaths increased to approximately 44,775 by April 21, with a majority of these reported in the United States, which was the new epicenter for the coronavirus. The Eastern Mediterranean region had its total confirmed cases increase to 139,349 cases with 6326 people dying from COVID-19. The Western Pacific region had a total of 136, 271 cases after 1765 new cases were confirmed while the number of deaths increased to 5793. The South-East Asia region and African regions, though have had their cases increase, have shown remarkable levels of resilience despite having some of the weakest health systems. Their total confirmed cases increased to 33,912 and 16,115 cases, respectively, while the number of people who succumbed to the COVID-19 in the regions increased to 1427 and 720 deaths, respectively, (WHO, 2020y).

Following the unprecedented increase of infections in the United States, President Donald Trump had reported on April 20 that he would be signing an executive order to suspend immigration to the United States for the next 60 days. And, true to his word, on 21st, he signed the order meaning that Green card recipients would be blocked from moving into the country, with only workers holding nonimmigrant visas allowed (Nick Miroff et al., 2020). He supported his decision by arguing that the unprecedented effects on COVID-19 had pushed many Americans out of jobs, and he would wish to see them access the available job opportunities without having to compete with migrants (Nick Miroff et al., 2020). And to ensure that job opportunities would be available, on the same day, his office and Congressional leaders agreed on a $484 billion small business and hospitals stimulus package, that now only awaited approval from the House of Representatives (Roberts, 2020). In Africa, South Africa took a similar approach of bailing out the economy by unveiling a $26 billion relief plan that would also aid the most vulnerable in the society during the period that the country was struggling with increasing cases of coronavirus and the lockdown measures (Channelstv, 2020). The economic struggles saw Iran start to reopen its economy with major shopping centers in the capital Tehran being the first (Press, 2020). Similar actions were observed in Israel, which eased lockdown restrictions to allow small shops and stores to open and allow people to move around, but on condition mask-
wearing in public (Haaretz, 2020). This came as the number of recoveries in those countries started to increase, while the death toll contained (Efrati and Rabino-witz, 2020). In the poorest countries in the world, the World Bank supported the pandemic bond, launched in 2017, with an amount of $195.84 million to assist 64 nations from the impacts of COVID-19 (Baker, 2020). This came as the UN World Food Programme warned that the impacts of COVID-19 would result in the doubling of world hunger, representing a total of 265 million people (Anthem, 2020).

The economy was however not worsening for individuals only, but on this day, it was seen to have particularly worsened for US oil-producing economies and companies, with the prices per barrel going down to $0, a historical event that has never happened (Suleymanova, 2020). The only sector that was seen to be doing well, especially in the United States is the gaming industry, probably due to the “stay-at-home” orders and also due to the closure of schools. But, while the market increased, there were fewer games produced due to the impacts sparked by the coronavirus (Schreier, 2020). The other sector that was seen to benefit from the impacts of COVID-19 was the environment, where it was reported that following the reduced activities in the manufacturing and transport sector, less emissions (6% drop) are expected during the year (Marchand and Faigle, 2020).

**DAY 146—APRIL 24, 2020**

As over 210 countries continued to fight the spread, and the impacts of COVID-19 in their countries, the United States was the most hit with over 895,766 cases and over 50,000 reported deaths as up to April 24. The new cases in the country had increased at an average number of approximately 28,000 (CDC, 2020). As the number of cases continued to increase, and other more “staying-at-home” measures following the lockdowns in different states, the number of those filing for unemployment claims continued to increase with over 4.4 million additional claims reported over the past week, which was the fifth consecutive week since this trend started (Lambert, 2020). These new numbers raised the total of those who had filed for their employment benefits to over 26 million people (Chaney and Guilford, 2020).

Outside the United States, there were mixed responses to the virus. Some were seen to ease and lift the lockdown and subsequent measures they had implemented, while others were seen to be in haste to institute those measures. For instance, in the Netherlands, after experiencing some “relative calm” over the past weeks in respect to infections in the country, its number had started to rise with new deaths averaging over 120 each day and reaching a high of 4177 deaths and 35,729 confirmed cases by April 24 (WHO, 2020z). To minimize further infection, a stern decision was taken to ban any form of public gather until September 1 (3 months extension) the first of such a ban globally. That means that events such as sports, music festivals, and religious grouping would not be resuming anytime soon (Reuters, 2020e). But, it was not the only one extending such measure as in Pakistan, the lockdown was extended by two more weeks until May 9, as the country was still experiencing increasing numbers of local transmission of the virus, and the lockdown extension would somehow reverse these trends (Cherian, 2020). Indonesia also joined the list of those that were strengthening their measures after the government announced that it would be temporarily suspending nonessential domestic and international air and sea travel until the end of May to curtail the spread of the coronavirus in the country (Bangkok Post, 2020). Others that extended their lockdown include Liberia (Garda, 2020), Lebanon (Reuters, 2020k), and Czech, which sought parliamentary intervention to allow the extension of the state of emergency until May 25 (Xinhua, 2020b).

On the same breath, some countries and states in the United States started easing restrictions to allow the reopening of their economy. These include states such as Georgia, Oklahoma, and others in the United States, which took these decisions despite the disapproval of President Trump (Smith, 2020). Belgium was ready to start reopening some businesses and schools as from May, but gradually and cautiously (Martens, 2020).

Although countries were reacting to COVID-19 situations in different ways, some unfortunate news besides new cases and deaths were also reported. For instance, in the United Kingdom, which had seen the confirmed cases increase significantly and the number of deaths rising to beyond 20,000, there were reports that among the dead were 69 National Health Service personnel who had paid the ultimate price in a bid to save their country from the pandemic (Express and Star, 2020). In Bangladesh, it was reported that 251 frontline doctors had tested positive for the coronavirus due to strains that the COVID-19 had put on the healthcare system, with most of those in the frontline experiencing a shortage of PPEs, test kits, and hospital beds, among other basic essentials (Mahmud, 2020).

Elsewhere in Japan, after a dreadful experience with the Diamond Princess Cruise ship, on 21st, another
fateful incidence involving an Italian cruise ship (Costa Atlantica) happened in Nagasaki shipyard (The Japan Times, 2020b). It started when one of the crew members tested positive for coronavirus, while 20 of his colleagues were also showing signs, especially high fever. The following day, after contact tracing from the first confirmed cases, another 33 cases tested positive (The Straits Times, 2020a). 24 h later, another 14 people tested positive (Kaneko and Kim, 2020) and by 24th, a total of 96 people; all crew members were confirmed as testing positive (CNA, 2020b). Following this, the Japanese government stated that it would test 260 people, out of the 630 who were on board the cruise ship and those who turned negative would be repatriated back to their home countries.

DAY 148—APRIL 26, 2020
As the fifth month, since the onset of the coronavirus, is almost over, the number of those confirmed to have contracted the virus increased to over 3 million people globally, and at least 209,000 were reported to have succumbed to the disease. Over the same period, of the 3 million, over 884,000 patients had recovered (Spotlight, 2020). One country where success against COVID-19 have, and continued to be celebrated, was in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, where healthy officials reported that they had treated all cases and those who recovered were discharged from hospital (O’Donnell, 2020). In fact, as previously reported, the restrictions and lockdown in the provinces were lifted including in Wuhan, on April 8 (Aljazeera, 2020a). Following this, on 23rd, China pledged additional funding, amounting to $30 million, to the WHO (Shih, 2020), as already, it could manage the few cases emerging, and the funds could help other areas that were experiencing high pressure from the pandemic. In the new cases, between 24th and 26th, China was reported to have only recorded a total of 33 new cases and 29 asymptomatic cases, but no death was reported in the 2 days (WHO, 2020i). As cases in China reduced, those in the European region seemed to have continued increasing reaching a high of 1,341,851 cases after the addition of 27,185 new cases on 26th, and the number of deaths increased to 122,218. In the American region, the number of cases was 1,094,846 and 56,063 deaths reported, according to data by the WHO (WHO, 2020i). The Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific, and South-East Asia regions had 160,586, 142,639, and 43,846 confirmed cases, respectively. The African region continued to show high levels of resilience with only 20,316 confirmed cases and 839 deaths reported (WHO, 2020i).

But as the number of cases continued to increase, reports of more countries planning to ease up the lockdown also increased. As of 26th, Italy and Spain, two of the most affected countries by the COVID-19 pandemic, with cases of death in each exceeding 20,000 (Italy 26,384 deaths, Spain 22,524) unveiled plans of how they would open up their country as from May 4. In Italy, according to Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, the manufacturing industry would gradually open as from May 4, but schools would remain closed for three more months until September (Kayali, 2020). In Spain, people would be allowed to walk out for physical activities, but social distancing will have to be observed, as infections in the country were still real (Reuters, 2020q). Saudi Arabia is another country that considered lifting the nationwide curfew, except for Mecca, which remained under 24-h curfew (Aljazeera, 2020h).

In Germany, after easing the restrictions a few days ago, it is reported that Volkswagen was gearing to resume production in their Wolfsburg factory on April 27 (Allan, 2020), the same decision was also taken by BMW company and other companies such as Mercedes, Jaguar Land Rover, and others reopening in a few days (Reuters, 2020f). This came as some protests were witnessed in Berlin as people demanded the easing of lockdown measures to allow them to return to work (Reuters, 2020d). In the United States, as some states started reopening businesses, the airline industry, which was yet to resume, received support funds amounting to $9.5 billion -taking their bailout total from the US Treasury to $12.4 billion, with the first disbursement received on April 20 (Landay and Shephardson, 2020).

Although those countries were gearing to resume business, others insisted on strict measures as cases continued to rise. For instance, the United Kingdom maintained the lockdown as it was still not safe from the virus infections (BBC, 2020i). Sri Lanka also extended the lockdown in the country to counter the increasing number of cases (AFP, 2020b). Honduras was even considering extending the lockdown by at least one more week until May 3 (Reuters, 2020h). In India, Prime Minister Modi urged his citizens to piously adhere to the nationwide lockdown to contain the rising cases that came amid the month-long curfew (The Straits Times, 2020d).

DAY 150—APRIL 28, 2020
By April 28, it became official that the number of COVID-19 infection cases had exceeded the 3 million (the WHO reported 2.95 million cases and 202,597
deaths) people and caused the death of over 211,000 people globally. Of the confirmed cases, over 1 million were reported in the United States while a quarter of reported deaths from the virus coming from the United States. The number of deaths in the country (59,266) even surpassed the total of those who died during the Vietnam War between 1955 and 1975, where nearly 58,200 people died (Woodward, 2020). In New York, it was reported that for every four people, one of them had contracted the coronavirus. This is after almost 300,000 cases had been confirmed, and more than 17,500 deaths were reported in the city alone. These numbers in the United States eclipse those of other reported regions. For instance, as of 28th, the total number of reported cases in Africa (35,676) was far much less than the total number of deaths (59,266) reported in the United States on the same day. In addition, they were more than the total number of deaths (52,661) in Italy and the United Kingdom, which were leading in terms of reported deaths in Europe (Worldometer, 2020). To reduce these unprecedented trends, some states in the United States started testing for asymptomatic residents such as delivery drivers, rideshare drivers, and others. This came as most of the states were planning to reopen by easing the lockdown restrictions, amidst opposition from President Trump, and the latest, Judge Clay Jenkins of Dallas County, who mentioned the solution, for now, was to follow science and people to stay at home (Holcombe, 2020).

Besides the United States, other countries that are yet to experience some reductions in a number of cases include Russia, where President Vladimir Putin stated that the country was bracing for a new and grueling phase of the pandemic (Llyushina, 2020). His statement came at a time when the number of confirmed cases had continued to stabilize, and the country performed significantly well to reduce casualties. Italy, though determined to ease its lockdown restrictions, was experiencing some new cases, with its numbers reaching beyond the 200,000 mark. According to the WHO, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and parts of Asia were still not yet out of risk; hence, caution was required even as some actions such as easing the restrictions were being taken.

This came as EU experts warned that the world would have to wait longer for the vaccine, which would not be ready until the end of 2021, especially considering the cost implications, and other processes that have to be accomplished (Cullen, 2020). In relation to this, in New York City, it was reported that medical personnel had started testing Famotidine; an over-the-counter heartburn medication could cure COVID-19 (Lentile, 2020). This came as human trials had also started in Germany where BioNTech, a pharmaceutical company was testing its vaccine on volunteers, with 12 participants already having received the dose as from April 23 (Aljazeera, 2020). As solutions for the COVID-19 continued to be sought, some diplomatic disharmony was witnessed when India canceled orders for 500,000 rapid test kits from China after claiming that they were “faulty,” and also went forth to withdraw some of the kits that were already in use in several states (BBC, 2020b). China responded harshly and claimed that it was unfair and irresponsible for India to label Chinese products as “faulty” (Business Today, 2020a).

In sports, following the unseen end for the pandemic, French authorities stated that there was no hope for “big sporting affairs” to come back until September in the years, thus, throwing the French Football season in disarray, thus, causing them to be canceled (Aarons and Lowe, 2020). The cancellation came as other countries like Germany had already announced that the football season (Bundesliga) would return in a date to be confirmed albeit under closed doors (Bassell, 2020). Regarding the Olympics, the Olympics International Committee stated that it would cancel the event coming in the next year if the pandemic would not have ended (Schad, 2020).

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CHAPTER 3  The Third 50 Days: A Detailed Chronological Timeline

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