|  |
| --- |
| **ADDRESS** **BY****H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI****PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA****TO THE NATION****ON THE COVID-19 (CORONA VIRUS)** **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES****21ST MARCH, 2020****STATE HOUSE – ENTEBBE** |

Countrymen and Countrywomen,

Greetings to you all, again.

A few days ago, on the 18th of March, 2020, I addressed you on the dangerous situation of the corona-virus. Up to now, Uganda, by God’s mercy, has not yet recorded even a single case of this terrible virus. Nevertheless, we must fine-tune our strategy against this enemy. In my address of the 18th of March, 2020, I had directed the Health authorities to allow people, Ugandans and non-Ugandans, coming into the country from abroad, even from category I (one) as well as the others. However, partly due to the indiscipline of some of the people, we have now deiced to review that position and tighten preventive measures.

Consequently, we have decided to take the following measures:

1. To prohibit all in-coming passengers whether by air, land or water. In order to actualize this, we have decided to prohibit all passenger-planes, coming from outside Uganda, from landing at any of the Airports of Uganda. Only cargo planes will be allowed to fly into and out of Uganda. Also to be allowed in are planes on account of emergency or the UN planes involved in the Relief work and other UN operations as will be agreed with the mandated Government authorities. The crews of these cargo or UN mission planes will be accommodated in locations agreed with the concerned authorities. Domestic flights will continue for now. In conformity with International Law, this prohibition of in-coming passenger-planes will come into force 24 hours from mid-night tonight, the 21st of March, 2020.

2. Pending the evolving of an EAC Health Response Plan to the Pandemic by the East Africa Ministers of Health, no person, Ugandan or otherwise, will be allowed to enter Uganda by land or water except for drivers and accompanying crews, not exceeding 3 persons, for cargo transport vehicles ─ trailers, lorries and other cargo vehicles. No buses, mini-buses, salon cars or boda-bodas will be allowed in the country. Also, pedestrians, walking on foot, or bicycle rider will not be allowed to enter Uganda or to enter Uganda by road, path or water; nor will they be allowed to exit by those means.

I call upon the LCIs in the border regions to work with the security forces to report and promptly confine anybody who comes in from the neighbouring countries without following this order. This measure will come into effect starting 1200 hours, tomorrow the 22nd of March, 2020, Sunday.

These measures are backed by the force of law as mandated by the Public Health Act and the Statutory Instrument signed by the Minister of Health. Anybody violating any one of them will be prosecuted and may suffer imprisonment or pay a heavy fine. This virus can cause alot of deaths. Yet, it is very easy to avoid. Remember that the crucial elements about the virus’ ability to infect are two:

(1) A sick person sneezing out (*kwetsyamura*) or coughing (*kukororra*) near you and the viruses of his invisible mucous or spittle being inhaled by you; and

(2) An infected person, after carelessly blowing his nose, touching a surface which you, then, also touch and carelessly, again touching your mouth, nose or eyes without washing your hands first with soap. That is all. Otherwise, the virus cannot enter your system.

I must also inform the Ugandans that I do not share excessive pessimism of some actors regarding the economy and its performance as a consequence of this virus. Yes, some sectors will definitely suffer. These are sectors of: tourism, entertainment, sports etc. However, the sector of manufacturing, if we act correctly, will boom. Uganda has been importing products to the tune of US$7billion per annum. With the exception of the petroleum products, this is a chance to end the haemmorhage caused by traders who go to foreign countries and turn our country into a super-market for foreign products. Now that corona has blocked these products, we are going to make them here. The Government will work out a package to actualize that.

All these measures are in addition to what I previously said on Wednesday last and will be in force for 32 days from Wednesday. The SOPs regarding the cargo transporters will be put out by the Ministry of Health.

The young people should be very careful. Previously, there was a belief that young people can easily survive this virus.

However, information is beginning to come in that quite abit of the people who are dying are young people.

I thank you.