

## Facing Massive Economic Depression, Western Governments Struggle with how to Lift Coronavirus Lockdowns

### News:

*The Trump administration is pushing to reopen much of the country next month, raising concerns among health experts and economists of a possible covid-19 resurgence if Americans return to their normal lives before the virus is truly stamped out.*

*Behind closed doors, President Trump — concerned with the sagging economy — has sought a strategy for resuming business activity by May 1, according to people familiar with the discussions.*

*In phone calls with outside advisers, Trump has even floated trying to reopen much of the country before the end of this month, when the current federal recommendations to avoid social gatherings and work from home expire, the people said. Trump regularly looks at unemployment and stock market numbers, complaining that they are hurting his presidency and reelection prospects, the people said.*

*Like others, they spoke on the condition of anonymity to reveal internal discussions.*

*Trump said at his daily briefing Thursday that the United States was at the “top of the hill” and added, “Hopefully, we’re going to be opening up — you could call it opening — very, very, very, very soon, I hope.” [Washington Post]*

*The coronavirus pandemic will turn global economic growth “sharply negative” this year, the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned.*

*Kristalina Georgieva said the world faced the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.*

*She forecast that 2021 would only see a partial recovery.*

*Lockdowns imposed by governments have forced many companies to close and lay off staff.*

*Earlier this week, a UN study said 81% of the world's workforce of 3.3 billion people had had their place of work fully or partly closed because of the outbreak. [BBC]*

### Comment:

Contagious diseases are natural and inevitable phenomena but the West's gross mismanagement of COVID-19 has resulted in social and economic disaster in Western countries and harm to the world more generally.

The proper way to contain epidemic outbreaks is through geographic cordoning. The Prophet (saw) said, «إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِالطَّاعُونَ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا» **“If you hear of a plague in a land do not enter it; and if it breaks out in the land where you stay, do not leave.”**

China and the countries of East Asia did practice geographical cordoning to a degree. After initially suppressing news of the contagion, China did then seal the city of Wuhan, limiting entry into and out of the infected area. Taiwan, Singapore and others restricted entry from China across their borders. But Western countries failed completely to close down international travel, including from China, even during the peak of the epidemic in Wuhan. Inevitably, the disease spread quickly and widely within Europe and then America. It was

only then that travel restrictions began to be imposed internationally but still not domestically. For example, New York has the greatest extent of the disease within America, so the New York region should have been isolated from the rest of America just as the Chinese isolated Wuhan from the rest of China, instead of allowing the disease to spread throughout the United States.

In place of geographical cordoning, the West have applied the policy of lockdowns and what they call social distancing, bringing public life to a halt and forcing citizens to remain in their homes. This policy contradicts the initial medical scientific opinion and was adopted by Western governments only because of public panic over the epidemic, basing this policy on unsubstantiated modelling projecting significant control over the spread of the disease if this step was taken. There are three reasons for panic in the West: firstly, their deviation from religion and trust in Allah (swt); secondly, their commercialised media which seeks to exaggerate and scandalise every issue in order to attract a greater number of readers, listeners and viewers; and thirdly, their corrupt politics that leads opposition politicians to attack government policies irrespective of whether they are valid or not. It was this that led Western governments to reverse their initial policies and impose social distancing and public lockdowns.

It is wrong to completely shut down public life. It is those who are unwell that need to be kept at home and not those who are healthy. The Prophet (saw) said: «لَا تُوردُوا المُمْرِضَ عَلَى الْمُسِيحِ» **“A sick person must not be brought among the healthy.”**

Additionally, those with previous conditions, or the elderly may take special precautions, in accordance with genuine medical advice, as the Prophet (saw) said: «لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ» **“No harm and no harming.”**

The healthy must struggle even harder during epidemics to sustain public life on behalf of those who are ill. Economic life must continue in order to provide for everyone. And social life must continue to provide familial and community support to all. Social life is not as the West understand it, which is to engage in individual selfish pleasures; social life is to visit and spend time with others, particularly family and relatives, and attend to their needs. This is all the more important when so many are unwell.

Regarding lifting the lockdown, the West is employing two strategies. First, they are waiting for the virus to spread through the entire population so that the peak of the incidence of the disease is passed, though without general testing it is difficult to corroborate this. The West has failed to conduct adequate testing, or even to publish results of sample testing of the general population. Second, they are beginning to build public opinion against lockdowns, so that governments can then claim that they are reopening public life under public pressure.

With Allah’s permission, the Muslim Ummah shall soon re-establish the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State on the method of the Prophet (saw) and the world shall witness a far more rational, effective and humanitarian approach to all of man’s affairs in life.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by  
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