



UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

P.M.B. 1154, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

17th May, 2020

COVID-19 PANDEMIC: MESSAGE OF HOPE AND GOODWILL TO ALL UNIBEN STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Dear UNIBEN Students,

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), which originated from Wuhan, Hubei, China on December 1, 2019, engulfed Europe, North America, and within 12 weeks spread all over the world with devastating consequences. Its human-to-human mode of transmission via respiratory droplets made students' gatherings and socialisation at lecture halls, laboratories, common rooms, readings rooms, halls of residence, restaurants, etc., unsafe. Consequently, on the 23rd of March 2020, the Federal Government directed all schools and tertiary institutions closed to curtail the spread of the disease in Nigeria.

When I approved the notice that all University of Benin students should go home on the 23rd of March 2020 in line with the federal government directive, I thought within weeks you will all be back to school to resume your studies as the number of Covid-19 confirmed cases as of March 23, 2020 was just 35 with no death and 2 discharged., Unfortunately, eight weeks after, the situation is far from being safe. As of May 16, 2020, the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases in Nigeria has risen to 5,621 with 1472 discharged and 176 deaths in 34 states and the Federal Capital Territory, and the number is increasing daily! This is alarming and sad, thus making it inexpedient for the Federal Government to reopen the schools now. Indeed, these past few weeks have been filled with pain, fear, despair, emotional trauma, uncertainties and horrible news of deaths from Covid-19 all over the world.

We must commend the efforts of the Federal Government and its Agencies in fighting the virus in our dear country. Edo state government, where the University is located, is continuously working tirelessly to curb the spread of the disease and its attendant consequences. We are all involved. But there will be no UNIBEN without our good and brilliant students. You are our joy for today and hope for tomorrow. We cherish you as leaders, professionals, scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs and business gurus of tomorrow. My thought goes to you all as I imagine your vulnerability, despair, pain and uncertainty in a time like this. Our parents are no doubt saddled with more responsibilities at this trying time-safety and provisions for the children in the face of dwindling economic resources. I am moved to send this piece of advice and message of hope and goodwill because I love you all:

1. Please, stay safe for the sake of your bright future, parents, guardians and loved ones.
2. Kindly obey all Covid-19 safety rules, restrict physical contacts and crowded areas.
3. The economic situation is becoming harder due to restrictions on movement and economic activities; goods are becoming scarce and prices are going up; please conserve your resources and avoid waste.

4. Above all, as students, do not forget your academic activities - remember that after Covid-19, academic activities will resume. Therefore, whatever you do, devote at least four hours daily to your academic activities. This is the time to catch up with your courses, improve on your reading skills and general knowledge, identify your areas of academic weakness and overcome them.
5. For our final year and post graduate students grab this opportunity to work closely with our dedicated lecturers, your project supervisors to fast-track the completion of your respective project/thesis upon resumption.

Finally, please stay safe, healthy and remain academically active as we look forward to having you back in school soonest.

Greatest UNIBEN students!



Prof. Lilian Imuetinyan Salami
Vice-Chancellor