



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

August 24, 2023

Case No. FL-2021-00033

Gary Ruskin
4096 Piedmont Ave. #963
Oakland, CA 94611

Dear Mr. Ruskin:

As we noted in our letter dated July 24, 2023, we are processing your request for material under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552. The Department of State ("Department") has identified an additional 34 responsive records subject to the FOIA. We have determined 28 records may be released in part and 6 records must be withheld in their entirety.

An enclosure explains the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made redactions, the applicable FOIA exemptions are marked on each record. The records withheld in full are exempt from release pursuant to FOIA Exemption 1, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(1). The document identification numbers for the records withheld in full are: B-00002002415, B-00002002414, B-00002002412, B-00002002168, B-00002002167, and B-00002002087. Where applicable, the Department has considered the foreseeable harm standard when reviewing these records and applying FOIA exemptions. All non-exempt material that is reasonably segregable from the exempt material has been released and is enclosed.

We will keep you informed as your case progresses. If you have any questions, your attorney may contact Sarah M. Suwanda, Trial Attorney, at sarah.m.suwanda@usdoj.gov or (202) 305-3196. Please refer to the case number, FL-2021-00033, and the civil action number, 20-cv-08415, in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diamonece Hickson", with a large, stylized initial "D" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Diamonece Hickson
Chief, Litigation and Appeals Branch
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures: As stated.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

- (b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:
- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
 - 1.4(b) Foreign government information
 - 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
 - 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
 - 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
 - 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction
- (b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| ARMSEXP | Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c) |
| CIA PERS/ORG | Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g) |
| EXPORT CONTROL | Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c) |
| FS ACT | Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004 |
| INA | Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f) |
| IRAN | Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505 |
- (b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information
- (b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
- (b)(6) Personal privacy information
- (b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:
- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
 - (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - (D) disclose confidential sources
 - (E) disclose investigation techniques
 - (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
- (b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

- NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002415

(b)(1); (b)(5)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002414

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

B-00002002412

From: "SMART Core" <svcSmarrHBtsEWsSPrec@state.sgov.gov>

(b)(6)

CC: (b)(6)

Subject: Taipei Communique: Cross-Strait Relations, Taiwan's Foreign Relations, Domestic Politics, China Domestic Politics, and Hong Kong

Date: Fri, 14 Aug 2020 04:49:24 -0400

~~**SECRET**~~
~~Sensitive~~



Info Office: s_p_eap, s_p_main

MRN: 20 TAIPEI 363
Date/DTG: Aug 14, 2020 / 140848Z AUG 20
From: AIT TAIPEI
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, CN, TW
Captions: SENSITIVE
Pass Line: AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
Subject: Taipei Communique: Cross-Strait Relations, Taiwan's Foreign Relations, Domestic Politics, China Domestic Politics, and Hong Kong

1. (U) This edition of the Taipei Communique includes highlights of what AIT political officers heard and observed July 31–August 7.

Cross-Strait Relations

(b)(1)

2. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

3. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Taiwan's Foreign Relations

(b)(1)

4. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

5. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Domestic Politics

(b)(1)

6. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

7. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

8. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Taiwan Presidential SecGen Resigns, Five Legislators Arrested Over Corruption Scandals

9. (SBU) President Tsai Ing-wen moved quickly to replace Presidential Office Secretary General Su Jia-chyuan following Su's August 3 resignation. Su resigned amidst bribery

allegations against his nephew, DPP legislator Su Chen-Ching. Media speculated that Tsai's rapid appointment of David Lee, formerly head of the Straits Exchange Foundation and National Security Council Secretary General, was designed to prevent infighting between DPP factions for a plum position. Lee is a career diplomat and former KMT member who crossed party lines to join the Tsai Administration in 2016. Five other incumbent and former legislators were also implicated in the same bribery scandal, including two KMT legislators, former DPP Foreign Minister Mark Chen, and the chairman of the New Power Party (NPP). Several sitting legislators were formally arrested on court orders on August 4. Despite a recent focus on alleged DPP corruption, the KMT remained relatively restrained in its response, only posting a video on Facebook highlighting allegations that Su Chen-Ching had allegedly accepted NTD 20 million (USD 690,000) in bribes, more than double the amount allegedly accepted by the KMT legislators involved. President Tsai issued public comments calling on public servants to avoid even the appearance of malfeasance.

China Domestic Politics

Vietnamese Rep. Assesses PRC Leadership Dynamics

10. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Public Security Confiscating and Cancelling Passports in Wuhan

11. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Hong Kong

(b)(1)

12. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Signature:

CHRISTENSEN

Classified By:

Name: Christensen, W. Brent, Title: Director

Office: EXEC

Agency: AIT

Reason:

1.4 (b), (d)

Declassify On:

2045/08/14

Drafted By:

TAIPEI: (b)(6)

Cleared By:

POL (b)(6)

Approved By:

EXEC: (b)(6)

Released By:

TAIPEI: (b)(6)

Info: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; OSD WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; CIA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; DIA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI *ROUTINE*; COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI *ROUTINE*; COMSOPAC HONOLULU HI *ROUTINE*; USARPAC INTEL FT SHAFTER HI *ROUTINE*; PACAF HICKAM AFB HI *ROUTINE*; COMMARFORPAC *ROUTINE*; CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE *ROUTINE*; ZEN/AUCKLAND, AMCONSUL CHENGDU, AMCONSUL

XMT:

Action Post: NONE
Dissemination Rule: DIS_S_P_EAP, DIS_S_P_main

SECRET
Sensitive

Sender: "SMART Core" <svcSmarrHBtsEWsSPrec@state.sgov.gov>

(b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	
CC:	
Subject:	READY TO PRINT: Package 202004794 (SBU) Mission China's 2018 Reporting on C oronaviruses and the Wuhan Institute of Vi rology (WIV) has been forwarded on to S
Date:	Mon, 20 Apr 2020 14:03:09 -0400

Package 202004794 (~~SBU~~) Mission China's 2018 Reporting on Coronaviruses and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) has been forwarded on to S on 20-Apr-2020 02:03:03 PM and is ready for printing.

The following recipients also received an e-mail that this package has been forwarded on to the Principal:

EAP, C, CGRCU, GPA, INR, OES, P, S/ES, S/ES-S, S/P

FOR: S

ORGANIZATION: EAP

CO-DRAFTER BUREAU:

PACKAGE SUBJECT: (~~SBU~~) Mission China's 2018 Reporting on Coronaviruses and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV)

DOCTYPE: Note

LINK: 202004794 Package

Please note that the package link will expire 2 weeks after the e-mail is sent, for security reasons. If this link is expired, please use the Advanced Search to find the package by typing in the S/ES ID number.

Sender:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	

Everest_T <Everest_T@state.sgov.gov>

From:	(b)(6)
To:	(b)(6)
CC:	(b)(6) EAP-ANP-Office-DL <EAP-ANP-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>; EAP-CM-global-DL <EAP-CM-global-DL@state.sgov.gov>; (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
Subject:	RE: U.S. Embassy Kolonia Response Regarding COVID-19 FSM Needs and PRC Potential Responses
Date:	Fri, 27 Mar 2020 10:29:42 -0400

DECLASSIFIED

(+ ANP office distro, DAS Fritz, EAP/CM leadership and global team)

Lt Col (b)(6) —

Thank you so much for this incredibly insightful and well-written analysis of PRC efforts to control the narrative and otherwise influence the FSM, and your great analysis of FSM's needs and the difficulty they are having in articulating them.

I'm looping in others here so that they have access to this helpful info.

Many thanks,

(b)(6)

Deputy Director, Office of Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island Affairs (EAP/ANP)

U.S. Department of State

Tel: (b)(6) • Unclass email: (b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 8:23 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc:

Declassification Authority: Geoffrey W. Chapman, Senior Reviewer, A/GIS/IPS
8/16/2023

(b)(6)

Subject: U.S. Embassy Kolonia Response Regarding COVID-19 FSM Needs and PRC Potential Responses

Mr. Ambassador,

Per Ambassador Cantor's instruction, the below narrative responds to your queries regarding FSM COVID-19 needs, PRC potential assistance, and USG options regarding strategic narrative. We are happy to provide further information or clarification as required.

U.S. Embassy Kolonia Response Regarding COVID-19 FSM Needs and PRC Potential Responses

(b)(1)

PRC Offer of Assistance to the FSM Likely to be Unfettered

(b)(1)

PRC Has Provided Little Real COVID-19 Assistance to the FSM

~~(C)~~ To date, the PRC has provided very little in actual assistance to the FSM with the following exceptions:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

(U) In mid-February, the FSM National Government and various FSM States reached out to their normal suppliers, primarily in China, and requested PPE. These requests all resulted in replies that no PPE was available as manufacturers in China and India were holding on to all stocks for domestic use.

(U) On 22 February, the Tan Siu Lin Foundation donated 21,000 surgical masks to the FSM. Dr. Tan Siu Lin is Honorary Consul of the FSM to Hong Kong, the founder of Tan Holdings Corporation which operates various businesses in Micronesia and China, and a staunch advocate of PRC investment in the FSM.

Technical Assistance

(U) On 10 March, China and Pacific Island Countries held a video conference (VTC) to share experience and information on fighting COVID-19, bringing together officials from Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Health Commission, Chinese health and epidemiological experts, and officials and health experts from all 10 Pacific island countries that have diplomatic relations with China. [i]

(U) The Chinese side briefed on the latest developments in relation to China's fight against COVID-19, saying that President Xi Jinping personally commands and deploys the epidemic prevention and control efforts and the situation is increasingly trending in a positive direction, with production and normal life gradually resumed. China claims that it has been actively engaged in international cooperation in an open, transparent and highly responsible manner. China briefed participants on measures taken to safeguard the health and safety of foreign nationals and international students in China from Pacific Island Countries. China also indicated a desire to "join hands" with Pacific Island Countries to step up information sharing, deepen cooperation on epidemic prevention, work in the spirit of solidarity and mutual assistance to break through the current difficulties, and protect regional and global public health security.

(U) Professor Wu Zunyou, Chief Epidemiologist of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Professor Wang Guiqiang, Chairman of the Department of Infectious Diseases of Peking University First Hospital briefed on the etiology, routes of transmission, epidemiological developments, China's response and clinical treatment and answered dozens of questions regarding the viral information, protective measures for medical staff, targeted prevention and control, port of entry screening and quarantine, therapeutic solutions and vaccine development.

(U) On 18 March, the PRC Embassy to the FSM shared the PRC official website of The Knowledge Center for China's Experiences in response to COVID-19 (<https://covid19.alliancebrh.com>). The Website provides a PRC State Council Information Office briefing on China's science-based treatment of severe COVID-19 cases in Wuhan and a briefing on China's Experience on COVID-19 Response. The website also provides various briefings on clinical protocols for the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19, experiences and case studies share by PRC Provincial Authorities, and recommended prevention and control protocols.[ii]

PRC Attempts to Control the Narrative

(U) In mid to late February, the PRC Embassy to the FSM attempted to control the narrative over the nature and severity of COVID-19.

~~(C)~~ On 10 February, The Kaselehlie Press, the only print media outlet active in the FSM, published an article by the PRC Ambassador to the FSM.[iii] The article, titled, "Keep Calm and Work Shoulder to Shoulder to Fight the 2019-nCoV," argued that COVID-19 is not as "horrible

as people may imagine," and compared to H1N1, MERS, and Ebola, it has a low mortality rate, is "totally preventable, controllable, and curable." The article also expounded on PRC transparency, responsible behavior, and cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). The article implores the FSM to heed and comprehend the professional opinions of the WHO, respect facts and science, and view the epidemic in an objective and rational manner to avoid unnecessary panic.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)

Messaging – What Works and What Does Not

(b)(1)

What The FSM Needs

(b)(1)

[i] "H.E. Ambassador Huang Zheng Attends Video Conference of Health Experts on COVID-19 between China and Pacific Island Countries," PRC Embassy to the FSM Website, <http://fm.china-embassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1755322.htm> (retrieved March 26, 2020)

[ii] "Fighting COVID-19: The Chinese Way," PRC Embassy to the FSM Website, <http://fm.chinaembassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1761386.htm> (retrieved March 26, 2020)

[iii] Huang, Zheng. "Keep Calm and Work Shoulder to Shoulder to Fight the 2019-nCoV," *The Kaselehlie Press*, February 10, 2020.

[iv] "H.E. Ambassador Huang Zheng Meets with Dr. Eunyong Ko, WHO Country Liason Officer to the FSM," PRC Embassy to the FSM Website, <http://fm.china-embassy.org/eng/xwdt/t1747348.htm> (retrieved March 26, 2020)

[v] "Extended Travel Restrictions Allow FSM to Build Health Infrastructure to Deal with COVID-19," *The Kaselehlie Press*, February 21, 2020.

Very Respectfully,

LtCol (b)(6)

SDO/DATT USDAO Kolonia

Wk: +(b)(6)

Mob: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

WhatsApp: (b)(6)

Wk: (b)(6)

Sender:

(b)(6)

Recipient:

(b)(6)

EAP-ANP-Office-DL <EAP-ANP-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>;

EAP-CM-global-DL <EAP-CM-global-DL@state.sgov.gov>;

(b)(6)

Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

From: "Yu, Miles" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
CC: EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>
Subject: RE: For Clearance: Readout of Congressional China Task Force Briefing
Date: Fri, 29 May 2020 15:56:04 -0400

(b)(6)

Thanks for this. I clear, only thing to do is to change tenants to tenets.

Cheers!

Miles

M. Miles Yu
Policy Planning (S/P)
Office of the Secretary
Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(c)

~~Sensitive~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2020 12:41 PM
To: (b)(6) Yu, Miles
Cc: EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL
Subject: RE: For Clearance: Readout of Congressional China Task Force Briefing

Hi Miles, can you please clear ASAP? Thanks (b)(6)

~~Official-Sensitive~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) China Desk, Office:EAP/CM, Agency:U.S. Department of State
Declassify On: 5/28/2045
Reasons: (Derived) Classification derived from previous message(s)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 6:59 PM
To: Yu, Miles

Cc: (b)(6) EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL

Subject: For Clearance: Readout of Congressional China Task Force Briefing

Hi (b)(6)

Please see below the readout from today's meeting for your review. Thank you much! Best regards, (b)(6)

~~(S//NF)~~ During a May 28 meeting with Congressman Michael McCaul and other House members of the China Task Force, EAP Assistant Secretary David Stilwell and Miles Yu of the Policy Planning Staff provided an overview of the Administration's policy towards the PRC.

Beijing's Perspective

(b)(1)

Administration's Policy Response

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

COVID-19

(b)(1)

Economics

(b)(1)

~~Official-Sensitive~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) - China Desk, Office:EAP/CM, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 5/28/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender: "Yu, Miles"

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Recipient:

(b)(6)

EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

B-00002002168

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

B-00002002167

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

B-00002002087

From: "Stilwell, David R"
To: Daniel Tobin (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: your question last night on Xi taking credit
Date: Mon, 13 Apr 2020 23:53:08 +0000

Many thanks; gathering up all the evidence we can before it gets erased.

From: Daniel Tobin (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2020 2:04 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) USINDOPACOM China (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) PACOM (b)(6)
Subject: your question last night on Xi taking credit

Sir, this might be turning point you referred to:

In the mid-February issue of 求实 ("Seeking Truth") they published Xi's 3 February speech to the Politburo Standing Committee which referenced Xi's having taken actions at 7 January Politburo Standing Committee meeting and further actions on 20 and 22 January.

Here's the Qiushi text:

http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2020-02/15/c_1125572832.htm

However, Bill Bishop has translated some key passages below.

After the outbreak of the new coronavirus pneumonia in Wuhan, on January 7, when I chaired a meeting of the standing committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, I made a request for the prevention and control of the new coronavirus pneumonia. On January 20, I issued a special instruction on the prevention and control of the epidemic, pointing out that we must attach great importance to the epidemic and do our best to prevent and control it. On January 22, in view of the rapid spread of the epidemic and the severe challenges faced by the prevention and control work, I explicitly asked Hubei Province to implement comprehensive and strict control over the outflow of personnel. On the first day of the first lunar month, I again chaired a meeting of the standing committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee to restudy, redeploy and remobilize the prevention and control of the epidemic, especially the treatment of patients.

武汉新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情发生后，1月7日，我主持召开中央政治局常委会会议时，就对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情防控工作提出了要求。1月20日，我专门就疫情防控工作作出批示，指出必须高度重视疫情，全力做好防控工作，要求各级党委和政府及有关部门把人民群众生命安全和身体健康放在第一位，采取切实有效措施，坚决遏制疫情蔓延势头。1月22日，鉴于疫情迅速蔓延、防控工作面临严峻挑战，我明确要求湖北省对人员外流实施全面严格管控。正月初一，我再次主持召开中央政治局常委会会议，对疫情防控特别是患者治疗工作进行再研究、再部署、再动员，并决定成立中央应对疫情工作领导小组。

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: bill=sinocism.com@substack1.sinocism.com <bill=sinocism.com@substack1.sinocism.com> on behalf of Bill Bishop at Sinocism <bill@sinocism.com>

Sent: Monday, February 17, 2020 2:28:50 PM

To: (h)(6)@outlook.com (h)(6)@outlook.com

Subject: Xi's standing committee speech; Is the CCP close to declaring "victory"?; US-China tech war doesn't stop for a vir...

[Read in browser](#)

This post is only for paying subscribers of [Sinocism](#), but it's ok to forward every once in a while. Was it forwarded

Xi's standing committee speech; Is the CCP close to declaring

 [Bill Bishop](#) Feb 17   

The CCP may be close to declaring “victory” over the virus everywhere but in Hubei. The official number of new cases has declined, and the government has strengthened prevention and control of the novel coronavirus outbreak (Xinhua [Chinese](#), [English](#)):

避免了可能出现的更大范围暴发流行，全国疫情形势出现积极向好趋势

The possibility of a wider epidemic outbreak has been avoided through strengthened prevention and control measures.

However, the "Two Meetings" scheduled for the first week of March in Beijing looks like they will be delayed to April. A delay from a delay would conflict somewhat with the message that the situation is nearly under control.

The latest Qiushi magazine published Xi's February 3rd speech to the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC). In early January if not earlier and his aides were already so concerned about it that it rose to the level of PBSC discussion.

Xi opened his speech (在中央政治局常委会会议研究应对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情工作时的讲话) by saying:

After the outbreak of the new coronavirus pneumonia in Wuhan, on January 7, when I chaired a meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee, I issued a special instruction on the prevention and control of the epidemic, pointing out that we must attach great importance to the prevention and control work, I explicitly asked Hubei Province to implement comprehensive and strict control measures. The Politburo Standing Committee to restudy, redeploy and remobilize the prevention and control of the epidemic, especially the treatment and prevention work.

武汉新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情发生后，1月7日，我主持召开中央政治局常委会会议时，就对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情防控工作作出重要指示，把人民群众生命安全和身体健康放在第一位，采取切实有效措施，坚决遏制疫情蔓延势头。1月22日，中央政治局常委会会议研究应对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情工作时的讲话，决定成立中央应对疫情工作领导小组，统筹推进新冠肺炎疫情防控和经济社会发展工作。

I do not see the publication of this speech and the exposure of Xi's earlier than understood involvement as some credit for the coming success while also employing the hallowed CCP strategy of pushing blame for problems to Premier Sun Chunlan, may be nervous.

It is also part of the emerging and entirely predictable propaganda narrative that only with the strong leadership of Xi Jinping can we achieve modernizing governance and the superiority of our system. Expect to see a surge in propaganda about Xi's leadership.

To shape this narrative we are already seeing increasing constriction of media reporting on the outbreak and even on the death toll.

Is victory really in reach, or has the Party decided it needs to convince everyone victory is within reach so most people will support the Party while they cover up the true extent of the devastation and death in Hubei.

And is this epidemic and its initial mishandling the crack in Xi's armor that so many inside the system have been waiting for?

Thanks for reading.

《求是》杂志发表习近平总书记重要文章《在中央政治局常委会会议研究应对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情工作时的讲话》

CCTV Evening News report on the Qiushi article”

The article pointed out that, on the whole, the judgment of the central committee of the party on the situation of the epidemic is correct.

The article pointed out that we should do a good job in publicity, education and public opinion guidance, coordinate and promote the work of epidemic prevention and control.

First, we need to strengthen policy enforcement and strengthen confidence in combating the epidemic. Second, we need to strengthen the work of epidemic prevention and control.

Xi stresses centralized leadership in virus battle - Global Times on Xi's 2.3 speech

Analysts noted that Xi, the leader of the Party and the country, is leading the fight against the COVID-19 in a senior-level meeting included so many details, direct instructions and harsh criticisms on the problems, especially on the problems of the government.

Shen Yi, head of Fudan University's Cyberspace Governance Research Institute, said that the article shows an effective way to implement the instructions from the CPC Central Committee and also didn't reflect the real situation of the government.

"The CPC Central Committee is aware of a situation on January 7, but due to this kind of problem(inefficient government) has been generally fixed and recovered," Song said.

The article also emphasized the importance of taking control of the narrative and winning over public opinion.

The text of the speech 习近平：在中央政治局常委会会议研究应对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情工作时的讲话

In the qiushi reprint of Xi's 2.3 speech to the PBSC he uses the term "I 我" 13 times"

In his speech Xi also decried the eating of wildlife:

"We have long recognized the risks of consuming wildlife, but the "game industry" is still huge and poses a major threat to public health. We must strengthen supervision, resolutely ban and crack down on illegal wildlife markets and trade, resolutely eradicate the bad habits of eating wildlife."

Xi's article on fighting novel coronavirus epidemic to be published - Xinhua

The article underlines the need to safeguard social stability, the promotion of public education and communication.

It also stresses improving the country's emergency management system and capacity of handling urgent, difficult

Xi Jinping 'put China's top echelon on notice' in early days of coronavirus outbreak | South China Morning Post

The speech was delivered on February 3 and published in the party's bimonthly journal Qiushi on Saturday. It

In his speech, Xi also accused local officials of not carrying out edicts from the central government, vowing to

"I issued demands during a Politburo Standing Committee meeting on January 7 for work to contain the outbreak

Xi says China must keep economic, social order while battling coronavirus - Reuters

The epidemic had revealed "shortcomings and deficiencies" in national governance, he said, such as how the government's response was inadequate.

重磅！习近平战“疫”全攻略-新华网

Xinhua infographic on Xi's complete strategy in the war on the virus

China stifles foreign internet to control coronavirus coverage | Financial Times \$

Beijing is tightening access to the uncensored global internet, while carefully controlling its domestic news re

China's most popular VPN services, which allow foreign businesses and locals to circumvent internet censors and access Twitter and most foreign newspapers.

On Friday Xi chaired a meeting of the central committee for deepening overall reform - Xi Focus: Xi stresses i

President Xi Jinping on Friday stressed improving the mechanism for major epidemic prevention and control

Xi...specified the requirements at the 12th meeting of the central committee for deepening overall reform, which

Xi called for the assessment of revising laws and regulations concerning infectious disease prevention and treatment, and national security.

Comment: Interesting moment for Xi to bring up biosecurity.

Xi urged reforming and improving the disease prevention and control system to prevent major outbreaks, strengthen

Xi stressed improving the mechanism for major epidemic emergency response, and enhancing the coordinated

The system of treatment for major epidemics should also be improved, Xi said, encouraging the application of new treatment, and resource allocation.

Comment: Xi is not going to take away a lesson from this that decisionmaking is too centralized. It is going to**Friday CCTV Evening News on the reform commission meeting - 习近平主持召开中央全面深化改革委员会第****No mahjong, no card games: Hubei province in full lockdown as China battles coronavirus | South China Morning Post**

Under the new rules, all businesses will close and the province's 58 million people will not be able to leave the

Crowd numbers will be limited in stores that are allowed to remain open and there will be "collective coordin

"Disease control of the province has entered an important and difficult period," the provincial government said

Hubei Companies Need Government Approval Before Restarting Work - Bloomberg

Private vehicles that aren't used for virus-related activities will be temporarily barred in urban areas, while public transport has been halted, it said.

The official notice - 湖北省人民政府关于进一步强化新冠肺炎疫情防控的通告**Coronavirus: Xiaogan, China's second worst-hit city, bans people from leaving their homes | South China Morning Post**

Authorities trying to limit the spread of the coronavirus in Xiaogan – China's second worst-hit city – have taken

In Depth: Understaffed, Under-resourced and Overwhelmed — Coronavirus Early Response - Caixin

A review of the past 20 days in Wuhan shows how the city gradually toughened its approach to containing the

missed key windows for controlling the spread of the virus. Meanwhile, thousands of patients still remain in hospital.

Just 20 days ago, the Baibuting neighborhood was cheerfully celebrating a massive Lunar New Year event.

“It is like 20 years have passed, and so many things happened,” Li said.

It has been a tradition since 2000 that the 130,000-resident neighborhood holds a banquet similar to a Western one to celebrate the end of a mysterious disease.

“There was reportedly no human-to-human transmission, but many of us were concerned,” Li said. “We suggest that the government should be more proactive in preventing such a crisis.”

In Depth: The ‘People’s War’ Against the Epidemic in 16 Cities Across Hubei - Caixin

Caixin reporters visited 16 cities in the province and spoke with officials at epidemic prevention offices, medical experts, and community leaders. The experiences and effective measures by others may prove valuable for decision-makers in working out next-phase battle plans.

A close-up of the 16 cities reveals a public health system not equipped to address a severe crisis such as this one. Weaknesses include uneven medical resources, inconsistent control and prevention policies, chaotic management of emergency response, and a lack of coordination between different levels of government.

This business-as-usual approach directly resulted in large numbers of patients swamping unprepared hospitals. In some cities, the number of deaths was the second-highest after Wuhan and the third-highest number of confirmed cases in Hubei.

A doctor at a Huanggang hospital told Caixin that the first suspected patient was recorded Jan. 3, and the hospital was overwhelmed by the influx of patients.

Comment: The original Caixin story 封面报道之一|16城抗疫记录, the cover story for this week's issue, notes that on January 17 he "took a little risk" and ordered the first group of 32 patients in the city who were suspected of infection to be isolated.

在以色彩深浅表示感染程度的湖北省疫情分布图上，潜江和神农架两块是浅粉色。除却山深林密的神农架，其他15个地级市都不同程度地染上了疫情。

这缘于当地官员“冒了一点点不是太合规的风险”，市委书记吴祖云在武汉参加湖北省“两会”，获知一线情况后，立即下令启动应急预案。

Coronavirus: The Symptoms and What It Feels Like to Catch It - Bloomberg

Tiger Ye -- not his real name -- is a 21-year-old student in Wuhan...

Like many Chinese, Ye is critical of the government's response to the outbreak, especially the slow initial response. Thursday, as Beijing tries to gain control of the spiraling crisis.

"Hubei has missed one opportunity after another while they were trying to keep things under wraps," Ye said.

Four Deaths in One Family Show Danger of Wuhan's Home Quarantine Policy - Caixin

Chang Kai, a notable director at Hubei Film Studios, died on Feb. 14 from pneumonia caused by the virus also on Feb. 14, Caixin learned from one of Chang's former college classmates.

The story of their deaths starkly illuminates how authorities in the disease-stricken city may have mishandled the crisis.

In Wuhan, the coronavirus anguish as experienced by one family - The Washington Post

These days, Zhu is not just trying to be a good daughter and wife and mother and employee. She's also trying to survive the process....

Even once this is over, the family expects they, and Wuhan, will have to deal with new problems. The real estate market is still in a state of flux.

Comment: Hearing increasing numbers of stories of families in Hubei who have had multiple members die from the virus.

Comment: Hearing increasing numbers of stories about Hubei families that have lost multiple members to the virus

Recovered patients donate plasma to save more - Xinhua

Cured patients who were infected with COVID-19 are called upon to donate plasma as initial results had indicated that plasma from recovered patients can help fight the virus.

China highlights controlling virus transmission chains - Xinhua

Prevention and control measures, worked out by a joint mechanism, feature controlling the source of infection, cutting off the transmission chain, and treating patients, a press conference in Beijing...

Illegal activities of hunting, trading and eating wild animals have been harshly cracked down upon, Zhou said.

'Animals live for man': China's appetite for wildlife likely to survive virus - Reuters

For the past two weeks China's police have been raiding houses, restaurants and makeshift markets across the

Supreme People's Court wields the Criminal Law "Big Stick" in the Anti-Coronavirus Battle | Supreme People's Court

The Punishing Crimes and Violations of Obstruction Opinions and the Ensuring Positive Medical Order are in the hands of criminal justice institutions how the relevant criminal (and public security administration penalty) laws should be applied

PHOTOS: Life Goes On In The Epicenter Of The Coronavirus Outbreak : Goats and Soda : NPR

WHO-China expert team begins coronavirus field inspections - Xinhua

The expert team will go to Beijing, Guangdong Province and Sichuan Province to conduct inspections, said Mr. Wang

How Wenzhou, 900 km From Wuhan, Went Into Total Lockdown - Foreign Policy

one of the largest magnets for the city's diaspora has been Wuhan. Migrants from Wenzhou set up a chamber of commerce

3. Persis

I have been trying to avoid these rumors but after some recent conversations in the last week, and some current evidence, my hypothesis has moved from the leak of a genetically modified virus to a naturally occurring one that the lab was

Wuhan virologist warns of overseas-started 'leaked virus' conspiracy - Global Times

A research fellow from Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, the epicenter of the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, said

"I never released any information on reporting others and I am in great indignation for people who use my name to spread rumors," he said on Monday.

Chinese research lab denies rumours of links to first coronavirus patient | South China Morning Post

In a statement on Sunday, the Wuhan Institute of Virology denied that one of its employees was the outbreak's first patient

"Recently there has been fake information about Huang Yanling, a graduate from our institute, claiming that she was the first patient," the institute said

But releasing these guidelines at this moment only fuels the "conspiracy" theories - Biosafety guideline issue

The release of the guideline deals with chronic loopholes at laboratories, Yang Zhanqiu, a deputy director of t

"The mention of biosafety at labs by the ministry has nothing to do with some saying that the coronavirus leak

Laboratories in China have paid insufficient attention to biological disposal, Yang said.

Lab trash can contain man-made viruses, bacteria or microbes with a potentially deadly impact on human bein

Some researchers discharge laboratory materials into the sewer after experiments without a specific biological

科技部要求加强对实验室特别是对病毒的管理 - 国内 - 新京报网

Ministry of Science and Technology has issued a guiding opinion on "关于加强新冠病毒高等级病毒微生物

And this comment from Xi at the Friday reform meeting is interesting - "Xi called for the assessment of revisin
biosecurity, stressing that biosecurity should be included in the system of national security."

China should get ready for belt-tightening following virus outbreak - Global Times

"China will face decreased fiscal revenues and increased expenditures for some time to come, and the fiscal o
of China Central Committee. In this situation, it won't be feasible to adopt a proactive fiscal policy by expand
wrote in an article published on Qiushi, a magazine affiliated with the Communist Party of China Central Com

Liu's article sent a clear signal that China would not stimulate the economy by rolling out another massive mo

Due to the major impact of the coronavirus outbreak on businesses across the country, the Ministry of Finance

Liu Kun's article - 积极的财政政策要大力提质增效 - 求是网

China to step up financial support for epidemic control - Xinhua

The most urgent work for fiscal authorities at all levels is to increase financial input and roll out favorable pol

(CPC) Central Committee.

As of 9:00 p.m. Feb. 12, China has allocated a total of 78.53 billion yuan (about 11.3 billion U.S. dollars) of f

China's Coffers Are Depleted Just as Virus Spurs Spending - Bloomberg

More than half of mainland provinces expect slower expansion of revenue in 2020 than last year's average loo
fall...

Analysts are divided about how the shortfalls will be addressed. While economists from Citigroup Inc. to Chin
and Goldman Sachs believe that remains politically unpalatable.

China Factories Stand Ready to Go, But Where Are the Workers? - Caixin

Among 109 of its members surveyed last week between Feb. 11 and 14, some 69% involved in manufacturing
running by this week.

But despite reopening, resuming full production remained difficult due to staffing issues. Of the companies su
period for returning workers as the two biggest factors keeping their shops understaffed. When asked what the
respondents.

Beijing neighborhoods move to step up precautions - China Daily

People who return to Beijing from other places must isolate themselves for 14 days at home or designated site
effect immediately and violators will face legal liability.

北京一单位数十人被隔离 疾控中心称因一人返京即上班_政经频道_财新网

This is likely the reason for the new Beijing quarantine rules. A worker from an unidentified work unit (sound
to have the virus, and now dozens from his work unit are quarantined...now imagine this happening at compar

Catering Sector Suffers Major Losses as Diners Stay Away Over Lunar New Year - Caixin

The report released by the China Cuisine Association said the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on China's r
businesses are likely to face serious cash flow issues and difficulty obtaining financing in the coming months.

The Economic Fallout of the Coronavirus in Southeast Asia - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

The virus's ripple effects have hampered the economies of nearby countries, especially in Southeast Asia, in t

Yicai Global - Hainan Province Issues China's First Epidemic Risk Insurance to Get Firms Back to Work

Hainan, China's southernmost province, has introduced the country's first insurance against epidemic-related l

Balance needed between economic activity, virus watch - Global Times

We do not believe prevention and control are no longer needed. Instead, we appeal to scientific, targeted mea
consideration, and care more about the interests of local people rather than doing things only in a "politically c

Beijing Auto Show Becomes Latest Event to Be Delayed by Virus - Bloomberg

The new date for the Beijing International Automotive Exhibition, originally scheduled for April 21-30, will b

China Focus: China sees 45-pct drop in holiday travel, no "peak" expected - Xinhua

China will see a 45-percent drop of trips over the annual Spring Festival travel period due to the COVID-19 o

Drugmakers braced for coronavirus disruption to China supplies | Financial Times \$\$

China manufactures key ingredients in the global supply chain for antibiotics, diabetes drugs, painkillers and a

Europe braces for coronavirus-induced drug shortages – POLITICO

“We have seen there might be a possibility [of the] risk of shortages of supplies due to the coronavirus,” said
particularly in Hubei province.”

China to Postpone Annual NPC Session and Restrict Wide Animals Trade & Consumption – NPC Observer

The Council of Chairpersons decided on Monday, February 17 to convene the NPC Standing Committee (NPC

First, the NPCSC is expected to adopt a decision postponing this year's NPC annual session, which was origin

At this point, it is unclear whether the NPCSC will decide next week on a new date for the NPC session. Were **[全国人民代表大会议事规则] (which has the status of a national law), the NPC must convene its annual s**

Second, the NPCSC will also adopt a Decision on Prohibiting Illegal Trade in Wild Animals, Uprooting the P **[关于禁止非法野生动物交易、革除滥食野生动物陋习、切实保障人民群众生命健康安全的决定].**

China postpones year's biggest political gathering amid coronavirus outbreak | South China Morning Post

The state news agency Xinhua reported that the standing committee of the National People's Congress (NPC)

Zang Tiewei, a spokesman for the NPC legislative affairs commission, told Xinhua that deferring the March m

What I learned at the 2020 Munich Security Conference - The Washington Post

For the past four years, it has been impossible to go to a global affairs conference without discussing the rise o
Conference (MSC) turned out to be different from the theme that dominated the discourse. To paraphrase Jan

Bringing the East and West Together In Shared Commitment to Multilateralism - Transcript of Wang Yi's spee

As many world leaders noted, it is admirable that the Chinese government and people have shown firm resolve
strengths of China's system...

To date, confirmed cases outside China account for less than one percent of the world's total. It means China l

China's view is that as human society has entered the age of globalization, we must transcend the East-West d
differences, to see the international community as one global family...

the West also needs to eschew the subconscious belief in the superiority of its civilization and abandon its pre
the East, one with a system different from the West...

The initiative of building a community with a shared future is inspired by the traditional Chinese philosophy t

governance and represents the ultimate goal of multilateralism. It is a Chinese proposal on how to address todays
unremitting efforts to this end.

Comment: US policymakers should be under no illusions that Wang and the PRC's message, along with cash a

The West Is Winning - United States Department of State Secretary Pompeo speech at the Munich Security C

The West is winning. Freedom and democracy are winning. And by that, I don't mean just geographical nation
sovereignty. They're part of this idea of the West....

China encroaches on the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia. And on that po

And let's talk for a second about the other realm, cybersecurity. Huawei and other Chinese state-backed tech c

China demands silence on Taiwan and Hong Kong so that deals will keep flowing. It exacts pieces of national

China is increasingly trying to co-opt officials at the state and local level.. And this is happening all across Eu

Preaching clash of civilizations meant to reverse wheels of history: Chinese FM - Xinhua

"The so-called clash of civilizations is a false argument," Wang responded when asked whether China and the

Noting that the human civilization is quite advanced in the 21st century, Wang said if anyone is trying to prea

China has always advocated that all civilizations are equal and no one is superior to others as all civilizations

Those who clamor for the clash of civilizations subconsciously believe in the superiority of Western civilizati

As Prepared Remarks by Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper at the Munich Security Conference > U.S. DEPAR

China's growth over the years has been remarkable, but in many ways it is fueled by theft, coercion, and explo

Huawei and 5G are today's poster child for this nefarious activity...

We are not asking our partners to reject engagement with China; just the opposite.

We want you to show them the right path, and nudge them down it.

In the meantime, though, we ARE asking our friends to clearly choose a global system that supports democracy.

We want China to behave like a normal country that adheres to the international rules and order that generations have built.

And that means the Chinese government needs to change its policies and behaviors.

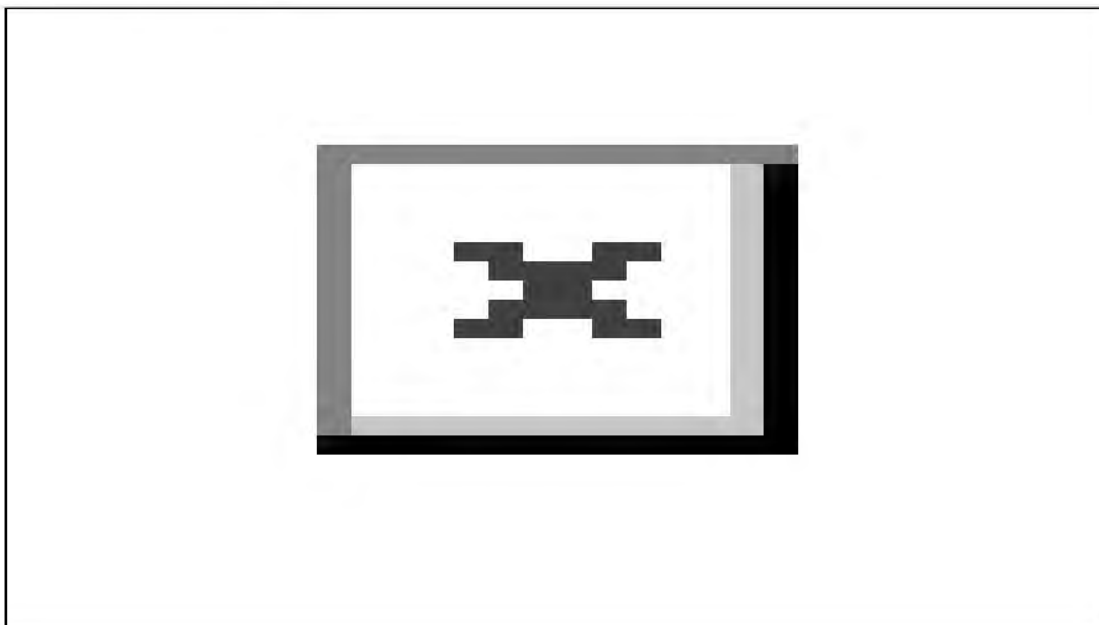
If the PRC will not change its ways, then defending this system must be our collective priority.

Chinese diplomat's challenge to Nancy Pelosi signals concerted fightback, starting with Huawei | South China Sea Watch

Rising from the audience of the Munich Security Conference, the chairwoman of the foreign affairs committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, was a vocal critic of China's human rights records.

"China, since its reform started 40 years ago, has introduced all kinds of Western technologies ... and China has threatened the political system? Do you really think that the democratic system is so fragile that it could be threatened by China's technologies?"

Video of the exchange:



US warnings about China are lies, Foreign Minister Wang says - CNBC

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Saturday that U.S. criticisms of Beijing were "lies" and blamed Wash

"The root cause of all these problems and issues is that the U.S. does not want to see rapid development and r
discussion at the Munich Security Conference.

Transcript of State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi's Exclusive Interview with Reuters

Does China believe that eventually it will have to have a military presence in the Middle East to ensure the se
Middle East?

Wang Yi: Well I'm afraid that many countries in the Middle East would not agree that the United States is pro

Think about this: In the past decades, how many wars has the US started in the Middle East? How much dama
stability and development to the Middle East, but rather endless turbulence and persistent poverty. In addition

Coronavirus: China accuses US of 'dark mentality and dangerous action' | South China Morning Post

People's Daily, a mouthpiece of the ruling Communist Party, published a commentary on Monday slamming

The commentary under the pen name Zhong Sheng — a homonym in Chinese for the "voice of China" — also h
pneumonia-like virus.

And it targeted US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's tweet on February 8 that the US would provide an addit
leadership in response to the outbreak".

The commentary -疫情面前，美方做了什么（钟声）**U.S.-China Feud Ensnarers Obscure UN Intellectual Property Agency - Bloomberg**

The fight over who heads the World Intellectual Property Organization, described by people familiar with the
leader in early March.

7. US**U.S. Weighs New Move to Limit China's Access to Chip Technology - WSJ**

The Commerce Department is drafting changes to the so-called foreign direct product rule, which restricts foreign companies from using American equipment to produce chips for Huawei Technologies Co., according to the people familiar with the effort...

"They don't want any fab in the world to produce anything for Huawei—that's the goal," one person said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Trump Effort to Keep U.S. Tech Out of China Alarms American Firms - The New York Times

The concerns, which have been simmering for months, have taken on new urgency as the Commerce Department considers a range of new restrictions on Chinese investment in the United States and proposed measures that would prevent American companies from doing business with China.

Trump Administration Considers Halting GE Venture's Engine Deliveries to China - WSJ

The administration may decline to issue a license allowing CFM International, a joint venture of GE and France's Safran, to deliver engines to China's Comac C919 jetliner, the latest in a planned family of new jets that is years behind schedule.

Some within the administration are concerned that the Chinese could reverse-engineer the CFM engines, allowing them to produce their own.

Cambridge caught in crossfire of US-China tech war | Financial Times

The battle for technological supremacy between China and the US risks damaging Cambridge's growing reputation as a global hub for artificial intelligence research.

"The risk is that we find ourselves stuck between two world powers, trying to appease both," said Alexi Drew, a senior research fellow at the Cambridge Centre for Alternative and Emerging Technologies.

Department of Commerce Renews Temporary General License for 45 Days | U.S. Department of Commerce

Today, the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) of the U.S. Department of Commerce announced it was extending the Temporary General License (TGL) for 45 days. The TGL was first implemented as a measure to prevent interruption of existing network communication systems in rural U.S. regions that rely on legacy technology (i.e., those not produced by Huawei or one of its listed affiliates).

Coronavirus fears force China into mass chicken cull | Financial Times \$\$

China is to begin importing live chickens from the US as feed shortages due to the coronavirus force poultry f

“There is no question China’s chicken population will fall sharply in the coming months,” said Qiu Cong of J

Farmers have slaughtered at least 100m young chickens because travel restrictions imposed to control the spre
Ning Zhonghua, a professor at China Agricultural University.

China Approves Imports of Live Poultry From U.S. - Reuters

Beijing had banned all trade in poultry products from the United States since 2015 due to outbreaks of avian i

But it lifted the ban on poultry meat imports in November 2019 as a concession to the United States ahead of

The new announcement would also allow for the import of live birds

Comment: And the pig population has been decimated by African Swine Flu. And the leadership looks increa

China's rural policy bank issues loans for spring farming preparation - Xinhua

As of Feb. 10, a total of 12 billion yuan (about 1.72 billion U.S. dollars) of loans had been issued by the Agric

Specifically, the bank allocated a total of 5.7 billion yuan of loans to support fertilizer reserves between Oct. 1

Investors Oppose Province’s SOE Bond Buyback - Caixin The Qinghai provincial government is facing oppositi

N.B.A. Expects to Lose ‘Hundreds of Millions’ From China Rift, Silver Says - The New York Times N.B.A. Comr
sponsorships and television revenue but that he believed there would “be a return to normalcy fairly soon.”...Silv

China Standoff Cost the NBA ‘Hundreds of Millions’ - WSJ \$\$ it was encouraging to the league when Yao Ming
man had a reserved seat in the front row of Radio City Music Hall. Yao, who refused to take the NBA’s calls du

Chinese FM meets Vatican counterpart - Xinhua Noting that Pope Francis has publicly expressed his love and b

China-Vatican exchanges over time and will open up more space for bilateral exchanges in the future, he added.

Macao casinos allowed to reopen after anti-virus closure - AP The Chinese territory of Macao will allow casin

Armed gang steals toilet rolls in panic-buying Hong Kong - AFP A gang of knife-wielding men jumped a deliver

U.S. warship sails through Taiwan Strait: MND - Focus Taiwan A United States warship sailed through the Taiw
fighter jets to monitor the movements of Chinese warplanes, according to the Ministry of National Defense (MN

ByteDance to name exclusive head for gaming, signaling ambitions for business: sources - Reuters Yan Shou,
like Honor of Kings, according to one of the people, asking not to be identified because the information isn't pub

Under Lockdown and Quarantine, China's Punk Rock Bands Are Taking the Mosh Pit Online With venues shut

E

China takes centre stage in global biodiversity push - Nature.com The meeting is the second of three rounds of
the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Kunming in October, and will replace the curr



This post is only for paying subscribers of Sinocism, but it's ok to forward every once in a while.

▪

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

Recipient: Daniel Tobin (b)(6)
(b)(6)

From: "Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: WaPo - Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables
Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 20:48:39 +0000

You should also copy (b)(6) so he's aware of the article as well.

Best regards,

Jamie Fouss

Consul General

U.S. Consulate Wuhan - DC Branch

From: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 4:41 PM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)

(b)(6) (Phnom Penh) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: WaPo - Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables

There will be another one from WSJ tomorrow. We're working on CDC guidance on a few items.

(b)(6)

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

[SharePoint](#) | [State.gov](#) | [InfoCentral](#)

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Wuhan)

Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 4:37 PM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)

(b)(6) (Phnom Penh) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: WaPo - Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables

All,

This one came out sooner than expected

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/28/senators-demand-answers-pompeo-wuhan-lab-cables/>

The facts that we are contributing to counter the argument that we didn't push for further investigation into our concerns are the details of cancellations of our requests to visit the lab. I also had to explain at length what a BFB is.

(b)(6)

text:

The State Department was warned two years ago of safety concerns at a Wuhan lab doing dangerous research on bat coronaviruses. Now,

two Democratic senators want to know if those warnings were ignored — and why, despite these warnings, the Trump administration reduced our government's health presence in China before the novel coronavirus pandemic broke out.

On Tuesday, Sens. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) and Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) sent a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo requesting information about two sensitive but unclassified diplomatic cables sent from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing back to the State Department in Washington in early 2018. The cables, one of which I obtained, reported that scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology complained about a lack of properly trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate their highest-security lab, which claimed the top level of biological security (Biosafety level 4).. The U.S. diplomats also warned of the risk of a new virus pandemic breaking out at the lab if more wasn't done to address these concerns.

Full coverage of the coronavirus pandemic

The cables contain no firm evidence the novel coronavirus outbreak originated in the WIV lab. But their emergence has stirred an intense debate inside the Trump administration — and now on Capitol Hill — over whether this lab or the nearby Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention lab is connected to the origin of the pandemic. The lab

and the Chinese government have categorically denied any connection.

“The cables raise really serious red flags and it would stand to reason that anybody that received these cables would take steps to figure out whether there was fire underneath the smoke,” Murphy told me in an interview. “But we still have more questions than we have answers about the origin of this virus.”

These Democrat senators are not endorsing the lab origin theory outright and they definitely don’t agree with Trump on China policy. But they do not dismiss the possibility that the Wuhan labs were connected to the outbreak, and they want the U.S. government to get to the bottom of it.

First of all, they want Pompeo to hand over the cables. The House Foreign Affairs Committee minority side has also put in a formal request for the cables. The State Department denied my request for the cables and declined to comment for this article.

Sign up for our Coronavirus Updates newsletter to track the outbreak. All stories linked in the newsletter are free to access.

The senators also want to know: What did the State Department do to follow up on the cables? Did the U.S. government investigate its

assertions, address its concerns, share the information with other agencies, engage the Chinese government on the matter or offer the WIV lab the help it was clearly asking for to be able to operate safely? Why did the Trump administration slash the staff of our own CDC inside China in 2018 and 2019? And why did the Trump administration cancel funding for the USAID Predict program, which was trying to prevent the next viral pandemic by working with Chinese researchers, including the WIV lab? Murphy is proposing new funding for international public health infrastructure and restoration of the mechanisms the Trump administration cut.

“If you got this cable and you had an infrastructure inside China that could help you investigate the claims, you would think the response would be to increase that presence,” Murphy said. “It appears that the Trump administration’s response to these cables was to pull out our investigators rather than empower them.”

Since the existence of the cables was revealed, top Trump administration officials have said they’re still trying to understand the virus’s origins but the Chinese government is intentionally thwarting their efforts. The National Institutes of Health has suspended its work with the WIV lab and is conducting its own investigation, but without China’s help.

Opinion | U.S. diplomatic cables warned of Wuhan lab safety issues. The world needs answers.

“We are still asking the Chinese Communist Party to allow experts to get into that virology lab so that we can determine precisely where this

virus began,” Pompeo said earlier this month. The Chinese government rejected Pompeo’s request.

U.S. intelligence agencies have been looking for evidence about the virus origin for months, but they haven’t found any proof that would either implicate or exonerate the labs. There’s an intelligence gap, several officials told me, which means they don’t know anything either way.

Murphy said China should allow international experts into Wuhan to investigate the lab-related theory as well as a scenario that links the outbreak to a local seafood market. He wants the Trump administration to take a more international approach to bringing pressure to bear on Beijing.

“Everything [Chinese authorities] have done suggests that they have something to hide,” he said. “If this virus did emanate from bats in a wet market as they claim, then why not allow outsiders inside to confirm that claim? You have to view their actions incredibly suspiciously.”

The Opinions section is looking for stories of how the coronavirus has affected people of all walks of life. Write to us.

He thinks the Trump administration and its allies are attacking China to deflect from Trump’s mishandling of the pandemic and make up for

Trump's early praise of the Chinese government's response. Whatever one's view on the Trump administration's coronavirus response, however, Americans' public health depends on figuring out the truth about the labs — not just in Wuhan but in all of China.

"If there is an ongoing security crisis in Chinese labs, then we need to resource our overseas public health infrastructure to address that," Murphy said. The important question of how the coronavirus pandemic started is caught up in our domestic political fight over how to deal with China. But there's a bipartisan consensus that we must figure out what happened in Wuhan in order to help mitigate this pandemic and prevent the next one.

(b)(6)

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

[SharePoint](#) | [State.gov](#) | [InfoCentral](#)

(b)(6)

Sender: "Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)" (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
	Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
To:	(h)(6)
	Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
	(h)(6)
CC:	Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
	Kanapathy, Ivan (b)(6)
Subject:	RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story
Date:	Fri, 13 Mar 2020 19:40:31 +0000

Here's a gift from Erik Bethel, courtesy People's Daily (SARS is a variety of CORONA Virus):

<https://www.facebook.com/PeoplesDaily/posts/1791622717556204>



People's Daily, China

January 6, 2018 ·

China's top-level biosafety lab begins work

China has put its first level-four biosafety laboratory into operation, capable of conducting experiments with highly pathogenic microorganisms that can cause fatal diseases, according to the national health authority.

Level four is the highest biosafety level, used for diagnostic work and research on easily transmitted pathogens that can cause fatal diseases, including the Ebola virus.

The Wuhan national level-four biosafety lab recently passed an assessment organized by the National Health and Family Planning Commission, according to a news release on Friday from the Wuhan Institute of Virology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

After evaluating such things as the lab's management of personnel, facilities, animals, disposals and viruses, experts believed the lab is qualified to carry out experiments on highly pathogenic microorganisms that can cause fatal diseases, such as Marburg, Variola, Nipah and Ebola.

"The lab provides a complete, world-leading biosafety system. This means Chinese scientists can study the most dangerous pathogenic microorganisms in their own lab," the Wuhan institute said.

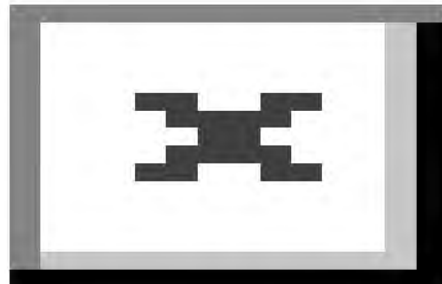
It will serve as the country's research and development center on prevention and control of infectious diseases, as a pathogen collection center and as the United Nations' reference laboratory for infectious diseases, the institute said.

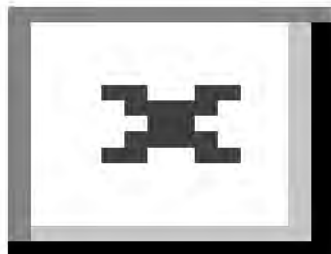
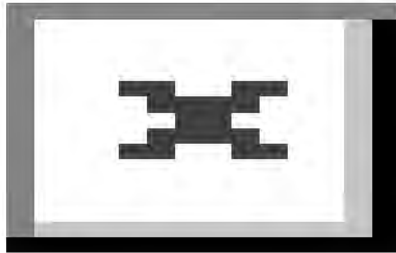
Previous media reports said the Wuhan P4 lab will be open to scientists from home and abroad. Scientists can conduct research on anti-virus drugs and vaccines in the lab.

The lab is part of Sino-French cooperation in the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases, according to the news release.

The central government approved the P4 laboratory in 2003 when the outbreak of **severe acute respiratory syndrome** spread alarm across the country. In October 2004, China signed a cooperation agreement with France on the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases. This was followed by a succession of supplementary agreements.

With French assistance in laboratory design, biosafety standards establishment and personnel training, construction began in 2011 and lasted for three years. In 2015, the lab was put into trial operation. (China Daily)





2.7K2.7K

124 Comments730 Shares

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:35 PM

To: (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

A few suggestions below including a term of art at the beginning: see text below.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:26 PM

To: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
(b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

+(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Special Assistant

Office of the Assistant Secretary

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:22 PM

To: (b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Update on Chinese Ambo story

That seems suitably damning yet restrained.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:16 PM

To: Fritz, Jonathan D

Subject: FW: Update on Chinese Ambo story

About to call you

(b)(6)

Special Assistant

Office of the Assistant Secretary

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:08 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6); EAP-
Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

Possibly background this?

From: Stilwell, David R

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:02 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) EAP-

Press <EAP-Press@state.gov> (b)(6)

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

(b)(5)

How's this:

(b)(5)

Atul,
Please chop.
Dave

From: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 2:53 PM

To: (b)(6); EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>; Stilwell, David R

(b)(6)

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: Update on Chinese Ambo story

(b)(5)

Sent from an iPhone

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 1:02:36 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>; Stilwell, David R

(b)(6)

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

(b)(6)

Adding EAP/FO here. Below is an informal readout of what A/S Stilwell said in the meeting with Ambassador Cui. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

**Informal Readout of A/S Stilwell Meeting with
Ambassador Cui Tiankai**

Friday, March 13, 2020, 11:00 a.m. (10 minutes)

- On March 13 at 11:00 a.m., EAP A/S Stilwell met with PRC Ambassador Cui Tiankai to rebuke the PRC government for recent tweets by PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Spokesperson Zhao Lijian insinuating that the U.S. Army was responsible for COVID-19.
- A/S Stilwell delivered the following points:
 - Last night Ambassador Cui declined to answer a phone call from A/S Stilwell. This is inappropriate. State Department leadership, in contrast, makes itself available to the PRC government as needed to ensure communication.
 - The tweets by MFA's Deputy Spokesperson were offensive. (A/S Stilwell read the tweets back to Ambassador Cui.)
 - The U.S. government has seen a shifting storyline from the PRC government officials showing that Beijing is trying to shift blame for COVID-19.
 - The U.S. government has a list of statements made by PRC government in which Beijing itself has acknowledged that COVID-19 started in Wuhan.
 - Beijing should partner with the international community on COVID-19.
 - Beijing should delete the Deputy Spokesperson's comment immediately and issue an apology.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 12:06 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: Update on Chinese Ambo story

(b)(6)

I think A/S Stilwell reached out to you directly to say we're working on this and will have it soon. FYI, Carol Morello from the Washington Post just reached out to us asking for the demarche. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

From: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 11:34 AM

To: EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>

Cc: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Update on Chinese Ambo story

EAP Team— both Rich and Kylie got footage (long story) as well as Carol from WaPo. So, we are no longer giving Reuters the exclusive per our discussion earlier this morning. There was a process foul that ended up with Rich and Carol being there, so it is what it is. At least the story will get out.

They all want to report right away. I'm going to (b)(5)

(b)(5)

In the mean time—(b)(6)— please make sure Kylie, Rich, and Carol have any and all Chinese disinfo materials related to coronavirus. You may want to check in with EAP as Stilwell has been collecting a lot of this stuff.

Also looping in (b)(6) in case she has any points that she wants me to make to background the reporters on this demarche.

Sent from an iPhone

Sender: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)

Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Recipient: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)

Kanapathy, Ivan (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)
To: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples
Date: Tue, 19 May 2020 16:02:13 +0000

Thank you. Will raise this.

(b)(6)

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

[SharePoint](#) | [State.gov](#) | [InfoCentral](#)

(202) 790-3452

From: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 12:00 PM

To: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 11:50 AM

To: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (b)(6)

Subject: Fw: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

further notes on this thread. FYI

(b)(6)

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

[SharePoint](#) | [State.gov](#) | [InfoCentral](#)

(202) 790-3452

From: Yu, Miles (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:57 AM

To: (b)(6) CGRCUPress; OES-IHB-DG; ISN-BPS-DL; Legal-EAP-DL; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL; EAP-Press

Subject: Re: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

Colleagues,

Here is my take on the Liu Dengfeng admission of destroying samples, which I have shared with a few colleagues in a different dialogue.

(b)(5)



Miles

Dr. M. Miles Yu
Policy Planning Staff
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)



From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:46 AM
To: (b)(6) CGRCUPress; OES-IHB-DG; ISN-BPS-DL;
Legal-EAP-DL; (b)(6) Yu, Miles (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL; EAP-Press
Subject: RE: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

This needs to be reviewed in a smaller group which I have spoken with. Will get back.

(b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:42 AM
To: (b)(6)
CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>; OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; Legal-EAP-DL <Legal-EAP-DL@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6) Yu, Miles (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

I defer to (b)(5)

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:33 AM
To: (b)(6) CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>; OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; Legal-EAP-DL <Legal-EAP-DL@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6) Yu, Miles (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

I would largely defer to (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Liz

(b)(6)

Attorney Adviser, L/EAP

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:11 AM

To: CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>; OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; Legal-EAP-DL <Legal-EAP-DL@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) Yu, Miles (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>
Subject: SHORT FUSE CLEAR BY 1PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

Hi all,

Thank you all for clearing on the draft PG yesterday. (b)(6) had significant edits, so I am now requesting that you re-clear the PG by 1PM. [Image removed by sender.] 20200518_PRC COVID-19 Destroyed Samples MK.docx<[https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/ap/w-59584e83/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fusdos.sharepoint.com%2F%3Aw%3A%2Fs%2FEAP_ChinaDeskSharedDrive%2FER2a2463njZFvn8bR4On0OsBHx1wAyrV1H8WMMOYq62neA%3Fe%3DfyGRVe&data=02%7C01%7\(b\)\(6\)%40state.gov%7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=sArAII EJN2IDV5eR2Ljou9a3VtVFPO8UHBlhGAJY9BM%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/ap/w-59584e83/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fusdos.sharepoint.com%2F%3Aw%3A%2Fs%2FEAP_ChinaDeskSharedDrive%2FER2a2463njZFvn8bR4On0OsBHx1wAyrV1H8WMMOYq62neA%3Fe%3DfyGRVe&data=02%7C01%7(b)(6)%40state.gov%7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=sArAII EJN2IDV5eR2Ljou9a3VtVFPO8UHBlhGAJY9BM%3D&reserved=0)>

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 1:01 PM

To: CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>; OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; Legal-EAP-DL <Legal-EAP-DL@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) Yu, Miles (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>

Subject: NO FUSE CLEARANCE BY 1:30PM: Press Guidance Tasking on PRC Destroying COVID-19 samples

Hello all,

Please clear the linked PG by 1:30PM [Image removed by sender.] 20200518_PRC COVID-19 Destroyed Samples .docx<[https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/ap/w-59584e83/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fusdos.sharepoint.com%2F%3Aw%3A%2Fs%2FEAP_ChinaDeskSharedDrive%2FERXEnwYP-65NnZqXW0SG4GUBi4nxcnPPydd2t75yBtzQ6w&data=02%7C01%7\(b\)\(6\)%40state.gov%7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=sArAII EJN2IDV5eR2Ljou9a3VtVFPO8UHBlhGAJY9BM%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/ap/w-59584e83/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fusdos.sharepoint.com%2F%3Aw%3A%2Fs%2FEAP_ChinaDeskSharedDrive%2FERXEnwYP-65NnZqXW0SG4GUBi4nxcnPPydd2t75yBtzQ6w&data=02%7C01%7(b)(6)%40state.gov%7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=sArAII EJN2IDV5eR2Ljou9a3VtVFPO8UHBlhGAJY9BM%3D&reserved=0)>

[7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=19%2B%2BiBEbmm61BbHeFEuZOttXuB5xhH%2FChgFWlbFIsl%3D&reserved=0](https://www.wsj.com/articles/7C24546f5f3b3a440e1bb608d7fc04f583%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637254970538382058&data=19%2B%2BiBEbmm61BbHeFEuZOttXuB5xhH%2FChgFWlbFIsl%3D&reserved=0)>. The tasking and relevant WSJ article are below. ISN and OES, you have seen similar language by e-mail already.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

EAP/OES/S: MK/CHINA: Per WSJ reporting, what is the US reaction to a senior Chinese official confirming that Beijing ordered labs to destroy COVID-19 samples?

CHINA

China Told Labs to Destroy Coronavirus Samples to Reduce Biosafety Risks

A Chinese senior official says domestic law has clear rules for the handling of highly pathogenic samples

By Josh Chin

May 16, 2020 10:58 pm ET

A senior Chinese official appeared to confirm Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's allegation that Beijing had told labs in the country to destroy coronavirus samples in early January but slammed his characterization as misleading.

In a May 6 press briefing, Mr. Pompeo accused China of covering up the Covid-19 outbreak as it emerged in the central city of Wuhan, saying China's National Health Commission had ordered destruction of samples of the virus on Jan. 3.

Asked about those comments at a press briefing in Beijing on Friday, NHC official Liu Dengfeng confirmed that the commission had issued these guidelines at that time "for pandemic prevention and control, which also played an important role in preventing biosafety risks."

"If the laboratory conditions cannot meet the requirements for the safe preservation of samples, the samples should be destroyed on the spot or transferred to a professional institution for safekeeping," said Mr. Liu, supervisor of the commission's Department of Health Science, Technology and Education.

Chinese law has clear rules for the handling of highly pathogenic samples, he said.

Mr. Pompeo's allegation that the samples were destroyed as part of a coverup "takes facts out of context with the aim of intentionally misleading people," he said.

China's early handling of the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan has become the subject of intense scrutiny. Beijing and Washington both seek to deflect blame for a pandemic that has infected more than 4.6 million people and killed more than 310,000 world-wide.

Many governments, including the U.S., have regulations that require labs with lower biosafety ratings to destroy or transfer samples of particularly dangerous pathogens. Still, China's government has taken other actions that suggest it wants to stall an investigation into the origins of the virus.

Local authorities in Wuhan collected extensive samples at the end of December from a market where the virus is believed to have first begun spreading widely, enlisting professional disinfection crews to help with the effort, The Wall Street Journal reported. Four months later, officials have yet to share any data from those samples with any labs outside of China.

Some Chinese and foreign researchers told The Journal they had been informed by Chinese officials that animals taken from the market were destroyed.

At Friday's briefing, Mr. Liu said China had always been active in sharing microbial samples with other countries.

He said Chinese officials "also have an active and open attitude" when it comes to the new coronavirus "and are willing to share novel coronavirus strains in an orderly manner" within the framework of the World Health Organization.

Public health experts say it is likely too late to investigate the role of the market in Covid-19's spread and that proving its origin might now be impossible.

Write to Josh Chin at josh.chin@wsj.com <<mailto:josh.chin@wsj.com>>

Sender: (b)(6) (Wuhan)" (b)(6)

Recipient: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday
Date: Tue, 24 Apr 2018 00:15:56 -0400

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for replying. We can move it to 1:30pm or even morning. Thanks,

(b)(6) USAID/Beijing

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:11 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

I have a meeting outside the embassy at 3pm. Can we do it at 2 or earlier?

(b)(6)

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 11:24
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Hi (b)(6)

We would like to check with your availability on May 4th to meet with EcoHealth Alliance colleagues on GVP. Will 2-3.30pm be OK for you? Thanks and regards,

(b)(6)
USAID/Beijing
US Embassy Beijing

Phone: (86) 10-8531 3097 **Fax:** (86) 10-8531 3605

E-mail: (b)(6)

<http://www.usaid.gov> <http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/usaid.html>

From: Hongying Li [mailto:(b)(6)]

Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:43 PM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)

Cc: Peter Daszak; Alison Andre

Subject: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Dear (b)(6)

I am writing to confirm the time for Peter and me visiting you at the Embassy on May 4th, Wednesday, to give updates to the Health Working Group on the GVP as you suggested, as well as other relevant work in China. Please let us know what time will work best for you on that day, and if there is any specific topics/questions you want to hear from us, please feel free to let us know.

Please find our IDs information as the follows for the security clearance:

Peter Daszak Passport No.: (b)(6)

Hongying Li Chinese ID: (b)(6)

Look forward to seeing you soon!

Best,
Hongying

Hongying Li, MPH 李泓莹

China Program Coordinator

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street – 17th floor

New York, NY 10001

(b)(6) (U.S. mobile)

(b)(6) (China mobile)

(b)(6) (Skype)

(b)(6) (WeChat)

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge scientific research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science, we develop solutions that prevent pandemics and promote conservation.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

Sender: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Recipient:

(b)(6)	(Beijing)	(b)(6)
(b)(6)	(Beijing)	(b)(6)
(b)(6)	(Beijing)	(b)(6)
(b)(6)	(Beijing)	(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

To: (b)(6)

CC: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Date: Thu, 30 Apr 2020 16:46:37 +0000

(b)(6)

Great to know.

(b)(6)

Policy Planning Staff (S/P)
Office of the Secretary
Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(c)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:45 PM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Thanks! My work on microelectronics and supply chain risks during my time at DOD last year continue to get a lot of attention too.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:42 PM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Thanks (b)(6)

One big mistake we made is that USG did not keep you in China longer.

(b)(6)

Policy Planning Staff (S/P)
Office of the Secretary
Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(c)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:30 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

I sent a member of my team up to Harbin in late April to meet with the lead virologist working on the H7N9 poultry vaccine that Dr. Shi introduced me to; however, when the team tried to go they were told it was closed to visitors. They ended up having a very short perfunctory meeting in the hotel lobby. I departed post in June of that year and I don't believe there was any further follow-up from the Embassy.

Here is the very short and innocuous readout that they sent me after the meeting:

Institute of Animal Sciences:

8 priorities include engineering, food science, animal science, and 8 research institutions, including the ruminant nutrition lab, which is linked to the dairy industry.

China imports a lot of alfalfa and conducts national training for farmers.

Milk sample testing: There are testing and inspection centers in each of the provinces. China will make a public database in the future about milk safety from the farm to retail.

Working with individual scientists, the Institute wants to expand the following:

Environment-AMR issues-heavy metals

Long term surveillance programs

Gas-research and productivity efficiency

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:20 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for the flagging.

Yuan's article is largely a rehash of an article he co-authored back in Jan. 2016 in the Bulletin of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, see the attached. I reported that to S Tuesday (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

Policy Planning Staff (S/P)
Office of the Secretary
Department of State

(b)(6)

(o)
(c)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 10:01 AM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Hi (b)(6)

I wanted to flag this journal article I ran across the other day, which shows that internal WIV concerns about bio-safety were still being raised right up to the point of the outbreak.

This paper was submitted by Yuan Zhiming, the Wuhan Institute of Virology's Communist Party chief and Vice Director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology and was published in the Journal of Biosafety and Biosecurity journal on September 11, 2019

Current status and future challenges of high-level biosafety laboratories in China



**Current status and future challenges of high-level biosafety
laboratorie...**

High-level biosafety laboratories are safe and secure platforms which

integrate reliable containment, well-train...

Relevant Points:

3.2. Inadequate biosafety management systems

Since the promulgation and implementation of "Regulations on Biosafety Management of Pathogenic Microorganism Laboratories," issued by State Council in 2004, a series of other regulations have been formulated by different ministries and local governments. These have considered the examination and approval of laboratory construction and accreditation, authorization of research activities, as well as pathogen, waste, and laboratory animal management regulations. Although these regulations wholesomely cover all aspects of construction, management, and eventual operation of BSLs, their enforcement still needs to be strengthened. Furthermore, due to different investment sources, affiliations, and management systems, the implementation of these laboratories faces difficulties converging objectives and cooperation workflows. **This scenario puts laboratory biosafety at risk since the implementation efficiency and timely operations are relatively compromised.**

3.3. Insufficient resources for efficient laboratory operation

Depending on the size and location, building a modern BSL costs millions of US dollars, and in China the funds for construction are typically raised by the state, local governments, upstream authorities, and institutions. Additionally, 5–10% of construction costs are needed for annual operation. However, **the maintenance cost is generally neglected; several high-level BSLs have insufficient operational funds for routine yet vital processes. Due to the limited resources, some BSL-3 laboratories run on extremely minimal operational costs or in some cases none at all.**

3.4. Deficiency of professional capacity

In the process of BSL construction, operation, and management, highly skilled professional teams from diverse disciplines such as architectural science, materials science, aerodynamics, automatic controlling, environmental science, microbiology, botany, biosafety, and systems engineering are required. In addition, biosafety measures and practices are vital in daily laboratory operations hence a highly qualified, motivated, and skilled biosafety supervisor is needed not only for overseeing solid containment but also in laboratory risk management. **Currently, most laboratories lack specialized biosafety managers and engineers. In such facilities, some of the skilled staff is composed by part-time researchers. This makes it difficult to identify and mitigate potential safety hazards in facility and equipment operation early enough. Nonetheless, biosafety awareness, professional knowledge, and operational skill training still need to be improved among laboratory personnel.**

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:50 PM

To: (b)(6); Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:47:14 PM

To: (b)(6); Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Thanks, (b)(6) This is very helpful.

The former deputy director of the PRC CDC is the wife of a prominent Chinese dissident. Both are living in NYC. She knows all about this 2004 incident.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:37 PM

To: (b)(6) Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Actually there is a CDC press release from 2004:

<https://www.cdc.gov/sars/media/2004-05-19.html>

NOTICE

This website is archived for historical purposes and is no longer being maintained or updated.

During April 22-29, the Chinese Ministry of Health (MOH) reported a total of nine cases of SARS in China ; seven of the patients were from Beijing , and two were from Anhui Province , located in east-central China . One of the patients died.

Two of the nine patients were graduate students who worked at the China 's National Institute of Virology Laboratory (NIVL) in Beijing , which is known to conduct research on SARS coronavirus (SARS-CoV). The laboratory was closed on April 23, potentially exposed personnel are being monitored for signs of illness, and possible sources of infection for the two laboratory workers are being investigated.

Of the seven other SARS cases, two were directly linked to close personal contact with one of the graduate students who worked at NIVL; these two cases were in the graduate student's mother (who died) and in a nurse who provided care to the graduate student. The remaining five cases were linked to close contact with the nurse.

No further cases of SARS in China or anywhere else in the world have been reported since April 29. Chinese authorities have carried out active surveillance activities to identify other possible cases of SARS, including enhanced surveillance for any flu-like illness and pneumonia of unknown etiology. They also initiated measures to prevent the spread of SARS among travelers, including health screening of travelers at ports of exit/entry.

On May 18, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported on its websiteExternal that the outbreak in China appears to have been contained, but that biosafety concerns remain and further investigation is under way. WHO and Chinese health officials are still in the process of determining precisely what caused the outbreak.

CDC is in close communication with WHO and is working with its public health partners to reinforce the need for strict adherence to applicable biosafety precautions to reduce the risk of laboratory-related exposures to SARS-

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:30:12 PM

To: (b)(6) Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Happy to keep sending what I know. One thing I missed from this morning is that there was a 2004 leak of SARS from a BSL3 lab in China. (b)(5)

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:17:58 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Thanks, Stilly, for sharing (b)(6)'s brilliant contributions to this project.

(b)(6) truly appreciate your input. Please do not hesitate to keep sending it. (b)(5)

(b)(5) Good stuff.

(b)(6)

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 5:10 PM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

Subject: FW: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

(b)(6)

(b)(6) wrote/resurrected the 2018 cables. (b)(6) foresaw this disaster long ago. . . To me this is the key point (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Cheers

Stilly

From: (b)(6) >

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 11:59 AM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Attached is the Nature article I referenced below.

Relevant Summary: The laboratory in Wuhan is on the cusp of being cleared to work with the world's most dangerous pathogens. The move is part of a plan to build between five and seven biosafety level-4 (BSL-4) labs across the Chinese mainland by 2025, and has generated much excitement, as well as some concerns. ***Some scientists outside China worry about pathogens escaping***, and the addition of a biological dimension to geopolitical tensions between China and other nations. But Chinese microbiologists are celebrating their entrance to the elite cadre empowered to wrestle with the world's greatest biological threats.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 11:46 AM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Sir,

Here is the best I could come up with on short notice:

(b)(5)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 10:28 AM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (h)(6)

Subject: Re: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

Sir,

Per our call I will get you my initial thoughts this morning (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Best,

(b)(6)

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 8:38:51 AM

To: (h)(6)

Cc: (h)(6) (h)(6)

Subject: HOT: Virology Labs Breakdown

(h)(6)

(b)(5) Figured I'd start with you.

Some questions like:

1. Current CCP virology/pathogen/bio labs (civilian and military); where they are, when they opened; what they do; do we have any confidence in them?

2. Last time they were inspected by outside world;
3. How many did Americans help create?
4. Previous known lab shortcomings and failures.

Feel free to call. I understand you probably don't have all the data (b)(5)
but maybe you can point us to those who do.

Thanks

Dave

David R. Stilwell

Ass't Secretary East Asia Pacific

(b)(6)

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)
Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (h)(6) (b)(6)
S_SpecialAssistants <S_SpecialAssistants@state.gov>
(b)(6) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (S) (h)(6)
(b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (h)(6)
Subject: Re: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area
Date: Sat, 9 May 2020 01:18:42 +0000

Thank you, Dave. We will include with tomorrow's morning media book. (h)(6)

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2020, at 9:15 PM, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:

(b)(6)

Great OpEd if you think S is interested; proves there is still sanity in this world.

Cheers

Dave

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 9:08 PM
To: Keshap, Atul (b)(6) (b)(6) EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(h)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Canberra) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Canberra)
(h)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area

Colleagues,

Also of interest, our PAS colleagues in Mission Australia sent the opinion piece below in the Daily Telegraph.

Best,

(b)(6)

Sharri Markson: In reality, we're united with The States on China

China infected the world, but some bureaucrats and media think the US is the real threat, writes Sharri Markson.

Sharri Markson, The Daily Telegraph

May 8, 2020 9:00pm

The left-wing media is trying to paint the picture of a greatly divergent position between the United States administration and the Australian government on the outbreak of the coronavirus.

While those sentiments may exist within some elements of the Australian bureaucracy, the reality is Scott Morrison and Mike Pompeo have the same view of China's culpability for the outbreak of COVID-19.

The two men are very close, sharing many of the same values and beliefs.

Whether or not the virus was created or leaked in a laboratory is a legitimate line of inquiry.

It's why the Office of the Director of National Intelligence issued a rare statement to confirm intelligence networks are investigating it.

Early evidence to the Morrison government didn't just claim that the virus accidentally leaked from a laboratory but that it may have been created there. This has now been ruled out.

But this entire matter of the origins of the virus is a side-show.

It distracts from what we do know. And that is that China deliberately chose to hide or destroy evidence of the virus and instead allow hundreds of thousands of people to die all around the world.

It is an understatement to talk about western blood on the hands of President Xi Jinping and Chinese authorities.

Yet, so many are resisting an investigation into China's actions.

Into how China destroyed evidence at genomics laboratories and in the wet market.

Into the disappearances or arrests of journalists, doctors, activists and scientists.

Into the insistence coronavirus couldn't be transmitted from person to person until January 20, when the first evidence emerged on December 6.

Into how China allowed millions of people to leave Wuhan after the outbreak with an untold number flying overseas, infecting countries the world over.

Shouldn't we all — regardless of where we sit on the political spectrum — be concerned about how China, an emerging superpower, handled this outbreak?

I'll repeat what former Defence Force Deputy Secretary, executive director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Peter Jennings said to me: "While the origins of the virus is unclear, what's very clear is that China is trying to weaponise the virus now."

Let's compare the political response to China's criminal actions with Russia's shooting down of flight MH17.

MH17 was not treated as a left or right issue. There was solidarity in calling for an investigation.

The unfortunate and sad reality is Australian politicians were less delicate with Russia. They were prepared to stand up and uphold our national interest. Yet the same approach is not being taken now when it comes to holding China to account.

It was easy to gang up on Russia as a natural villain because we don't have any critical trade or economic ties with them. But with China, our largest trading partner, our leaders are tongue-tied, mealy mouthed and struggle to even say that they no longer trust China. It's embarrassing.

Just the mention of an independent inquiry into their actions saw them threaten to cut off trade with Australia.

Imagine if Scott Morrison had threatened to shirt-front Xi Jinping. It would probably be World War III.

This shows we have already gone too far down the road of oppression of free speech, living by China's values, to avoid offence.

It shows we have become far too dependent on China for our prosperity and failed to diversify.

In the short term it's always going to be easier kowtowing to China because any trade-related impact China could impose on us would be felt immediately.

But we need to think longer-term about allowing a world superpower to be able to conduct itself like China is right now with no accountability, and with barely a critical word uttered from our leaders.

While Morrison's endgame is holding China to account, there is a bizarre war being waged by some in the bureaucracy against the US. It is without the government's backing.

There are small-time bureaucrats stirring up conflict with our closest ally, who actually shares our values.

These bureaucrats have their hands nowhere near the US intelligence on Wuhan which is managed by ASIS and the foreign ministry. Yet these bureaucrats, charged with protecting Australia's national security, have been trying to create a problem between the US and Australia, instead of focusing on the greater issue of China.

As I reported on The Daily Telegraph's front page on Wednesday, one senior federal source said there were emerging fears in the intelligence community that the US administration could be repeating mistakes made by George Bush when he pressured the UN weapons inspector to declare Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction.

It really is an absurd comparison because the US is on the same page as Australia that the virus may have leaked from a laboratory and it needs to be investigated. The difference is Australia's need for diplomacy given our reliance on China versus the United States' politically expedient position to attack China.

The concerns of these bureaucrats do not accord with the Prime Minister's view. I repeat, these expendable bureaucrats do not share the same view of Scott Morrison. This is significant.

To that end, there has been criticism of one department head, Home Affairs boss Mike Pezzullo, from within the federal government.

"Mike spends a little too much time speaking to journalists," a government insider said.

Morrison's real focus is holding China to account.

As Mike Pompeo said on Friday: "China could have prevented the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. China could have spared the world a descent into global economic malaise. They had a choice.

"China is still refusing to share the information we need to keep people safe, such as viral isolates, clinical specimens and details about the many COVID-19 patients in December 2019, not to mention 'patient zero'."

The fact that an investigation into the origin and outbreak is being resisted heavily by China is all the evidence you need that they have something to hide.

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/sharri-markson-in-reality-were-united-with-the-states-on-china/news-story/15b054e47ac11c43691f9a473574dfc3>

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 9:01 PM
To: Keshap, Atul (b)(6) (b)(6) EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov> (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Canberra) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Canberra)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area

Good evening,

Below are three articles on this issue in the Australian press.

Best,

(b)(6)

- Chris Griffith in *The Australian*: "Coronavirus: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area".
- Miranda Devine in *The Daily Telegraph*: "Mystery of the missing data — substantial changes made to Wuhan lab's bat virus files".
- Clive Hamilton in *The Sydney Morning Herald*: "It would be unwise to dismiss Donald Trump's Wuhan lab leak theory".

Coronavirus: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area

EXCLUSIVE

CHRIS GRIFFITH

TECHNOLOGY REPORTER

12:00AM MAY 9, 2020

COVID-19 case data allegedly hacked from China's Wuhan lab suggests the number of cases has been under-reported.

Data includes areas where cases were not reported, according to an analysis.

The dataset, seen by The Weekend Australian, contains empty records for the period February 2-18, indicating records were not kept for that period or that data was deleted. The Australian reported on April 23 that data from the Wuhan Institute of Virology had been hacked.

Robert Potter, CEO and founder of online security firm Internet 2.0, then told The Australian: "I've had credible sources tell me that people have used the credentials that were leaked on Twitter and Facebook to access the lab."

The original story reported Mr Potter citing the existence of nearly 25,000 email addresses and passwords dumped online belonging to the Wuhan labs, the WHO, the US National Institute of Health, Gates Foundation and other bodies.

Mr Potter's sources have now revealed a database purportedly from the Wuhan Institute of Virology containing a daily record of coronavirus cases in apartment blocks in cities across China.

READ MORE: US Intel investigates virus links to lab accident PM's right to hold the line on lab 'conspiracy' Trump's 'seen' Wuhan lab evidence Much evidence for Wuhan lab theory: Pompeo All evidence points to Wuhan labs

Each record includes an ID, collection time, number of deaths and recoveries, the latitude and longitude of the building and locality. The dataset contains a series of records for each day from February 2 to April 22.

A sample of coronavirus records totalled by buildings in China that are claimed to be from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Mr Potter on Friday told The Weekend Australian his source had sent him photos of an authenticated login and visualisations of the data that gave him "high confidence" the records were legitimate. "It was highly unlikely that the data had been fabricated," he said. "They appear to showcase tracking from what I think is probably a research project within the Wuhan lab working on coronavirus data.

"It's not data of individual cases, it's tracking buildings where there are confirmed or suspected (cases) or recoveries or people have died from coronavirus in those buildings. The metadata tab translated to English shows areas (that) correspond to apartment blocks a lot of the time.

"But I would also say that the data doesn't appear to cover every case in China, but it covers different cases to what have been publicly reported."

He said the records included cities that hadn't appeared among publicly revealed cases. He found more cases from the northern city of Harbin than reported. There were cases in Inner Mongolia and Shanxi Province not found in public data. He had done comparisons with recently released information in China.

He said there were two possibilities for the blank records in early February, one being that data was uploaded in late February or data had been deleted because there "appears to be logs for those days ... but they have no entries".

"So it appears that there could be data from before that period that may have been deleted.

There seems to be a high sensitivity around data from that period."

Records from the WHO indicate a WHO-China joint mission travelled to Wuhan around that time. The mission included experts from Canada, Germany, Japan, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore and the US. They went to Beijing, Wuhan and two other cities in that period from 16-24 February, says the WHO.

The resulting report recommended that uninfected countries prepare to immediately activate the highest level of emergency response mechanisms essential for an early containment of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Associate Professor Chris Balding, of Fulbright University, Vietnam, who also examined the data, said Mr Potter's assessment was "absolutely accurate" in his assessment of the data.

"It seems to diverge significantly from official Chinese data," he said. "It shows a higher dispersion of cases and a higher number of deaths than official data."

Chris Griffith

TECHNOLOGY REPORTER

SYDNEY

Chris is one of Australia's most experienced technology reporters, with an involvement in the computer industry spanning almost 50 years. He learned to program in the late 1960s, studied computer science in the early 70s, worked on mainframes, taught programming, and ran a business networking PCs in the 80s. In journalism, he has worked in print, radio and television, been a columnist and commentator, and is an award winning feature writer. Apart from being The Australian's senior technology reporter, he discusses technology trends weekly on Sky Business channel's TECH.biz program.

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/mystery-of-the-missing-data-substantial-changes-made-to-wuhan-labs-bat-virus-files/news-story/46d5a4f7e05ed96e354b5bd5dc2b611c>

OPINION

Mystery of the missing data — substantial changes made to Wuhan lab's bat virus files

Days before the Wuhan wet market was bleached, whistleblowers punished and virus samples destroyed, someone at the high-security Wuhan Institute of Virology censored its virus database in an apparent attempt to disassociate the laboratory from a novel coronavirus outbreak that would become a global pandemic, writes Miranda Devine.

Miranda Devine, The Daily Telegraph

May 7, 2020 2:02pm

Days before the Wuhan wet market was bleached, whistleblowers punished and virus samples destroyed, someone at the high-security Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) censored its virus database in an apparent attempt to disassociate the laboratory from a novel coronavirus outbreak that would become a global pandemic.

This is what open source intelligence uncovered in the UK reveals.

Substantial alterations to the WIV database on the evening of December 30, the day before the World Health Organisation was alerted to the outbreak of a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, are just another indication that the Chinese Communist Party is hiding something when it comes to the origins of COVID-19.

The question of whether the virus came from the Wuhan wet market, as China insists, or leaked from the nearby WIV laboratory, where high-risk research into animal-to-human transmission of bat coronaviruses was being conducted, is at the centre of allegations of a cover-up and a worldwide clamour for an independent investigation into the source of the disease.

Shi Zhengli, the virologist known as China's "Bat Woman" for her work with bat coronaviruses, directs the WIV's Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases and is listed as the primary database contact.

On December 30, she was in Shanghai for a conference when she was summoned back to Wuhan with the news that a novel coronavirus had been detected in two pneumonia patients.

On the overnight train from Shanghai, according to a March article in Scientific American, she was stricken with worry about the coronaviruses.

"Could they have come from our lab?" she wondered.

After all, the closest known relative of this new coronavirus, a bat virus named RaTG13, was in her lab.

Weeks later, she would post a message on WeChat saying, "I swear with my life, [the virus] has nothing to do with the lab."

But, at some point that night, while she was on the train to Wuhan, alterations were made to her database, which contained records of bat viruses transmitted to other wild animals.

Most of the changes were to delete the keywords “wildlife” or “wild animals”. This is significant because global health researchers say the virus jumped from bats to humans via another wild animal — the crucial “missing link in the COVID-19 transmission chain.”

Shi’s used to boast her bat virus database was unique because it included data on virus variants in other wild animals.

Was her database censored to keep prying eyes away from references to cross-species transmission of viruses in wild animals?

For instance, the title of the database was changed that night from “Wildlife-borne Viral Pathogen Database” to “Bat and rodent-borne viral pathogen database”.

“Wild animal” was replaced with “bat and rodent” or “bat and rat” at least 10 times in the database. A reference to “arthropod vectors” also was removed.

Keywords which might facilitate searches potentially connecting the database with the outbreak also were deleted. “Wild animal samples”, “viral pathogen data”, “emerging infectious diseases” and “cross-species infection” were keywords associated with the original version.

On December 30 they were replaced with “bat”, “rodent” and “virus”.

“It looks like a rushed, inconsistent effort to disassociate the project from the outbreak by rebranding it,” says the British open source intelligence analyst who found the alterations.

“It’s a strange thing to do within hours of being informed of a novel coronavirus outbreak”.

He surmises that: “If the WIV had found the missing link between bat virus RaTG13 and SARS-CoV-2 [the virus that causes COVID-19] from an animal vector, it would have been in Shi’s database”.

There’s no conclusive evidence that any of the changes were made for sinister reasons.

But China’s lies and furtive actions since the outbreak leads us to believe the worst.

“This is an enormous crisis created by the fact that the Chinese Communist Party reverted to form, reverted to the kinds of disinformation, the kinds of concealment, that authoritarian regimes do,” Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo said in an interview Sunday with ABC.

“There is enormous evidence that [the Wuhan lab] is where this began ...

“These are not the first times that we’ve had a world exposed to viruses as a result of failures in a Chinese lab.”

On Wednesday, Pompeo walked back his comments slightly at a press conference: “We don’t have certainty,” he said. “We’re all trying to get to clarity.”

China's refusal to allow an investigation of the origins of the Wuhan virus, or even to share original virus samples, impedes the search for treatments and a vaccine. As if that weren't bad enough, now it is threatening economic boycotts against countries like Australia which want an investigation.

"The CCP organisational and governmental culture is to cover up and ruthlessly control," says a retired senior Australian intelligence officer who served in China.

"The arrest of frontline health professionals in January was standard practice."

We don't know why the changes were made to the WIV database.

What we do know is they were made the same day a young ophthalmologist, Dr Li Wenliang, warned colleagues in an online chat group about a "SARS-like coronavirus" among patients in the emergency department of a Wuhan Hospital.

Li was arrested two days later, along with seven other doctors, for "spreading rumours" and forced to recant. He died a month later, of coronavirus, aged 34.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/it-would-be-unwise-to-dismiss-donald-trump-s-wuhan-lab-leak-theory-20200507-p54qyg.html>

It would be unwise to dismiss Donald Trump's Wuhan lab leak theory

Clive Hamilton

Professor at Charles Sturt University in Canberra

May 9, 2020 — 12.00am

Donald Trump says he believes the coronavirus was accidentally leaked from a Wuhan laboratory but has provided no proof. Intelligence agencies in the United States and Australia say they have no hard evidence. The Australian government says it's most likely that the virus was transferred from an animal to humans at Wuhan's wet market. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo seems to be walking back from his previous strong statements.

Some are treating Trump's claim as without basis and we wait to see if he can back it up. In the meantime, it's unwise to dismiss the accidental lab leak hypothesis. Here's why.

Note first that it's not a conspiracy theory; it's an accident hypothesis. And we should not mix up the claim of an accidental leak of a naturally occurring virus with the claim that the virus was constructed or manipulated in a laboratory to become more potent. Genetic analysis has disproved the latter.

The main evidence pointing to a lab leak, all of it circumstantial, comes from research published by Chinese scientists before Beijing shut them down. On January 29, an article written by Chinese researchers was published in the New England Journal of Medicine. It concluded from an analysis of 425 coronavirus patients that 55 per cent of cases diagnosed before January 1 were linked to the South China Seafood Market, leaving 45 per cent who had no apparent contact with the market.

On February 6, a short paper by two scientists from Wuhan universities and titled "The possible origins of the 2019-nCoV coronavirus" appeared. Botao Xiao and Lei Xiao noted that the habitat of the bats carrying the suspected virus is 900 kilometres from the seafood market, that the bats are not eaten by Wuhan residents, and that "no bat was traded in the market".

Nor is there any evidence of an intermediate host (speculation has centred on pangolins). They point out that there are two research centres that experiment on bat viruses in Wuhan, one less than 300 metres from the seafood market and the other, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, around 12 kilometres. They concluded that "the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan". The article was quickly removed. Botao Xiao later told the Wall Street Journal he had withdrawn the paper because it lacked "direct proofs".

A more thorough study by 27 Chinese scientists published in The Lancet on February 15 found that 27 patients from a sample of 41 admitted to hospital in the early stages of the outbreak had been exposed to the market, leaving 14 who weren't. The first person diagnosed with COVID-19 (on December 1) had no contact with the market and lived a long way from it.

Richard Lucey, an infectious diseases expert at Georgetown University who had studied the early data, told Science magazine that the virus must have been circulating silently in Wuhan well before the cluster of infections broke out at the markets. The authorities, he said, "must have realised the epidemic did not originate in that Wuhan Huanan seafood market" even as they were putting this story around.

On February 14, President Xi Jinping gave a speech to party leaders declaring China must "close the loopholes exposed by the epidemic". He announced the fast-tracking of a new law for "biosecurity at laboratories" specifically targeting the use of biological agents that "may harm national security". The law had been in the pipeline for some months and some experts say tightening security measures at laboratories is to be expected after an outbreak like this one.

The next day, the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology published a new directive "strengthening biosecurity management in microbiology labs that handle advanced viruses like

the novel coronavirus". Again, overseas experts who have worked at the Wuhan Institute of Virology said this is normal after an outbreak.

The Wuhan Institute of Virology is the "only facility in China permitted to handle the most dangerous known pathogens, including the Ebola and Lassa viruses". It has been studying new SARS-related coronaviruses in bats for several years. The work has included manipulating coronaviruses to make them more potent. Researchers have to take stringent measures to prevent themselves from catching viruses. Around the world, leaks from labs have been known to occur.

In November, the Wuhan Institute of Virology posted a notice inviting applications for post-doctoral fellows to join a team led by Dr Peng Zhou using bats to research Ebola and SARS-associated coronaviruses. Peng Zhou has been studying how bats can carry highly pathogenic viruses without becoming sick.

In mid-January, Major General Chen Wei, the Chinese military's top epidemiologist and virologist, arrived in Wuhan with a team of military scientists. They based themselves at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. At this time, messages had been circulating on social media platforms WeChat and Weibo claiming that "patient zero", the first to be infected, was a researcher at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. It was suggested she was a graduate of the Institute, worked on coronaviruses and never visited the South China Seafood Market. The Institute released a statement saying that the person in question left Wuhan in 2015 and was quite healthy.

In early February, as the epidemic spread to other countries, Beijing became deeply worried about the damage to China's international reputation and began a campaign to deny the fact that the virus had its origins in Wuhan and spread disinformation such as the outlandish claim that the US military took the virus to Wuhan.

Beijing also moved quickly to shut down scientific research. Last month China's State Council ordered universities and research institutions to implement strict management of all scientific papers concerning the coronavirus, especially those dealing with its origin. Political vetting is now required before publication is permitted. The director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology emailed staff on April 9 instructing them not to disclose any information about the disease, not even to China's official media or partner institutions.

Beijing does not want the truth to be known, going so far as to delete from a European Union opinion piece words noting that the outbreak originated in China. But the truth matters because prevention of a similar catastrophe depends on it. If the pandemic was due to a lab accident, then the answer is tighter lab controls. (And those in charge will have a lot of explaining to do.) If the virus arose from animal transfer in the wet market, then the answer is to shut down the trade in live animals. Or the truth may lie elsewhere.

So, will the world know the truth about the origin of the new coronavirus? Chinese scientists are some of the world's leaders in virology, genetics and epidemiology and they have much to teach us. However, Beijing, paranoid about being blamed for the pandemic, has seen fit to silence them.

If the virus did escape from a lab it now seems the world will only know if some brave souls leak documents or otherwise blow the whistle.

Clive Hamilton is a professor at Charles Sturt University in Canberra and co-author with Mareike Ohlberg of *Hidden Hand: Exposing how the Chinese Communist Party is reshaping the world*, due out June 16.

From: Keshap, Atul (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 7:47 PM
To: EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Canberra) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Canberra)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Hacked Wuhan lab records show unreported cases in wider area

(b)(6) can we please get this article in full from behind the paywall? Thanks

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/coronavirus-wuhan-lab-records-show-unreported-cases-in-wider-area/news-story/e033a72402e65cfb9e95472fddaff98e>

Sender: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
S_SpecialAssistants <S_SpecialAssistants@state.gov>;
Recipient: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

From: "Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Frankfurt) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: EAP Press Guidance August 30, 2018
Date: Fri, 31 Aug 2018 07:46:58 +0000

Hi (b)(6)

Great to hear from you and thanks for thinking of us. (b)(6) having a great time here. Wuhan is nice but really what makes the difference are the Consulate staff. You all hired some amazing ones – smart, dedicated, perfect English, enthusiastic. We're so fortunate. (b)(6) mentioned he met you (b)(6). He's also a great addition to the team. New Consular Chief (b)(6) arrives tonight. (b)(6) is amazing as well.

(b)(6) I went to the Virology Institute in March. We weren't actually able to visit the lab. For your interest, here's the blurb from our monthly report:

(U) Virology Institute Highlights US Cooperation During Visit: CG Fouss visited the Wuhan Institute of Virology with visiting Embassy E5TH Counselor (b)(6). The Institute operates China's first "P4", or biosafety level 4 lab, which became fully operational earlier this year. Institute officials gave an overview of their SARS research, supported by the U.S. National Institutes of Health, discussed their exchange projects with the U.S. National Science Foundation, and expressed support for the Global Virome Project, which aims to launch this year as an international collaboration to identify all viruses which have the potential to jump from animal to human populations and cause pandemics. USAID is leading a precursor project called PREDICT, which has the Wuhan Institute's participation.

Regards,

Jamie Fouss

傅杰明

From: (b)(6) (Frankfurt)
Sent: Friday, August 31, 2018 3:07 PM
To: Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan) (b)(6)
Subject: FW: EAP Press Guidance August 30, 2018

Hi Jamie

Congrats on your Wuhan anniversary. Seems like you're enjoying your tour.

I saw this article earlier this week and it reminded me of the French-built Wuhan Bio lab that opened soon after I arrived. With CDC we tried multiple times to visit but it never happened. Have you been able to visit?

Please give everyone my best. Looking forward to seeing (b)(6) next month when she's here for training.

Enjoy the long weekend.

--Joe

Joseph Zadrozny
U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt
office: (b)(6)
IVG: (b)(6)

~~Official SBU~~
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Eapguidance
Sent: Thursday, August 30, 2018 11:56 PM
To: Eapguidance <Eapguidance@state.gov>
Subject: EAP Press Guidance August 30, 2018

-

CHINA

EAP Return Lines

August 30, 2018

(b)(5)

[Back to Top](#)

EAP Press Guidance
August 28, 2018

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(5)

Sender: "Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)" (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6)

From: "Heller, James R" (b)(6) (b)(6)

To: (h)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)

CC: (h)(6)

Subject: Re: You are mentioned in this article from today's Post! Just making sure you know...

Date: Tue, 14 Apr 2020 20:28:51 +0000

It is the #2 most-read story on WaPo today.

From: (h)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 4:02 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) Heller, James R (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: You are mentioned in this article from today's Post! Just making sure you know...

Not bugging me at all. Thanks for thinking of me.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (h)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 4:02:10 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) Heller, James R (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: You are mentioned in this article from today's Post! Just making sure you know...

Whoops. Well, that's the U.S. IC for you! ☐ Late! Sorry to bug you...

(b)(6)

From: (h)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 4:00 PM

To: (h)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) Heller, James R (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Re: You are mentioned in this article from today's Post! Just making sure you know...

Thanks (b)(6) Only like 50 people have forwarded it to me today:)

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 3:58:55 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6)

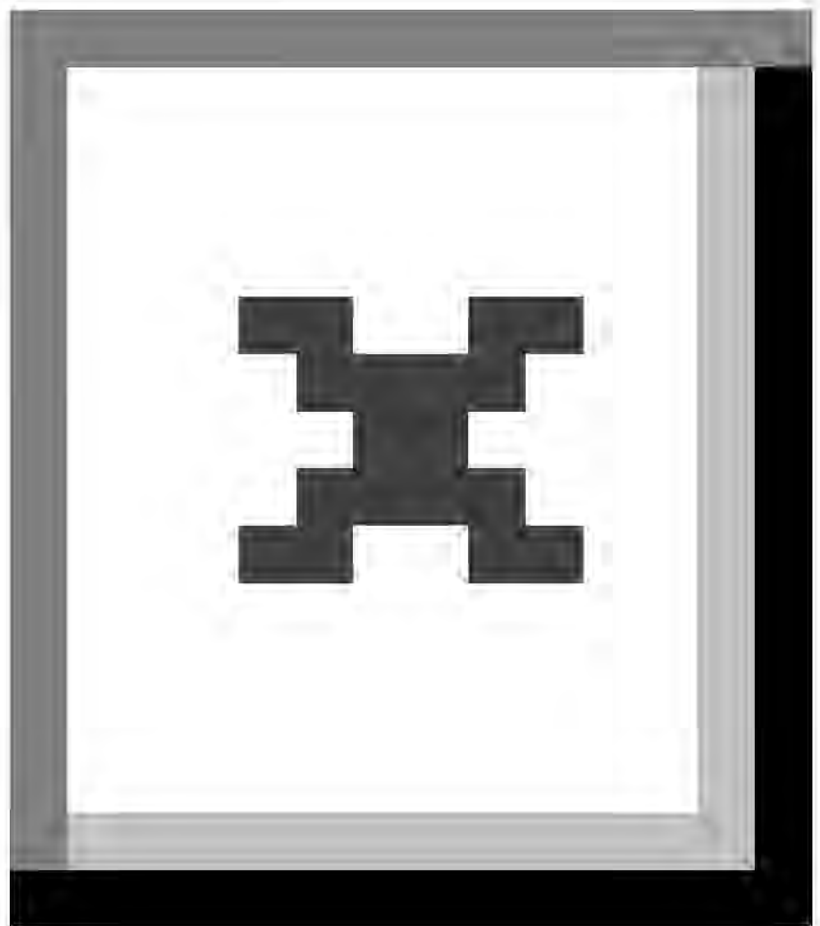
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) Heller, James R (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: You are mentioned in this article from today's Post! Just making sure you know...

Global Opinions

Add to list

State Department cables warned of safety issues at Wuhan lab studying bat coronaviruses



A woman wearing a protective suit at a hospital in Wuhan, China. (Aly Song/Reuters)



By

Josh Rogin

Columnist

April 14, 2020 at 6:00 a.m. EDT

Two years before the novel coronavirus pandemic upended the world, U.S. Embassy officials visited a Chinese research facility in the city of Wuhan several times and sent two official warnings back to Washington about inadequate safety at the lab, which was conducting risky studies on coronaviruses from bats. The cables have fueled discussions inside the U.S. government about whether this or another Wuhan lab was the source of the virus — even though conclusive proof has yet to emerge.

In January 2018, the U.S. Embassy in Beijing took the unusual step of repeatedly sending U.S. science diplomats to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), which had in 2015 become China's first laboratory to achieve the highest level of international bioresearch safety (known as BSL-4). WIV issued a news release in English about the last of these visits, which occurred on March 27, 2018. The U.S. delegation was led by Jamison Fouss, the consul general in Wuhan, and Rick Switzer, the embassy's counselor of environment, science, technology and health.

Last week, WIV erased that statement from its website, though it remains archived on the Internet.

Full coverage of the coronavirus pandemic

What the U.S. officials learned during their visits concerned them so much that they dispatched two diplomatic cables categorized as Sensitive But Unclassified back to Washington. The cables warned about safety and management weaknesses at the WIV lab and proposed more attention and help. The first cable, which I obtained, also warns that the lab's work on bat coronaviruses and their potential human transmission represented a risk of a new SARS-like pandemic.

AD

"During interactions with scientists at the WIV laboratory, they noted the new lab has a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory," states the Jan. 19, 2018, cable, which was drafted by two officials from the embassy's environment, science and health sections who met with the WIV scientists. (The State Department declined to comment on this and other details of the story.)

The Chinese researchers at WIV were receiving assistance from the Galveston National Laboratory at the University of Texas Medical Branch and other U.S. organizations, but the Chinese requested

additional help. The cables argued that the United States should give the Wuhan lab further support, mainly because its research on bat coronaviruses was important but also dangerous.

As the cable noted, the U.S. visitors met with Shi Zhengli, the head of the research project, who had been publishing studies related to bat coronaviruses for many years. In November 2017, just before the U.S. officials' visit, Shi's team had published research showing that horseshoe bats they had collected from a cave in Yunnan province were very likely from the same bat population that spawned the SARS coronavirus in 2003.

AD

Sign up for our Coronavirus Updates newsletter to track the outbreak. All stories linked in the newsletter are free to access.

“Most importantly,” the cable states, “the researchers also showed that various SARS-like coronaviruses can interact with ACE2, the human receptor identified for SARS-coronavirus. This finding strongly suggests that SARS-like coronaviruses from bats can be transmitted to humans to cause SARS-like diseases. From a public health perspective, this makes the continued surveillance of SARS-like coronaviruses in bats and study of the animal-human interface critical to future emerging coronavirus outbreak prediction and prevention.”

Opinion | Don't broadcast Trump's press briefings live. They contain more questions than answers.

The coronavirus pandemic is too serious to let the president hold freewheeling press briefings in real time, says Post media critic Erik Wemple. (Joshua Carroll, Erik Wemple/The Washington Post)

The research was designed to prevent the next SARS-like pandemic by anticipating how it might emerge. But even in 2015, other scientists questioned whether Shi's team was taking unnecessary risks. In October 2014, the U.S. government had imposed a moratorium on funding of any research that makes a virus more deadly or contagious, known as "gain-of-function" experiments.

As many have pointed out, there is no evidence that the virus now plaguing the world was engineered; scientists largely agree it came from animals. But that is not the same as saying it didn't come from the lab, which spent years testing bat coronaviruses in animals, said Xiao Qiang, a research scientist at the School of Information at the University of California at Berkeley.

AD

"The cable tells us that there have long been concerns about the possibility of the threat to public health that came from this lab's research, if it was not being adequately conducted and protected," he said.

There are similar concerns about the nearby Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention lab, which operates at biosecurity level 2, a level significantly less secure than the level-4 standard claimed by the Wuhan Insititute of Virology lab, Xiao said. That's important because the Chinese government still refuses to answer

basic questions about the origin of the novel coronavirus while suppressing any attempts to examine whether either lab was involved. Sources familiar with the cables said they were meant to sound an alarm about the grave safety concerns at the WIV lab, especially regarding its work with bat coronaviruses. The embassy officials were calling for more U.S. attention to this lab and more support for it, to help it fix its problems.

AD

“The cable was a warning shot,” one U.S. official said. “They were begging people to pay attention to what was going on.”

No extra assistance to the labs was provided by the U.S. government in response to these cables. The cables began to circulate again inside the administration over the past two months as officials debated whether the lab could be the origin of the pandemic and what the implications would be for the U.S. pandemic response and relations with China.

Inside the Trump administration, many national security officials have long suspected either the WIV or the Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention lab was the source of the novel coronavirus outbreak. According to the New York Times, the intelligence community has provided no evidence to confirm this. But one senior administration official told me that the cables provide one more piece

of evidence to support the possibility that the pandemic is the result of a lab accident in Wuhan.

AD

“The idea that it was just a totally natural occurrence is circumstantial. The evidence it leaked from the lab is circumstantial. Right now, the ledger on the side of it leaking from the lab is packed with bullet points and there’s almost nothing on the other side,” the official said. As my colleague David Ignatius noted, the Chinese government’s original story — that the virus emerged from a seafood market in Wuhan — is shaky. Research by Chinese experts published in the Lancet in January showed the first known patient, identified on Dec. 1, had no connection to the market, nor did more than one-third of the cases in the first large cluster. Also, the market didn’t sell bats.

The Opinions section is looking for stories of how the coronavirus has affected people of all walks of life. Write to us.

Shi and other WIV researchers have categorically denied this lab was the origin for the novel coronavirus. On Feb. 3, her team was the first to publicly report the virus known as 2019-nCoV was a bat-derived coronavirus.

AD

The Chinese government, meanwhile, has put a total lockdown on information related to the virus origins. Beijing has yet to provide U.S. experts with samples of the novel coronavirus collected from the earliest cases. The Shanghai lab that published the novel coronavirus genome on Jan. 11 was quickly shut down by authorities for “rectification.” Several of the doctors and journalists who reported on the spread early on have disappeared.

On Feb. 14, Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a new biosecurity law to be accelerated. On Wednesday, CNN reported the Chinese government has placed severe restrictions requiring approval before any research institution publishes anything on the origin of the novel coronavirus.

The origin story is not just about blame. It’s crucial to understanding how the novel coronavirus pandemic started because that informs how to prevent the next one. The Chinese government must be transparent and answer the questions about the Wuhan labs because they are vital to our scientific understanding of the virus, said Xiao.

AD

We don’t know whether the novel coronavirus originated in the Wuhan lab, but the cable pointed to the danger there and increases the impetus to find out, he said.

"I don't think it's a conspiracy theory. I think it's a legitimate question that needs to be investigated and answered," he said. "To understand exactly how this originated is critical knowledge for preventing this from happening in the future."

Sender: "Heller, James R" (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R"

To: Keric Chin (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Wired: Inside the Early Days of China's Coronavirus Coverup

Date: Sun, 10 May 2020 20:44:23 +0000

Nobody has suggested that it was man-made or modified—lots of people are stuck on this (to include NIAID Director Tony Fauci). But there were some bizarre activities surrounding the WIV both before COVID broke out in Wuhan and after. WaPo's Josh Rogin got ahold of some State Dept reporting from WIV in Jan 2018 that plainly stated that they were bypassing safety standards and doing sloppy work.

All other CCP explanations have been debunked. Circumstantially, they have been very opaque about the lab and overreact whenever it is raised as the possible source (even though there is copious evidence that Dr Shi Zhengli was studying the exact viruses that are found in COVID patients). When WHO finally was allowed to visit Wuhan a month after it requested access, they were not allowed anywhere near the Lab or the Wet Market, instead getting a tour of a hospital.

Luckily, momentum is building (after us beating the drum for 4 months) as evidenced here:

What we don't know about coronavirus origins might kill us

The WHO is seeking a new mission to China to hunt for the pathogen's source.

Read in Bloomberg: <https://apple.news/A4g1tO8WuSaODOqpQYqWEfw>

From: Keric Chin (b)(6)

Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2020 3:51 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Wired: Inside the Early Days of China's Coronavirus Coverup

Interesting article. Is the current theory that the novel coronavirus is a naturally occurring pathogen that escaped from the Wuhan lab, or a man-made or modified pathogen?

On 9 May 2020, at 13:13, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

Sentient friends;

This article is just another piece of evidence pointing at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (I'll bet my firstborn that's where COVID19 originated). The E-PAI analysis referenced needs to be validated, but how much evidence do the Chuck Todds and Lester Holts need before they'll acknowledge the obvious?

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/report-says-cellphone-data-suggests-october-shutdown-wuhan-lab-experts-n1202716>

The Wired article below highlights the PRC's attempts to hide and censor public frustration and worry on Chinese social media at the outbreak of the Wuhan virus. There's mention of martyr Dr Li Wenliang as well. My favorite are the last paragraphs. Long but worth every minute.

Also look for Fang Fang's Wuhan Diary on Amazon.

<image001.jpg>

<https://www.wired.com/story/inside-the-early-days-of-chinas-coronavirus-coverup/>

Inside the Early Days of China's Coronavirus Coverup

The dawn of a pandemic—as seen through the news and social media posts that vanished from China's internet.

LATE ON THE night of February 2, as her insomnia kicked in, a Beijing woman whom I'll call Yue took out her phone and religiously clicked open WeChat and Weibo. Over the past two fitful weeks, the two Chinese social media platforms had offered practically her only windows into the "purgatory," as she called it, of Wuhan.

At this point, according to official estimates, the novel coronavirus had infected just over 14,000 people in the world—and nearly all of them were in the central Chinese city where Yue had attended university and lived for four years. A number of her friends there had already caught the mysterious virus. An inveterate news junkie, Yue hadn't been able to look away from the ghastly updates pouring out of Wuhan, which—interspersed with a dissonant bombardment of posts praising the Chinese government's iron grip on the outbreak—kept hitting her in an unrelentingly personal way. Her mental health was fraying, and she was "disappointed in humanity," as she later put it.

That night, just when Yue was about to log off and try to sleep, she saw the following sentence pop up on her WeChat Moments feed, the rough equivalent of Facebook's News Feed: "I never thought in my lifetime I'd see dead bodies lying around without being collected and patients seeking medical help but having no place to get treatment."

Yue thought that she had become desensitized, but this post made her fists clench: It was written by Xiao Hui, a journalist friend of hers who was reporting on the ground for Caixin, a prominent Chinese news outlet. Yue trusted her. She read on. "On January 22, on my second day reporting in Wuhan, I knew this was China's Chernobyl," Xiao Hui wrote. "These days I rarely pick up phone calls from outside of Wuhan or chat with friends and family, because nothing can express what I have seen here."

Unable to contain her anger, Yue took a screenshot of Xiao's post and immediately posted it on her WeChat Moments. "Look what is happening in Wuhan!" she wrote. Then she finally drifted off.

The next morning, when she opened WeChat, a single message appeared: Her account had been suspended for having "spread malicious rumors" and she would not be able to unblock it. She knew at once that her late-night post had stepped on a censorship landmine.

What she couldn't have realized, though, was that she had posted her screenshot at what seems to have been a turning point in China's handling of the epidemic: Over the previous two weeks, the government had allowed what felt like an uncharacteristic degree of openness in the flow of information out of Wuhan. But now the state was embarking on a campaign of censorship and suppression that would be remarkable even by the standards of the Chinese Communist Party.

OVER THE PAST several weeks, as the number of new cases in China has tapered off and lockdowns have lifted, China has been positioning itself as a

global leader in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. It has vigorously promoted the narrative that its unprecedented quarantine measures bought time for the world—and that much of the world then botched and squandered that head start. Now, the story goes, China has again come to the rescue as it shares its expertise, experience, and equipment.

To be sure, China did eventually take extraordinary and painful steps to quell its domestic outbreak. But it has also taken extreme measures to curate the information that has emerged from ground zero of the pandemic.

Over the last month or so, China's openness with the rest of the world—or lack thereof—in the early days of the pandemic has become the subject of intense geopolitical debate. "The reality is that we could've been better off if China had been more forthcoming," Vice President Mike Pence told CNN in early April, when asked why the Trump administration had gotten off to such a late start in taking the virus seriously. The debate has become a strange and strained one, given that whatever China did or did not cover up, the US still squandered its chance to prepare for the inevitable even after Beijing's warnings had become loud and clear.

Moreover, it wasn't the rest of the world that Beijing was most intent on keeping in the dark. Nowhere has China been more aggressive in its war for control of the coronavirus narrative than it has been at home. A vivid and human picture of that information war emerges if you examine all the stories and posts that have been wiped off of the Chinese internet since the outbreak began—which is exactly what I've been trying to do for the past few months. Seasoned journalists in China often say "Cover China as if you were covering Snapchat"—in other words, screenshot everything, under the assumption that any given story could be deleted soon. For the past two and half months, I've been trying to screenshot every news article, social media post, and blog post that seems relevant to the coronavirus. In total, I've collected nearly 100 censored online posts: 40 published by major news organizations, and close to 60 by ordinary social media users like Yue. In total, the number of Weibo posts censored and WeChat accounts suspended would be virtually uncountable. (Despite numerous attempts, Weibo and WeChat could not be reached for comment.)

Taken together, these deleted posts offer a submerged account of the early days of a global pandemic, and they indicate the contours of what Beijing didn't want Chinese people to hear or see. Two main kinds of content were targeted for deletion by censors: Journalistic investigations of how the epidemic first started and was kept under wraps in late 2019 and live accounts of the mayhem and suffering inside Wuhan in the early days of the city's

lockdown, as its medical system buckled under the world's first hammerstrike of patients.

It's not hard to see how these censored posts contradicted the state's preferred narrative. Judging from these vanished accounts, the regime's coverup of the initial outbreak certainly did not help buy the world time, but instead apparently incubated what some have described as a humanitarian disaster in Wuhan and Hubei Province, which in turn may have set the stage for the global spread of the virus. And the state's apparent reluctance to show scenes of mass suffering and disorder cruelly starved Chinese citizens of vital information when it mattered most.

ON JANUARY 20, 2020, Zhong Nanshan, a prominent Chinese infectious disease expert, essentially raised the curtain on China's official response to the coronavirus outbreak when he confirmed on state television that the pathogen could be transmitted from human to human. Zhong was, in many ways, an ideal spokesperson for the government's effort; he had become famous for being a medical truth-teller during the 2003 SARS outbreak. Immediately following Zhong's announcement, the Chinese government allowed major news organizations into Wuhan, giving them a surprising amount of leeway to report on the situation there. In another press conference on January 21, Zhong praised the government's transparency. Two days after that, the government shut down virtually all transportation into and out of Wuhan, later extending the lockdown to other cities.

The sequence of events had all the appearances of a strategic rollout: Zhong's January 20 TV appearance marked the symbolic beginning of the crisis, to which the government responded swiftly, decisively, and openly. But shortly after opening the information floodgates, the state abruptly closed them again—particularly as news articles began to indicate a far messier account of the government's response to the disease. "The last couple of weeks were the most open Weibo has ever been and [offered] the most freedom many media organizations have ever enjoyed," one Chinese Weibo user wrote on February 2. "But it looks like this has come to an end."

On February 5, a Chinese magazine called *China Newsweek* published an interview with a doctor in Wuhan, who said that physicians were told by hospital heads not to share any information at the beginning of the outbreak. At the time, he said, the only thing that doctors could do was to urge patients to wear masks.

Various frontline reports that were later censored supported this doctor's descriptions: "Doctors were not allowed to wear isolation gowns because that

might stoke fears," said a doctor interviewed by the weekly publication *Freezing Point*. The interview was later deleted.

"Those were my saddest days. As a medical worker, I had to obey rules. But I don't understand why we couldn't say anything," another health care worker told *Southern People Weekly*, a Guangzhou-based weekly magazine in an article headlined "From discovery to lockdown, Wuhan's frontline medical workers analyze why the epidemic exploded." The story, published in early February, was later censored.

On February 26, Caixin published an article called "Tracing the Gene Sequencing of the Novel Coronavirus: When was the Alarm Sounded?" It offered a detailed timeline of the outbreak. According to Caixin's reporting, the provincial health commission began actively suppressing scientists' knowledge about the virus as early as January 1. (Despite repeated attempts, the provincial health commission could not be reached for comment.)

By January, according to Caixin, a gene sequencing laboratory in Guangzhou had discovered that the novel virus in Wuhan shared a high degree of similarity with the virus that caused the SARS outbreak in 2003; but, according to an anonymous source, Hubei's health commission promptly demanded that the lab suspend all testing and destroy all samples. On January 6, according to the deleted Caixin article, China's National Center for Disease Control and Prevention initiated an "internal second-degree emergency response"—but did not alert the public. Caixin's investigation disappeared from the Chinese internet only hours after it was published. When asked to comment on the Caixin story, China's CDC responded, "We have made sure to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak as efficiently as possible and do not condone news reports that accused our center of mishandling the crisis."

That same day, February 26, *Caijing*, a Chinese business magazine, published an interview with one of the experts whom the National Health Commission sent to Wuhan in early January to conduct field research on the mysterious pneumonia outbreak. The expert reported that the group's work was severely hindered by the provincial health commission.

According to the scientist, a representative of the provincial commission vehemently denied that any medical workers in Wuhan had been infected. In fact, at least one infection of a medical worker had occurred at Wuhan Central Hospital two days before, according to a doctor quoted in *Freezing Point*. Soon after it was published, the interview with the scientist disappeared. Wuhan Central Hospital declined to comment on the specifics of its response to the crisis, except to say that it "adhered to all the principles laid out by relevant authorities."

Government censors also appeared to take particular aim at articles that were graphic in their depiction of the apocalyptic scene in Wuhan in the first days of lockdown.

On February 1, *Caijing* revealed that many patients suffering Covid-like symptoms couldn't be tested for the virus due to the severe shortage of testing kits; they were also being turned away at hospitals due to the scarcity of available beds. Many were left to die at home, their deaths never counted in the official tally of Covid-19 fatalities. "80 out of 120 fever patients would have lung infections, but only 5 of them would be admitted," the reporter wrote, quoting a frontline administrator at a hospital in Wuhan.

Reports like this, even if they were short-lived, inspired some Chinese Weibo users to create an account called "Those Who Were Not Documented" on February 21. The crowdsourced page asked people to report whether they had relatives or acquaintances who had died outside of the hospital without having been tested—all to make sure there was a more accurate tally of the death toll. That account itself was purged within a day after it was created.

Another article, published on February 4 by *China Business Journal*, essentially confirmed what Yue's friend Xiao Hui had posted on WeChat about bodies lingering in hospitals. The article, under the headline "You Had to Queue Up to Get Into Funeral Parlors," reported that Wuhan's crematoria were so overloaded that corpses were being left in hospital morgues, sometimes for days. This article was later deleted, too.

On February 20, in an article headlined "Who is Lying? A Conversation with a Wuhan Medical Worker," a local newspaper interviewed a doctor who had been infected by the virus but later recovered. The doctor said that close to 300 medical workers had become infected in her hospital, but management had banned staff from saying or posting anything "sensitive." This dispatch, too, was later deleted.

In early March, the head nurse of a Wuhan hospital's ER Department, told a Chinese monthly magazine called *People* (no relation to the American magazine) that many medical workers were on the brink of severe mental breakdown. "My tears are dry and there is nothing moving that will make me cry anymore—not possible," she said. The article later vanished.

Other articles that were disappeared carried the following headlines: "No Hospital Beds, Family of Five Infected;" "Voices from the Frontline Medics;" "Over 160 Hospitals Turn to the Public for Help, Why Is the Medical Supplies Stockpile Insufficient?" Close to 20 news stories portraying the horrendous situation were abruptly deleted after they were posted.

AMONG JOURNALISTS AND social critics in China, the 404 error code, which announces that the content on a webpage is no longer available, has become a badge of honor. “At this point, if you haven’t had a 404 under your belt, can you even call yourself a journalist?” a Chinese reporter, who requested anonymity, jokingly asked me.

However, the crackdown on reports out of Wuhan was even more aggressive against ordinary users of social media.

On January 24, a resident posted that nurses at a Hubei province hospital were running low on masks and protective goggles. Soon after that post was removed, another internet user reposted it and commented: “Sina employees—I’m begging you to stop deleting accounts. Weibo is an effective way to offer help. Only when we are aware of what frontline people need can we help them.”

Only minutes later, the post was taken down. The user’s account has since vanished.

Censors deleted a video that showed a young woman weeping as her mother’s corpse is driven away to the cremation center. They pulled down footage of what appeared to be nurses and doctors, overwhelmed by the scale of the outbreak, having mental breakdowns. They culled posts in which relatives of hospital workers made pleas for medical supplies. Nearly any expression of raw grief, pleading, or desperation seemed fair game for removal—at least in the early days of the outbreak.

But the real war between China’s censors and its social media users began on February 7.

That day, a Wuhan doctor named Li Wenliang—a whistleblower who had raised alarms about the virus in late December, only to be reprimanded for “spreading rumors”—died of Covid-19.

Within hours, his death sparked a spectacular outpouring of collective grief on Chinese social media—an outpouring that was promptly snuffed out, post by post, minute by minute. With that, grief turned to wrath, and posts demanding freedom of speech erupted across China’s social media platforms as the night went on.

A number of posts directly challenged the party’s handling of Li’s whistleblowing and the government’s relentless suppression of the freedom of speech in China. Some Chinese social media users started to post references to the 2019 Hong Kong protests, uploading clips of “Do You Hear People Sing” from *Les Misérables*, which became a protest anthem during last year’s mass demonstrations. Even more daringly, some posted photos from the

1989 Tiananmen Square protest and massacre, one of the most taboo subjects in China.

One image that surfaced from Tiananmen was an image of a banner from the 1989 protest that reads: "We shall not let those murderers stand tall so they will block our wind of freedom from blowing."

The censors frantically kept pace. In the span of a quarter hour from 23:16 to around 23:30, over 20 million searches for information on the death of Li Wenliang were winnowed down to fewer than 2 million, according to a Hong Kong-based outlet *The Initium*. The #DrLiWenLiangDied topic was dragged from number 3 on the trending topics list to number 7 within roughly the same time period.

The #WeWantFreedomofSpeech and #IWantFreedomofSpeech hashtags were deleted as soon as they gained momentum. As the night dragged on, the deletions became more vigorous and even ridiculous: Excerpts from the Chinese Constitution that supposedly guarantee its citizens' right to freedom of speech were censored; even China's national anthem fell under the censors' radar because it begins with the words "Rise Up, People Who Do Not Want To Be Slaves."

"I hope Sina blows up all of our Weibo accounts today, so we can use this debris to build Dr. Li a gravestone," wrote Li Jingrui, a Chinese reporter. Since the night of February 7, whole publications have fallen to the scythe. On January 27, an opinion blog called Dajia published an article titled "50 Days into the Outbreak, The Entire Nation is Bearing the Consequence of the Death of the Media." By February 19, the entire site was shut down, never to resurface.

On March 10, an article about another medical whistleblower in Wuhan—another potential Li—was published and then swiftly wiped off the internet, which began yet another vast cat-and-mouse game between censors and Chinese social media users. The story, published by *People*, profiled a doctor, who, as she put it, had "handed out the whistle" by alerting other physicians about the emergence of a SARS-like virus in late December. The article reported that she had been scolded by hospital management for not keeping the information a secret.

Soon after it was deleted, Chinese social media users started to recreate the article in every way imaginable: They translated it into over 10 languages; transcribed the piece in Morse code; wrote it out in ancient Chinese script; incorporated its content into a scannable QR code; and even rewrote it in Klingon—all in an effort to evade the censorship machine. All of these efforts were eradicated from the internet.

WHILE ARTICLES AND posts that displease Chinese censors continue to be expunged across the Chinese internet, the messages that thrive on television and state-sanctioned sites are rosy: News anchors narrate videos of nurses saying how honored they have been to fight for their country despite all the hardships and video clips of China “generously” shipping planeloads of medical equipment to other countries hit hard by the virus are playing on a loop.

As the outbreak began to slow down in mainland China, the government remained cautious in filtering out any information that might contradict the seemingly unstoppable trend of recovery. On March 4, a Shanghai news site called The Paper reported that a Covid-19 patient who had been discharged from the hospital in late February later died in a post-discharge isolation center; another news site questioned whether hospitals were discharging patients prematurely for the sake of “clearing all cases.” Both stories vanished.

On April 8, travel restrictions in Wuhan were finally lifted, and the measures used to contain the outbreak continue to ease. The government, meanwhile, is aggressively pushing for the public to show its gratitude toward the ruling party for its supposedly efficient response. TV stations are playing patriotic documentaries to showcase the government’s measures to combat the pandemic. By constantly comparing the scale of the outbreak in the United States with that in China, the government is feeding its people reasons to be grateful for their authoritarian government.

But it’s unlikely that the masses of people who watched posts being expunged from the internet will forget how they were governed in the pandemic. On March 17, I picked up my phone, opened my Weibo account, and typed out the following sentence: “You are waiting for their apology, and they are waiting for your appreciation.” The post promptly earned me a 404 badge.

Shawn Yuan is a Beijing-based freelance journalist and photographer. He travels between the Middle East and China to report on human rights and politics issues.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

Recipient: Keric Chin (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

To: Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)

Subject: RE: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)**Date:** Mon, 20 Apr 2020 12:01:03 +0000

Still processing this (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Who knows.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~**From:** Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)**Sent:** Sunday, April 19, 2020 9:30 PM**To:** Stilwell, David R (b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

(b)(6) Tobin, Elizabeth

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)

(b)(5)

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: Stilwell, David R**Sent:** Sunday, April 19, 2020 9:17 PM**To:** Keshap, Atul; (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D; (b)(6) Tobin, Elizabeth**Subject:** FW: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)

If true, this one is interesting.

[China] Senior Chinese security official under investigation

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 3:44 PM, Bill Gertz, 482K, Negative] reports China's Communist Party announced Sunday that a senior Public Security Ministry is under investigation – another apparent political casualty of Beijing's handling of the devastating coronavirus outbreak. Sun Lijun, vice minister of Public security, is being investigated for

suspected "severe violations of discipline and law," the official Xinhua news agency said in a two-sentence dispatch. The probe is being carried out by the Chinese Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission. Reports from Asia say Mr. Sun was sent from Beijing to Wuhan in February to take charge of security operations in the city. That commission is the party's leading investigatory agency and under President Xi Jinping has conducted a nationwide crackdown on corruption within China. Mr. Sun was among four Chinese intelligence officials who came to Washington and New York in 2017 and improperly abused the visas to pressure a Chinese dissident. The FBI wanted to arrest the Chinese officials but was blocked by State Department official under then-Assistant Secretary of State Susan Thornton who feared the arrests would disrupt favorable U.S.-China relations.

From: TechMIS - DOS Daily <dos@techmis.com>

Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 8:42 PM

To: noreply@techmis.com

Subject: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)

STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS BRIEFING

Prepared for the U.S. Department of State

By TechMIS

www.TechMIS.com

Mobile User Copy

TO: State Department & Staff

DATE: Sunday, April 19, 2020 9:00 PM ET

State Department News

Americans at World Health Organization transmitted real-time information about coronavirus to Trump administration

The [Washington Post](#) [4/19/2020 4:46 PM, Karen DeYoung, Lena H. Sun and Emily Rauhala, 12625K, Neutral] reports more than a dozen U.S. researchers, physicians and public health experts, many of them from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, were working full time at the Geneva headquarters of the World Health Organization as the novel coronavirus emerged late last year and transmitted real-time information about its discovery and spread in China to the Trump administration, according to U.S. and international officials. A number of CDC staffers are regularly detailed to work at WHO in Geneva as part of a rotation that has operated for years. Senior Trump-appointed health officials also consulted regularly at the highest levels with the WHO as the crisis unfolded, the officials said. The presence of so many U.S. officials undercuts President Trump's charge that the WHO's failure to communicate the extent of the threat, born of a desire to protect China, is largely responsible for the rapid spread of the virus in the United States. Asked early Sunday about the presence of CDC and other officials at the WHO, and whether it was "fair to blame the WHO for covering up the spread of this virus," Deborah

Birx, the State Department expert who is part of the White House pandemic team, gently shifted the onus to China, and the need to "over-communicate." U.S. participation in the range of Geneva-based U.N. organizations is supervised by the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs, whose assistant secretary left office last November after the department's inspector general issued a sweeping condemnation of his leadership, including "political harassment" of career officials deemed insufficiently loyal to Trump. It is currently headed in an acting capacity by a deputy. But below the level of political appointments, communication between the U.S. government's public health bureaucracy and the WHO has continued throughout the Trump administration. In addition to working at WHO, on assignments first reported Saturday by Washington Post columnist Dana Milbank, CDC officials are often members of its many advisory groups.

US and Russia blocking UN plans for a global ceasefire amid crisis

Yahoo News/The Guardian [4/19/2020 7:00 AM, Simon Tisdall, 4742K, Neutral] reports the Trump administration and Russia are blocking efforts to win binding UN security council backing for a global ceasefire to help fight the coronavirus pandemic, which has claimed more than 150,000 lives worldwide. The UN secretary-general, António Guterres, called for an immediate end to fighting involving governments and armed groups in all conflict areas almost one month ago. "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war," he said. Yet despite strong support for a universal truce from dozens of countries, including leading US allies such as Britain, France and Germany, as well as human rights groups, charities and the pope, the Trump administration is refusing to be bound by the measure. In an attempt to break the impasse, Emmanuel Macron, the French president, has proposed a draft security council resolution which attempts to overcome US and Russian objections by, in effect, making it impossible to enforce. The US objections arise from White House, Pentagon and State Department concerns that an all-encompassing measure could hinder their ability to prosecute military operations against terrorist groups, for example Isis in Iraq, and other targets that are deemed hostile to US interests. Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, is believed to have similar reservations regarding the impact on Russian military operations in Syria and on Moscow's unacknowledged support for proxy groups and non-state militias in wartorn countries such as Libya. Kelly Craft, US ambassador to the UN, expressed support for a global truce earlier this week and said she hoped the French resolution could be agreed soon, possibly this week. But a State Department spokesman was more circumspect. "The United States supports the secretary-general's call for a global ceasefire, but have noted that we will continue to fulfil our legitimate counter-terrorism mission," the spokesman told Foreign Policy.

G20 health ministers acknowledge health systems' vulnerability to pandemics: statement

Reuters [4/19/2020 5:10 PM, Dahlia Nehme and Marwa Rashad, 23673K, Neutral] reports health ministers from the Group of 20 major economies discussed weaknesses in health systems that made the world vulnerable to the coronavirus outbreak and other pandemics, a statement said after a virtual meeting on Sunday. The Saudi G20 secretariat said that the ministers shared their national experiences, addressed necessary actions to improve preparedness and discussed systemic weaknesses exposed by the pandemic. "Health Ministers recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted systemic weaknesses in health systems," the statement said. "It also has shown vulnerabilities in the global community's ability to prevent and respond to pandemic threats." The statement said the

ministers adopted preventative measures to contain the pandemic, but did not elaborate. Leaders from Spain, Singapore, Jordan and Switzerland were invited to attend Sunday's meeting as well as international and regional organisations including the World Health Organization and the World Bank, an earlier G20 statement said.

Nato chief defends virus response after 'everyone caught off-guard' by pandemic

Yahoo News/PA Media [4/19/2020 4:15 AM, Trevor Marshallsea, 10942K, Neutral] reports the Nato general leading the group's response to the coronavirus in Europe has conceded all key figures were caught "off-guard" by the outbreak. Defending Nato's work in reaction to the virus, including co-ordinating the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) through various European countries, Lieutenant-General Olivier Rittiman said "no-one" fully understood the depth of the crisis that lay ahead in the early days of the outbreak. "I think that everybody was taken a little bit off-guard by this crisis," Lt Gen Rittiman, the commander of Nato's Europe Covid-19 Task Force, told Sky News' Sophy Ridge on Sunday. "No-one was really completely understanding the full expanse of the health crisis we are facing." Lt Gen Rittiman said it was not fair of former defence minister Tobias Ellwood to have said last week that Nato needed to "wake up" to the Covid-19 threat. The general said the organisation had so far deployed 4,000 medics and 250 field hospitals – amounting to some 25,000 beds – across various nations.

[Iran] Iran's Guard acknowledges encounter with US, says will give decisive response to any mistake by US in Gulf

The AP [4/19/2020 1:53 PM, Amir Vahdat, 23673K, Negative] reports Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard acknowledged Sunday it had a tense encounter with U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf last week, but alleged without offering evidence that American forces sparked the incident. The incident Wednesday saw the U.S. Navy release video of small Iranian fast boats coming close to American warships as they operated in the northern Persian Gulf near Kuwait, with U.S. Army Apache helicopters. In the Guard's telling, its forces were conducting a drill and faced "the unprofessional and provocative actions of the United States and their indifference to warnings." It said the Americans later withdrew. The Guard released no evidence to support its allegation, but did release a video showing an Iranian boat traveling in parallel with a U.S. warship. At one point, a deck-mounted machine gun on the Iranian vessel is seen pointed toward the American ship. The Guard also accused American forces of blocking Iranian warships on April 6 and April 7 as well. Lt. Pete Pagano, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet, said the Navy stood by its earlier description of the incident Wednesday. Reuters [4/19/2020 7:19 AM, Babak Dehghanpisheh, 5304K, Neutral] reports Iran will give a decisive response to any mistake by the United States in the Gulf, the Revolutionary Guards navy said in a statement published on the Guards' news site Sepah News. "We advise the Americans to follow international regulations and maritime protocols in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman and to refrain from any adventurism and false and fake stories," Sunday's statement from the Guards navy said. "They should be assured that the Revolutionary Guards navy and the powerful armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran sees the dangerous actions of foreigners in the region as a threat to national security and its red line and any error in calculation on their part will receive a decisive response."

[Iran] Iran's Central Bank Head Urges IMF to Approve Virus Loan

Bloomberg [4/19/2020 7:28 AM, Golnar Motevalli, 6400K, Negative] reports Iran's central bank governor urged the International Monetary Fund to resist U.S. pressure and approve its application for financing to help bridge a 10 billion-euro (\$10.9 billion) deficit as the country's sanctions-hit economy struggles to cope with the coronavirus pandemic. The Islamic Republic asked the IMF on March 6 for \$5 billion in loans to help finance its efforts to combat the disease and support an economy severely weakened by U.S. sanctions that have devastated oil revenues and isolated the state from the global banking system. While the U.S. has said it will block the application, on April 15 the IMF's director for the Middle East and Central Asia said it's proceeding with Iran's request for assistance. "The last time I checked, it's not the United States running the IMF, but its management and the board of governors who oversee the work and ensure that the IMF delivers on its mandate," Abdolnaser Hemmati, head of the Central Bank of Iran, said in written answers to questions sent by Bloomberg. The U.S. says sanctions don't apply to humanitarian goods such as pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and food, but Iran says they are preventing it from accessing its own money, which is frozen overseas and hurting its ability to pay for imports. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has fiercely opposed Iran's request to the IMF, accusing it of seeking to funnel the money into "corrupt purposes."

[Israel] Israelis accuse Netanyahu of endangering democracy

The AP [4/19/2020 3:48 PM, Oded Balilty, 23673K, Negative] reports more than 2,000 Israelis took to the streets of Tel Aviv on Sunday, demonstrating against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's attempts to form an "emergency" government with his chief rival and accusing him of using the coronavirus crisis to escape prosecution on corruption charges. Demonstrators wore face masks and largely kept their distance from one another, in line with social-distancing rules, as speakers criticized Netanyahu's possible partnership with rival Benny Gantz. Some held black flags, which have become the symbol of their campaign in recent weeks. Gantz, who during three bitter election campaigns over the past year vowed never to sit in a government with Netanyahu due to his legal problems, announced last month that he had accepted the prime minister's suggestion to form an "emergency" government to deal with the coronavirus crisis. The announcement infuriated many of Gantz's supporters and caused his Blue and White party to fracture. Netanyahu has been charged with fraud, breach of justice and accepting bribes. He denies the charges and says he is the victim of a hostile media and aggressive police and prosecutors.

[Turkey] Erdogan, Trump agree on 'close cooperation' in virus crisis

The AP [4/19/2020 2:26 PM, Staff, 2182K, Neutral] reports Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and U.S. President Donald Trump have spoken on the phone, discussing the coronavirus pandemic, bilateral relations and regional developments. According to an account of the phone call shared by the Turkish presidency's office on Sunday, the two leaders agreed to continue their "close cooperation" against the threats posed by the coronavirus on public health and the economy. This would be a "necessity of the spirit of solidarity required by being NATO allies," the message said. The two leaders also spoke on the phone at the end of March. The U.S. has the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the world and Turkey now ranks seventh, according to Johns Hopkins University's data on the coronavirus pandemic. They have both surpassed China, where COVID-19 emerged, the figures show.

[China] Pence Says Trump 'not happy' with China as Wuhan Lab Says Virus Did Not Originate From Them

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 5:48 AM, Tom Howell Jr., 482K, Neutral] reports Vice President Mike Pence said President Trump is "not happy" with China over its early fumbles in disclosing the coronavirus that erupted in Wuhan but stopped short of outlining consequences Sunday, saying the administration is looking into it. "The president's made it clear he's not happy," Mr. Pence told "Fox News Sunday." "We're going to make proper inquiries into this at the proper time." Mr. Trump is highlighting China's culpability in failing to contain a virus that's raced around the globe, sickening 2.3 million people and killing 161,400 people, including nearly 40,000 deaths in the U.S. "If they were knowingly responsible, certainly. If it was a mistake, a mistake is a mistake. But if they were knowingly responsible, yeah, then there should be consequences," Mr. Trump said Saturday at the White House. "I haven't ruled out anything — I want to look at the facts as they come in." Mr. Trump's critics say the White House is highlighting China to deflect attention from his slow start in preparing and testing for the virus. The Washington Examiner [4/19/2020 11:35 AM, Caitlin Yilek, 570K, Negative] reports Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House Coronavirus Task Force Coordinator, said it was too soon to determine whether the virus originated in a Chinese laboratory. "Anytime we have a new virus, it's important to figure out its origins. I think we're still a long way from figuring it out. It took us decades to figure out HIV and Ebola. It's gonna take us a while to really map and trace this particular virus, map it through its experience in humans, and get the scientific evidence of where this virus originated. We know it originated in China, we just don't know specifically how and where," Birx told CBS News's Face the Nation on Sunday. "I don't have the evidence that it was a laboratory accident. I also don't know precisely where it originated," she said, adding, "Right now, the general consensus is animal-to-human [transmission]." Yahoo News/RFI [4/19/2020 9:27 AM, Staff, 10942K, Negative] reports the head of a research laboratory in the Chinese city of Wuhan, ground zero of the coronavirus, has broken his silence to reject claims the facility could be the source of the pandemic. In comments published in Chinese state media Saturday, Yuan Zhiming, director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, said the accusations were a "conspiracy theory," adding "there's no way this virus came from us." The move comes after France on Friday said there was no evidence of a link between the Covid-19 outbreak and the work of the institute's high-security biosafety P4 laboratory, which is equipped to handle dangerous viruses and which France helped to set up.

[China] Senior Chinese security official under investigation

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 3:44 PM, Bill Gertz, 482K, Negative] reports China's Communist Party announced Sunday that a senior Public Security Ministry is under investigation — another apparent political casualty of Beijing's handling of the devastating coronavirus outbreak. Sun Lijun, vice minister of Public security, is being investigated for suspected "severe violations of discipline and law," the official Xinhua news agency said in a two-sentence dispatch. The probe is being carried out by the Chinese Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission. Reports from Asia say Mr. Sun was sent from Beijing to Wuhan in February to take charge of security operations in the city. That commission is the party's leading investigatory agency and under President Xi Jinping has conducted a nationwide crackdown on corruption within China. Mr. Sun was among four Chinese intelligence officials who came to Washington and New York in 2017 and improperly abused the visas to pressure a Chinese dissident. The FBI wanted to arrest the Chinese officials but was blocked by State

Department official under then-Assistant Secretary of State Susan Thornton who feared the arrests would disrupt favorable U.S.-China relations.

[Hong Kong] 'Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted': Barr condemns Hong Kong protester arrests

The Washington Examiner [4/19/2020 1:44 PM, Jerry Dunleavy, 570K, Neutral] reports Attorney General William Barr and other U.S. leaders condemned the Chinese government's move to arrest more than a dozen leaders from Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement for alleged crimes stemming from last year's mass protests. "I condemn the latest assault on the rule of law and the liberty of the people of Hong Kong," Barr said on Saturday. "These events show how antithetical the values of the Chinese Communist Party are to those we share in Western liberal democracies. These actions — along with its malign influence activity and industrial espionage here in the United States — demonstrate once again that the Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted." Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had said this weekend that the U.S. "condemns the arrest of pro-democracy advocates in Hong Kong" and noted that "Beijing and its representatives in Hong Kong continue to take actions inconsistent with commitments made under the Sino-British Joint Declaration that include transparency, the rule of law, and guarantees that Hong Kong will continue to enjoy a high degree of autonomy."

[North Korea] North Korea Says Kim Jong Un Didn't Send Letter to Trump

Bloomberg [4/19/2020 9:13 AM, Shinye Kang, 6400K, Neutral] reports an official at North Korea's foreign ministry said Kim Jong Un didn't send any letter to U.S. President Donald Trump recently although it's unclear that Trump mentioned about letters exchanged in the past, Korean Central News Agency reported. North Korea will analyze the U.S. leadership's purpose of leaking groundless information to the media. Relations between the leaders of two countries should not be used for "selfish purpose." Trump earlier said he got nice note from North Korean leader recently. The AP [4/19/2020 11:30 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 2182K, Neutral] reports North Korea's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that there was no letter addressed to Trump recently by "the supreme leadership," a reference to Kim. It said it would examine why the U.S. leadership released "the ungrounded story" to the media. "The relations between the top leaders of (North Korea) and the U.S. are not an issue to be taken up just for diversion nor it should be misused for meeting selfish purposes," the statement said.

[North Korea] UN experts want to blacklist 14 ships over N. Korea sanctions

The AP [4/19/2020 3:17 AM, Edith M. Lederer, Neutral] reports U.N. experts have recommended blacklisting 14 vessels for violating sanctions against North Korea in a report that accuses the country of increasing illegal coal exports, imports of petroleum products and continuing with cyber attacks on financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges to gain illicit revenue. The 267-page report, obtained Saturday by The Associated Press, also accused North Korea of importing luxury vehicles, watches and liquor and other sanctioned items including robotic machinery, and continuing to illegally access international banking channels "mainly by using third party intermediaries." The U.N. Security Council has imposed increasingly tough sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the country's official name, including banning most of its exports and severely limiting its imports, to pressure Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The full report by the panel of experts monitoring the sanctions provides more details to the

summary and some excerpts reported by AP in February. It includes photos of ballistic missile launchers, nuclear sites and vessels recommended for blacklisting. The panel made 39 recommendations to the Security Council, including on the blacklisting of 14 vessels. In China, Russia and elsewhere, there is strong demand for cheap North Korean workers. The U.S. State Department previously estimated there were about 100,000 North Korean workers worldwide, and civilian experts said those workers brought the DPRK an estimated \$200 million to \$500 million in revenue a year. The report said "in multiple cases, workers were not repatriated to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but moved to a third country."

[Afghanistan] Dozens Test Positive for Coronavirus at Afghan President's Palace

The New York Times [4/19/2020 3:30 PM, Mujib Mashal and Fahim Abed, 23673K, Negative] reports at least 40 staff members in Afghanistan's presidential palace have tested positive for Covid-19, Afghan officials said on Sunday, forcing President Ashraf Ghani to isolate himself and manage the country's response to the virus — amid a raging war — largely via video conference. There is no evidence that Mr. Ghani himself is infected. His spokesman would not comment on whether the president had been tested. But the reach of the virus deep into the center of Afghan power, guarded behind several layers of security to protect against truck bombings and suicide assaults, was a troubling omen of difficult times ahead. Officials are grappling with the spread of the disease and its economic ramifications for the impoverished nation even as they fend off Taliban onslaughts. An official at the palace said that most of the 40 people who tested positive work for the administrative wing of the president's office, the National Security Council and the office of Mr. Ghani's chief of staff. A second senior official confirmed that dozens had tested positive after hundreds of palace workers were tested more than a week ago. The official did not provide further details, but said those with confirmed infections were sent into quarantine.

[Pakistan] IMF Approves \$1.4 Billion in Coronavirus Aid to Pakistan to Deal With Covid-19 Pandemic

Yahoo News/News18 [4/19/2020 2:10 PM, Staff, 4742K, Neutral] reports the IMF on Thursday approved nearly \$1.4 billion in emergency aid to Pakistan to help it weather the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. "While uncertainty remains high, the near-term economic impact of COVID-19 is expected to be significant, giving rise to large fiscal and external financing needs," the international lender said in a statement. Pakistan has recorded just over 100 deaths but experts have voiced fear that the country of 215 million people could see a rapid and devastating increase due to its shortage of medical infrastructure and crowded cities. Worried about hurting an already weak economy, Prime Minister Imran Khan has resisted a sweeping, nationwide lockdown but provinces have shuttered schools and companies. "The domestic containment measures, coupled with the global downturn, are severely affecting growth and straining external financing," said Geoffrey Okamoto, the IMF's first deputy managing director. "This has created an urgent balance of payments need," he said.

[Canada] At Least 10 Killed in Nova Scotia Shooting, Police Say

The New York Times [4/19/2020 5:52 PM, Dan Bilefsky and Johnny Diaz, 23673K, Negative] reports a police officer and a 51-year-old gunman were dead after a 12-hour shooting rampage in Nova Scotia in which at least 10 people were killed, the police said Sunday. The authorities responded to reports of a shooting about 10:30 p.m. on Saturday in

the area of Portapique Beach Road, Bay Shore Road and Five Houses Road in Portapique, a small rural community about 35 miles from Truro, Nova Scotia. Police confirmed at a news conference on Sunday afternoon that at least 10 people were killed in multiple locations during the 12-hour rampage, which ended at a gas station. It was not immediately clear if that figure included the gunman. During a news media briefing on Sunday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada briefly touched on the tragedy and thanked the police for their work. "My heart goes out to everyone affected in what is a terrible situation," he said.

[Chad] Boko Haram suspects 'die of poison' in Chad jail

Yahoo News/BBC [4/19/2020 5:55 AM, Staff, 10942K, Negative] reports forty-four suspected Boko Haram militants in Chad have died in detention from apparent poisoning, the country's public prosecutor says. The men were part of a group of 58 suspects captured during a recent major army operation against the Islamist group around Lake Chad. An investigation has been launched after four autopsies showed a lethal substance had led to their deaths. The justice minister told AFP the prisoners had not been ill treated. Djimet Arabi was responding to allegations that the prisoners were placed in a single cell and given no food or water after their transfer to the capital, N'Djamena, on Tuesday. The military offensive was launched after jihadists killed nearly 100 Chadian troops on 23 March during a seven-hour attack on an island base in Lake Chad. It was the deadliest attack on the Chad's army by Boko Haram since their insurgency spread across the border from Nigeria several years ago. The prisoners, who were being held as part of an anti-terrorism investigation, had been found dead on Thursday morning, public prosecutor Youssouf Tom said.

[Congo] Escape of Ebola patient in Congo sparks fear of further infection

Reuters [4/19/2020 2:38 PM, Erikas Mwisi Kambale in Beni and Hereward Holland, 5304K, Negative] reports an Ebola flare-up in eastern Congo may spread again after a patient escaped from a clinic, complicating efforts to contain the disease that has infected six people since last week, the World Health Organization said on Sunday. The Democratic Republic of Congo was two days away from declaring the end of the world's second-largest Ebola epidemic when a new chain of infection was discovered on April 10, following more than seven weeks without a new case. Since then, health authorities have sought to contain any renewed spread of infections. But on Friday a 28-year-old motorbike taxi-driver who had tested positive for Ebola ran away from the centre where he was being treated in the town of Beni. "We are using all the options to get him out of the community," said Boubacar Diallo, deputy incident manager for the WHO's Ebola response operation. "We are expecting secondary cases from him." Small outbreaks are common towards the end of an epidemic, but healthworkers need to ensure the virus is contained by tracking, quarantining and vaccinating the contacts of new cases. "We do not have any details yet. All have been working with the authorities, youths and civil society to find him. Search is ongoing," Diallo said by WhatsApp message.

[Lesotho] Lesotho's army withdraws as calls mount for PM to resign

Yahoo News/AFP [4/19/2020 10:22 AM, Pascalinah Kabi, 10942K, Neutral] reports Lesotho troops deployed by Prime Minister Thomas Thabane amid a showdown with opponents demanding the octogenerian leader resign withdrew from the capital's streets on Sunday. Thabane faces mounting calls to step down from rivals within his ruling party and opposition groups over suspicions he had a hand in the murder of his estranged wife in 2017. An AFP

journalist in the capital Maseru reported that soldiers backed by armoured vehicles had returned to barracks by Sunday morning. Thabane had deployed them the day before to "restore order" while accusing unnamed law enforcement agencies of undermining democracy. The army spokesman was not immediately available for comment. Diplomatic moves to calm the situation were meanwhile gathering pace. A South African envoy has arrived in Lesotho, Thabane's senior private secretary Thabo Thakalekoala told AFP on Sunday. He did not elaborate but many in Maseru suspect President Cyril Ramaphosa had dispatched the envoy to the tiny kingdom surrounded by South Africa in a bid to facilitate talks between Thabane and his opponents. US, British and European Union (EU) ambassadors and commissioners, leaders called on Maseru to remember "the importance of maintaining stability and the rule of law." "We urge a united approach that prioritises the protection of citizens and the provision of essential services," they said in a signed statement.

[Nigeria] 'Armed bandits' kill 47 in northwest Nigeria's Katsina state: police

Reuters [4/19/2020 1:58 PM, Ardo Hazzad, 5304K, Negative] reports gunmen killed 47 people in attacks on villages in the northwestern Nigerian state of Katsina in the early hours of Saturday, local police said. "Armed bandits", some of whom wielded AK 47 guns, carried out the attacks, Katsina police said in a statement on Sunday. Hundreds of people have been killed in the last year by criminal gangs carrying out robberies and kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. Such attacks have added to security challenges in Africa's most populous country, which is already struggling to contain Islamist insurgencies in the northeast and communal violence over grazing rights in central states. Gunmen, some with AK 47 guns, carried out the attacks in three local government authorities in the state in the early hours of Saturday between 12:30 a.m. (2330 GMT) and around 3 a.m., Katsina police said in its statement. "There was reports of organised and simultaneous attacks in villages in Danmusa, Dutsenma and Safana by groups of armed bandits," the statement said of some of the attacks. "Detachments of Police, Nigerian Army, Nigeria Airforce, Civil Defence and DSS (Department of State Services) have been drafted to the area," it added.

{End of Report}

Sender: (b)(6)
Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Recipient: Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
CC: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: REMARKS TO THE PRESS: Secretary Michael R. Pompeo-April 22, 2020
Date: Wed, 22 Apr 2020 23:26:19 +0000

(b)(5)

(b)(6)
Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Operations
Bureau of Medical Services
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 5:29:13 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: FW: REMARKS TO THE PRESS: Secretary Michael R. Pompeo-April 22, 2020

Wow, the Boss came out swinging today! (b)(5)

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 5:20 PM

To: EAP-FO-Office-DL <EAP-FO-Office-DL@state.gov>

Cc: EAP-P-Office-DL <EAP-P-Office-DL@state.gov>; EAP-PG-Taskings-DL <EAP-PG-Taskings-DL@state.gov>; EAP-ChinaMongolia-Transcripts-DL <EAP-ChinaMongolia-Transcripts-DL@state.gov>; EAP-Korea-Transcripts-DL <EAP-Korea-Transcripts-DL@state.gov>

Subject: REMARKS TO THE PRESS: Secretary Michael R. Pompeo-April 22, 2020

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

April 22, 2020

REMARKS TO THE PRESS

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo

**April 22, 2020
Press Briefing Room
Washington, D.C.**

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, good morning, everyone. Happy Ramadan to those of you in time zones where it's Thursday already.

I want to lead off with three commemorations.

First, we remember those slain in terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday. That was one year ago yesterday.

Second, this week the administration honors the annual Holocaust Days of Remembrance. This is the 75th anniversary year of the liberation of many Nazi concentration camps where so many innocent people were murdered, including 6 million Jews. We bear witness to their stories so that such repugnant acts of evil will never happen again.

Third, it's Earth Day, and especially in light of Secretary-General Guterres' message released this morning to turn our recovery into a real opportunity to do the right thing, I want to remind everyone that the right way to achieve a greener, cleaner, brighter future for the world is to unleash private innovation and free market competition. It's what we've done here in the United States but continue to be our model, and we are a world leader in reducing all types of emission.

One simple data point: From 2005 to 2018, the most recent year we have data, U.S. emissions decreased by more than 10 percent even as our economy grew by 25 percent. China, conversely, has been the largest annual emitter since 2006 and it expects that its emissions will continue to grow until around 2030, thus offsetting the progress of countries all around the world in reducing global emissions. I would urge Secretary Guterres to make sure we have the data right, the facts right about who is actually delivering on the things that we all value. And on Earth Day, the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, I think that's especially important.

Turning to the World Health Organization, I want to spend a few minutes telling the American people a little bit more about the problems that we're trying to work our way through.

The WHO has two primary functions. First, it's a regulator and an advisory role, and a health emergency and humanitarian aid operation on top of that.

After the first SARS outbreak in 2003, the United States led the reform of the WHO, the WHO rules that govern how countries report on public health threats. So a major reform effort at 2003.

Those rules – they're called the International Health Regulations – went into effect in 2007.

We set very clear expectations. We – the world – set very clear expectations for how every country must disclose data to protect global health.

For example, Article 6 of the IHR says that “each State Party shall notify the World Health Organization...within 24 hours...of all events which may constitute a public health emergency of international concern within its territory...”

Annex 2 of those same rules provides that countries must notify the World Health Organization of any unusual or unexpected public health events such as SARS, a close genetic cousin of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Those rules also said how countries should evaluate when to notify the WHO of diseases of unknown causes or sources.

We strongly believe that the Chinese Communist Party did not report the outbreak of the new coronavirus in a timely fashion to the World Health Organization.

Article 6 of the IHRs, which was a part of this reform, further mandates that a State Party – that would include China – “shall continue to communicate to WHO timely, accurate and sufficiently detailed public health information...” That is, there’s an ongoing obligation.

Even after the CCP did notify the WHO of the coronavirus outbreak, China didn’t share all of the information it had.

Instead, it covered up how dangerous the disease is. It didn’t report sustained human-to-human transmission for a month until it was in every province inside of China. It censored those who tried to warn the world, it ordered a halt to testing of new samples, and it destroyed existing samples.

The CCP still has not shared the virus sample from inside of China with the outside world, making it impossible to track the disease’s evolution.

Not making a legal determination here today on China’s adherence to the IHRs, but the World Health Organization’s regulatory arm clearly failed during this pandemic.

I’d also note that when countries adopted these new rules in 2007, we also gave the director-general of the WHO encouragement and the ability to go public when a member-country wasn’t following those rules, and that didn’t happen in this case either.

It’s why we continue to insist this is an ongoing requirement for transparency and openness according to the WHO rules, and the WHO has responsibility to continue to enforce them today. This transparency and getting it right is critical to saving lives today and in the future.

I’ll talk for just a minute about humanitarian aid. The United States is the most generous nation on the planet, has been for the past three years, will continue to be this year.

Thanks to the American taxpayers, we’ve dedicated more than \$140 billion in global funding for global health purposes in the past two decades.

Today I can confirm the United States is making an additional commitment of about 270 million to assist the most at-risk countries in fighting the virus, bringing our total to more than \$775 million to date.

We do this in lots of ways. We do this through multilateral organizations. We help our partners by sharing expertise. Today the CDC has officers stationed in 59 countries and has helped train thousands of epidemiologists worldwide over the years whose knowledge is providing incredibly valuable.

You should know it helps those countries, it saves lives in those countries, but this is a global pandemic and that work protects us right here at home in America as well.

Weeks before the first reported COVID case arrived in Guatemala, USAID helped the Ministry of Health there equip a key hospital to start caring for its first patients.

And the United States is training more than 70,000 pharmacists across Indonesia today so they can provide good advice and referrals.

American generosity isn't limited to our assistance that comes directly from the United States Government. Our businesses, our NGOs, charities, all faith groups – this is an all-of-America approach to saving lives all across the world and protecting us right here at home as well.

We estimate that the American people, in cume, have given nearly \$3 billion in donations and assistance just to fight this particular virus.

America's global health commitments remain as steady as ever.

Move on to a couple final points. I want to highlight two ways in which the Chinese Communist Party is exploiting the world's focus on COVID-19 crisis by continuing its provocative behavior.

First, we commented on what's taking place in Hong Kong, where amidst increased efforts by Beijing to erode autonomy, law enforcement authorities have arrested pro-democracy activists, including 81-year-old Martin Lee. We've always said that China has an obligation to live up to its promises, its obligation – as I was speaking about the virus earlier – to live up to the rules that it put in place and it signed off on. We'd ask them to continue to do that here.

You've also seen that the Chinese Communist Party is exerting military pressure on Taiwan and coercing its neighbors in the South China Sea, even going so far as to have – so far as to sink a Vietnamese fishing vessel.

The United States strongly opposes China's bullying; we hope other nations will hold them to account, too. Tonight I'll be on a phone call cochaired by myself and my Laotian counterpart with every ASEAN member.

I want to note, too, that we are now well along in developing the implementing policies required by the law in the NDAA of 2019 prohibiting use of Huawei and other untrusted vendors in U.S. facilities.

Data that come into U.S. facilities will have to follow a Clean Path and reside and transit only through trusted systems. And we'll provide full details on that before too long.

On Venezuela, as I've commented frequently from this podium, we're continuing to apply pressure on the Maduro regime, all the while seeking to provide humanitarian assistance for the Venezuelan people.

As announced by the Department of Treasury yesterday, the general license which allowed certain companies to maintain operations – Venezuela, PDVSA – expires today.

The Treasury Department has announced a new, narrowly limited license for seven months which will allow companies that are operating there to begin their wind-down process.

And with that, I'm happy to take questions.

MS ORTAGUS: Okay, great. Nick.

QUESTION: Thank you, Morgan. Thanks, Mr. Secretary, for doing this. Let me try Iran and China, if you don't mind. The IRGC today said that it launched a military satellite into orbit for the first time. Could that technology be used for ICBMs? And we've seen from Iran expanded nuclear capacity, Iraqi militia rocket attacks, harassing of a Navy ship in recent days. After the Soleimani strike, there was talk of reestablishing deterrence. Do you fear the deterrence has slipped?

And on China, there are millions of PPE items stuck in China despite the fact they've been bought by U.S. companies. Do you believe the PPE is stuck because of red tape, China trying to make sure the quality is high, or because China is actually hoarding them and keeping them from the U.S.? Thanks.

SECRETARY POMPEO: As for your second question, I'll leave to the Vice President's task force to talk about those goods and their transit. The good news is we have seen China provide those resources. Sometimes they're from U.S. companies that are there in China, but we've had success. The Vice President and his team have talked about the air bridge that has delivered products to the American people from China, and we appreciate that. We are counting on China to continue to live up to its contractual obligations and international obligations to provide that assistance to us and to sell us those goods – often these are commercial transactions – in a way consistent with all of the international trade rules.

As for Iran, you noted the launch last night. The Iranians have consistently said that these missile programs were disconnected from their military, that these were purely commercial enterprises. I think today's launch proves what we've been saying all along here in the United States: The IRGC, a designated terrorist organization, launched a missile today. And I'll leave to the Department of Defense to talk about the details about that. But when you talk about the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, I think every nation has an obligation to go to the United Nations and evaluate whether this missile launch was consistent with that Security Council resolution. I don't think it remotely is, and I need – I think Iran needs to be held accountable for what they've done. They've now had a military organization that the United States has designated terrorists attempt to launch a satellite.

You talked about the naval ships. You saw the President's statement this morning. The President's been very clear to the Department of Defense and frankly to the State Department team too to do everything we need to do to make sure that we protect and defend our officers, our military officers, our diplomats around the world, to continue to ensure that they are secure and safe. What he said this morning and what I know he's told all of us in leadership inside the government is take whatever action is necessary to make sure that you can defend and keep our people safe. I'm confident that the Department of Defense will do that in response to what the President said this morning as well.

And then finally, you talked more broadly about deterrence. Two thoughts. First: The Iranian regime has gone around the world spreading disinformation in response to this virus. One of the things they've said is that, boy, we need resources in order to take care of the virus at home. And all the while they are launching satellites, driving ships around the Arabian Gulf, coming and harassing U.S. naval vessels. They continue to underwrite Shia militias, they're working to support Hizballah. Yesterday my Iranian counterpart – or the day before – was in Syria talking to the butcher in Damascus.

I hope that the Iranian regime will respond to the Iranian people's demands to prioritize resources, resources that the Iranian regime clearly has, to the health and security and safety of the Iranian people, rather than continuing their global terror campaign. You can see they're still hard at it. You can see they still have resources. You should note, we, the – at the very first news that the COVID virus had hit Iran, offered humanitarian assistance to the people of Iran. That offer was rejected. That offer still stands. We've assisted other countries in delivering humanitarian assistance to the Iranian people. I only wish that the Iranian regime cared about its people as much as the rest of the world has demonstrated that it does.

MS ORTAGUS: Barbara.

QUESTION: Thank you. Mr. Secretary, we're hearing that there is panic buying in North Korea at the moment. I was wondering if you have any reading about what's going on there. And given the reports that Kim Jong-un is in very poor health, has the U.S. tried to reach out to Pyongyang for any information, and what was the response?

And then a broader question on China, if I may. How would you say that the Chinese behavior – this disinformation that you are talking about – what effect do you think that has on a long-term relationship with the U.S.? Do you think it will damage it significantly?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Barbara, thanks. I don't have anything to add on North Korea. As the President said last evening I think it was, we're watching closely what's taking place there. But I don't have anything to add.

As for China, nations that desire to be part of the global landscape have obligations for truthful information – they have obligations to share and be transparent and open. That's our expectation for every country. What I think – I think you were referring to was you called it disinformation. Seeking to transfer responsibility or to deny access to the world so that the world can figure out what's going on – you have to remember, these labs are still open inside of China, these labs that contain complex pathogens that were being studied. It's not just the Wuhan Institute of

Virology. There are multiple labs inside of China that are handling these things. It's important that those materials are being handled in a safe and secure way such that there isn't accidental release.

We have an elaborate regime inside the United States to do that. Many countries do it as well. We have lots of regimes where – I'll give you an example in the nuclear context, where the world inspects sites so that we can ensure that there's proper handling. The United States spends a lot of money training others to help them handle nuclear materials in an appropriate way. We have to make sure that the Chinese Government is handling those materials in an appropriate way not only in the Wuhan Institute of Virology but elsewhere. So this is an ongoing obligation that the Chinese Government has as well as an ongoing obligation of the World Health Organization that has responsibility for compliance with the rules.

I hope I didn't bore you with them, but they're important to understand that there are a set of global regulations that the Chinese Communist Party signed up for. These aren't American rules we apply, these are rules that the Chinese Government signed up for, and the World Health Organization has a continuing obligation – not just one from back in December but a continuing obligation to make sure that those rules are being complied with today in a way that protects us not only from the ongoing pandemic but a future one as well.

MS ORTAGUS: Michel.

QUESTION: Thank you so much. Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: -- first, have you delivered the President's warning to Iran directly? And second, do you – are you concerned that the oil price will have an effect on the security and stability of the Gulf states and your partners in the region?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I never comment on communications, internal communications between myself and private – between myself and my counterparts. So I don't have any comment on your first question.

On your second one, the President has been incredibly focused on trying to create a more stable energy market in light of the enormous decrease in demand, right. You've seen crude oil demand fall somewhere between 20 and 35 percent over the past several weeks, and you've seen the price impacts that have resulted from that, right. You had the front futures contract trading for negative \$37 for a few hours a couple days back now. What the President did a couple of weekends ago and the work that he's engaged in today are twofold: one, to do everything we can to ensure that we preserve America's capacity to deliver on its energy resources here; and second, to work to try and create stability in the energy markets so that you get price signals that are consistent with real demand, and that also means getting the global economy cranked back up again. A key element that will have the most significant impact on those price issues, on those supply chain issues in the energy industry is getting the world back going and getting demand back to the levels we had back in October, November, and December of 2019.

Here in the United States we had one of the most robust economies that the United States has ever had. When we get back to those levels and the world gets back to those levels, those governments that depend for a significant amount of their revenue – for their national GDP on oil will be in a better place than they are today. There's real risk. With low prices and low volumes of demand, those countries are really going to face financial challenges, and we've been in conversation with many of them about how we can bridge that gap collectively.

MS ORTAGUS: Rich.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary --

SECRETARY POMPEO: Rich, how are you?

QUESTION: Good, how are you?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm good.

QUESTION: Given its failure to notify the WHO in a timely manner, do you think that the Chinese Government owes countries or individuals compensation? And also, just as you'd spoken about the multiple labs within China, what's your assessment of China's handling of these dangerous materials? Do you think that they do a sufficient enough job of it?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I'm going to leave the accountability piece of this for another day in terms of what we do to assign accountability and how we hold other nations accountable, other than to say is that the rules set – the WHO rules set itself contemplates nations complying with their obligations, and it gives the director general of the WHO enormous authority with respect to nations that do not comply, and we expect every country who signs up for the International Health Regulations and the leadership of the WHO to then enforce them. And so we're counting on that. We're now counting on that not only retrospectively, but that that continue today.

What's the second question, Rich?

QUESTION: You mentioned multiple labs within China.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah. I'm not going to comment on that. What I will say is it's always easier to know the answer to your question about whether these labs are in compliance not only with the regulations but if they're handling this material in a way that is adequate, safe, and secure, if the world can have access to those places, if they will share that information openly and transparently and in spite – the President said this – we tried to get in to take a look at what was going on early on in this, to come in alongside the World Health Organization early on; it would have been back in January if I remember correctly. We still do not have a sample of the virus nor has the world had access to the facilities or other locations where this virus may have originated inside of Wuhan.

MS ORTAGUS: Said.

QUESTION: Thank you, Morgan. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Sir, a new Israeli Government was formed, a unity government between Mr. Netanyahu and General Gantz, and they vowed to begin annexing parts of the West Bank on the 1st of July. I wonder if you would have a comment on that.

Also on the aid you released recently, you released \$5 million to the Palestinian Authority to fight COVID-19. Are they – they need a lot more. So will there be any more aid in the pipeline? Thank you, sir.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Two good questions. On the first one – on the second one, we are happy to provide that \$5 million of assistance^[1], and we hope that it'll get to the right place. Our concern with having provided assistance, the reason we stopped providing assistance previously was that this – these resources weren't getting to the place they needed to, to the Palestinian people. We hope that this money, this \$5 million will get where it needs to go to provide real assistance to the Palestinian people who, to your point and I agree with, are going to need a lot of help as they move through this. We'll evaluate whether this \$5 million both worked, delivered, and second, if there's more resources that are both either appropriate or can be delivered in a way that actually gets to the Palestinian people.

Your first question was about the election.

QUESTION: The government.

SECRETARY POMPEO: We're happy with the – a new government's formed. A fourth election, we think, wouldn't have been in Israel's best interest, but we'll leave that to them. We think it's not in the world's best interest. We're glad that there is a now fully formed government in Israel.

As for the annexation in the West Bank, the Israelis will ultimately make those decisions. Those are – that's an Israeli decision, and we will work closely with them to share with them our views of this in a private setting.

MS ORTAGUS: I need to get the Secretary to his next meeting, but we still have two special guests to continue this briefing so --

SECRETARY POMPEO: Great. Thank you all. Thanks for being with me. Everybody have a good morning.

MS ORTAGUS: Okay. So we're going to have John Barsa first, and then Jim Richardson, and then we'll go right to Q&A again. So, John.

MR BARS: Good morning. Thank you for having us here today. For those of you who I have not yet met, my name is John Barsa. I am the new acting administrator at USAID, and I'm deeply honored to have been chosen for this position. I would like to thank President Trump for the support and confidence he's placed in me with this charge. I look forward to working with him, Vice President Pence, Secretary Pompeo, and other leaders throughout the interagency as we lead one of the finest workforces in the U.S. Government today.

We are here to discuss how the United States continues to demonstrate global leadership and help countries around the world fight the COVID-19 pandemic. With the \$2.7 billion in emergency supplemental funding Congress has provided, USAID is working with the State Department and the CDC to provide assistance that strengthens health systems, meets emergency humanitarian needs, and mitigates the economic impact of the virus's spread.

With the Secretary's announcement today, we have contributed a total of more than \$775 million across more than 100 countries facing the threat of this global pandemic. Here's a little bit more detail for you on the specific pots of money that this announcement encompasses. It includes nearly \$103 million from the Economic Support Fund account, which nongovernmental organizations will use to implement a variety of interventions to support communities and countries. We'll also be committing \$100 million in humanitarian assistance from USAID's International Disaster Assistance Account to help meet urgent, lifesaving needs in crisis-affected areas, and \$667[2] million in migration and refugee assistance to support displaced populations, which remain the most vulnerable populations to this pandemic.

In every corner of the globe, the United States is lending a helping hand to countries that need it the most. Many of these countries are places where we regularly provide assistance. Our expanded presence in other countries demonstrate the extraordinary nature of this crisis.

For example, on April 11th the United States, through USAID, committed critically needed assistance to Italy to mitigate the overwhelming disruption the pandemic has had on the delivery of health care in communities and to help stabilize the country's economic situation. This assistance will help improve Italian citizens' access to essential health care during the current pandemic and support Italy's recovery.

In this latest round of funding, State and USAID will provide COVID-19 assistance to some countries for the first time since the outbreak began. These countries include Algeria, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Bulgaria, the Republic of Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Ecuador, Eswatini, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Jordan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Montenegro, Morocco, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Lesotho, Liberia, Panama, Namibia, Niger, Romania, Sierra Leone, Turkey, Uganda, the West Bank, and Yemen.

MS ORTAGUS: Well done.

MR BARSA: It was a quick list. Now, did you all memorize it? (Laughter.) As you know, we work through international organizations and NGOs in many of these countries to reach people in need, and as you can see from the list of countries I mentioned, the kind of places where we are responding is, of course, varied. To make sure our assistance is as impactful as possible, the support we provide is tailored to each country's capacity and needs. Our toolkit of support includes investments that improve case management, disease surveillance, and public health screening. It strengthens infection prevention and control of medical facilities, bolsters laboratory capacity, scale of communications campaigns to raise awareness, expand access to water and sanitation, and more.

America remains the leader in global health and humanitarian assistance. Through unmatched generosity, the American people have saved countless lives, protected those people who are most

vulnerable to disease, built health infrastructure, and promoted the stability of communities and nations. America has always led the world through times of strife, turmoil, and uncertainty, and this pandemic is no different.

Lastly, I want to highlight President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Secretary Pompeo for their extraordinary leadership on the world stage throughout this crisis. This all-star team and the rest of the Trump administration is working around the clock to stem the spread of virus at home and abroad, and they deserve our recognition. So thank you very much.

MS ORTAGUS: Jim.

MR RICHARDSON: Thank you, Morgan. I'm Jim Richardson, and I'm the director of foreign assistance here at the Department of State. First of all, I want to acknowledge the leadership, as John just did, of the President and the Vice President and of the Secretary, and really our talented teams both at State and USAID around the world, as we work together to defeat COVID-19. To put it simply, pandemics like COVID-19 do not respect national borders, and so that our response, our USG response, can't either.

Through decades of U.S. global leadership in health and humanitarian assistance, we know that the smart and strategic investments are critical to our primary mission of maintaining the health and safety of the American people. We can and must actually fight the pandemic both here and overseas. It's not a zero-sum game; it actually builds on each other.

Through the American people's generosity, the State Department of the United States continues to demonstrate global leadership in the face of this pandemic. In fact – this fact is underscored by what the Secretary just announced of an additional \$270 million for humanitarian and economic security assistance, bringing our total to 775 million spread over 100 countries worldwide, nearly all of them John just mentioned. So we'll implement this funding around – through a strategic, all-of-America approach to ensure that this world is safe from infectious diseases, both today and also in the future.

When it comes to our investments thus far, let me address a couple hot-button topics that I'm sure you will ask me about. First of all, let's talk about Italy. We've provided \$50 million in economic support to Italy, one of our closest allies and friends who has been at the forefront of the fight against COVID. These funds will help support the recovery of the Italian economy, they – and support international organizations and NGOs, including many faith-based organizations, many of which are already on the ground saving lives.

Second, the United States is also providing \$5 million to the Palestinian hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza to battle the pandemic. The United States welcomes the ongoing cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to address the COVID-19 crisis and Israel's facilitation of goods and equipment to the West Bank and Gaza in support of this effort.

Third, I want to talk about the Northern Triangle – El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras. We're providing \$7 million to help address this outbreak. This comes on top of what the President and the Secretary have announced of \$258 million in targeted foreign assistance for these three – for these three countries. These funds will benefit both the United States and our important allies. By targeting economic assistance to regions with high outflow migration, we can help keep

people at their – at home while supporting and deterring illegal immigration to the United States.

As you're aware, well aware, the United States – or last week the President announced that we are pausing for the next 60 to 90 days funding for the World Health Organization while we examine the failures to the response. First and foremost, this pause will not impact our commitment to fight COVID around the world. We are focused on outcomes, and as such we are working with other partners around the world, including community and faith-based organizations, to get the job done.

To put it in perspective, as the Secretary, I believe, mentioned, the WHO only receives about 4 percent of U.S. global assistance – global health assistance every year. There are plenty of amazing and highly qualified organizations implementing these programs around the world, and to be honest, no organization – or country for that matter – is owed a single nickel from the American people. We provide assistance out of generosity and U.S. national interest. At the very least, the American people should demand that every organization we fund – every NGO, every contractor, and every multilateral – is transparent, accountable, and results-oriented, and that's what this President's review will do.

To the – at the end of the day this should be about saving lives, not about saving a bureaucracy. For more than half a century, the United States has been the largest contributor to global health security. We have built the foundations upon which the global health system is based, contributing over \$140 billion in this century alone. In the face of COVID-19, our global leadership will continue and is once again underscored by what the Secretary has announced. And with that, we'll be available for questions.

MS ORTAGUS: Okay. Let's – you haven't asked one yet, right? Okay, go ahead. And CBS, if you have one, I think you, too, haven't gone yet, right? Okay.

QUESTION: Okay, so I don't know who this goes to, but I'll throw the question out and you guys can decide. So with regard to the pause on the World Health Organization funding, what will determine if they get that funding or not, and who is actually leading the review of that funding right now?

MR RICHARDSON: Go ahead, John.

MR BARSA: In terms of what the President said – so it's a 60- to 90-day pause. I think there are multiple elements within government who will be looking at the review. I'm not going to – we have nothing to announce today in terms of the internal review processes, how it's going to work out. Know that others who interact with World Health Organization are contributing to the review process.

QUESTION: Okay, but what is the review looking for? What does the World Health Organization have to do in order to secure its funding?

MR BARSA: As the President stated, and the Secretary stated this morning, there's numerous questions in terms of the management of the World Health Organization, how they have been

operating and holding member states accountable in their actions. So the review is going to be all-encompassing, getting to all manners of management and operation questions.

QUESTION: And one thing that the Secretary said was that the World Health Organization has not highlighted the fact that the CCP didn't reveal what it knew about the coronavirus pandemic when it knew it. If the WHO does that, is that something that you guys are looking for?

MR BARSAS: I'm not going to comment on any interim findings or discussions. I just – I'll have to say we'll have to wait till the final review is done.

MS ORTAGUS: You want to add anything?

MR RICHARDSON: Nope, sounds good.

MS ORTAGUS: No? Okay. CBS.

QUESTION: I had a question about the cooperation with vaccine development.

MS ORTAGUS: Okay.

QUESTION: Okay.

MR RICHARDSON: It's probably --

MR BARSAS: Vaccine development. Go on.

MS ORTAGUS: Go ahead, ask your question.

QUESTION: Considering that several countries are working on a vaccination, and given that the funding has been halted to WHO, does that mean this will affect at all cooperation between WHO countries on sharing information about a vaccine, depending on who comes up with one first? Or will the U.S. step in to help facilitate cooperation on a vaccination?

MR BARSAS: Okay. Couple things to think about. First, let's talk a little bit about scale. As the Secretary and Jim mentioned, over the last two decades the United States has contributed over \$140 billion dollars in health work. In 2018, the last year that I actually have actual figures, it needs to be noted that only 4 percent of U.S. funds went to the World Health Organization. Ninety-six percent of our funds went to other organizations. So during this pause, what USAID and other entities are doing – we're looking for alternate partners to carry out the important work. So be it vaccines, polio, or any number of health issues, by no means are we pausing our efforts to eradicate polio or come up with vaccines. We're going with existing programs outside of the World Health Organization, and we're looking for different partners.

MS ORTAGUS: Robin.

QUESTION: Just some clarification on that. So first of all, you are – I was wondering if there might be a carveout for certain WHO programs like polio, but you're saying no, there isn't,

you're going to find somebody else to do the polio – or to do those programs that you're committed to?

And then I just have a few other questions as well, if – do you want to answer that one first?

MR BARSA: Okay, so I'll start with that one. So even before the onset of this pandemic, USAID was working, piloting a new partnership initiative to look for other regional community-based partners outside of the normal menu of people we work with. I look forward to next week expanding the new partnership initiative in a more formal manner, but what we're doing right now is we're looking for different partners right now in terms of – working polio or any number of health issues, are there other entities, local community-based entities, faith-based organizations, are there other groups that can continue on this work. So part of the assessment that is taking place during this 60-to-90-day pause is to evaluate the availability of new partners to carry out this work.

So know that the questions you ask in terms of are there other partners for whatever program of interest, that's part of the assessment. So we're evaluating that now. I have people in our missions and our Global Health Bureau. We're looking for new partners right now. It's good government.

QUESTION: And just to --

MS ORTAGUS: I want to get to everybody, (inaudible).

QUESTION: Just a quick – one quick follow-up.

MS ORTAGUS: Okay, one more (inaudible).

QUESTION: There's a fair bit of U.S. expertise at the WHO, so you've had health experts there – you still have health experts there. Is that cooperation going to be cut off as well? Are you sort of cutting off the WHO not just in terms of funds, but also in coordination and cooperation?

MR BARSA: So part of your question is getting at to the end point of an assessment. We cannot tell you what decision is going to be made at the end of the assessment. During this assessment that the President announced, 60 to 90 days, we're going to look at all aspects of operations in World Health Organizations. So some of the questions you pose are the questions we ourselves are going to be asking in terms of capabilities during this pause period.

MS ORTAGUS: (Inaudible.)

MR RICHARDSON: Yeah, let me just – so the way I would say it is that the pause is about new decisions to provide assistance through the WHO. There is a lot of existing contracts that we've already essentially sent the check to pay for individuals, and we're not asking for refunds at this point. In terms of exemptions or those types of things, the President said we're pausing all assistance for 60 to 90 days. If the President has a subsequent announcement, we'll leave that to him to make that about target assistance.

MS ORTAGUS: Nick, go ahead.

QUESTION: So on the partners, just to be clear, as you examine the partners, are you taking the money that would have been going to the WHO over the next two to three months and plan to transfer them, transfer that funds to partners? Or are you withholding the money so that you possibly could still give it to the WHO depending on reforms? And if I could zoom in on IHRs, let me ask – let me have you answer that first and then we --

MR BARSÁ: Okay. So as the Secretary stated, in the aggregate, we have committed over \$775 million just on the pandemic alone. So when we're looking for new partners, we're looking for partners who can execute the funds in these countries for their specific needs. So it can't be a cookie cutter approach. So a solution for a challenge in one country is not the same as a solution in another country. So we're looking at ways to address the challenges individually with the funds that are being announced.

QUESTION: Right, but does that mean that the money that would have gone to the WHO will instead go to partners? Or is the money for the WHO being held back and possibly could still go to the WHO in the future?

MR BARSÁ: It – again, it's a pause in new funding. As Director Richardson announced, money that has been given to WHO already is not being taken back, so some of those contracts and existing work is continuing.

QUESTION: Okay. And then on the international --

MS ORTAGUS: Do you have anything to – (inaudible).

MR RICHARDSON: Yeah, let me just – yeah, so at the end of the day, this pandemic can't wait for the review. So our assistance to countries around the world is going to move forward. We will absolutely use the best – every time that we make a decision to provide assistance to any country around the world, we have to make a choice: Do we use a multilateral organization? Do we use an NGO? Do we use a faith-based organization? Do we use a contractor? And that's really what the expertise of USAID does, to – looks at the whole what – how are we going to get the best results in this circumstance.

And so for every contract or every dollar flowing today, we're just taking WHO off the table and we're going to provide that assistance to these other organizations in order to get the job done. Our system simply can't wait. That said, we're going to have a lot of global health resources in response to this pandemic over the coming years. Congress has already provided an additional \$2 billion, and so we'll look forward to continuing to make more announcements about funding over the next several months.

QUESTION: And then quickly on the IHRs, on the International Health Regulations, as I understand them, there is no real enforcement mechanism. I know the Secretary talked specifically about the leadership being able to enforce them, but is one of the reforms that you're asking for to increase the enforcement mechanism, or do you believe that enforcement mechanism is already there, and therefore this is a true failure not of regulation, but of the leadership?

MR BARSА: Well, again, we'll have to get back to you with the details on that. Again, so we're – I'm not going to prejudge the outcome of any assessment.

MS ORTAGUS: Said, go ahead.

QUESTION: A quick question.

MS ORTAGUS: Sure.

QUESTION: Is the money dispensed to the West Bank and to the hospitals – does it go directly there? Because I think USAID is not operating in the West Bank anymore.

MR RICHARDSON: No, so we mostly – we use implementing partners around the world. As I said, we use contractors, NGOs, multilateral organizations to actually be our hands and feet in most places around the world. So we'll be announcing the actual implementing partner here in the next couple days.

MS ORTAGUS: Anybody else? Rich?

QUESTION: Just following up on what the Secretary had to say about the – and a bit what Nick was talking about – the director general of WHO has an enormous power available to him to enforce those who violate regulations. What is available to him?

MR BARSА: Well, as the Secretary stated, there are certain mechanisms which oblige member-states to comply with agreements beforehand. So part of our review is to see what authorities did WHO leadership have. Did they execute the authorities and keep compliance? So the question you're asking gets exactly to the heart of what our review – is the management of the World Health Organization running it the way it should be run?

MS ORTAGUS: And just to follow up on both of your and Nick questions, I think the best thing for us to do is to get a briefing probably with Ambassador Bremberg or someone from IO, so we'll get that – I know you were wanting that, Nick, so we'll go ahead and get that scheduled, and I think we could through a little bit more detail through Andrew or through IO. Okay?

QUESTION: Can I ask John one more question?

MS ORTAGUS: Sure. Then we've got to – I just blew off my next meeting, so go ahead.

QUESTION: So – thank you. So you talk about a lot more work that USAID is going to have to do to identify new partners. So how – do you have the capacity to do that? Has USAID had to hire new people? What does your team look like?

MR BARSА: No, again, so before the onset of the pandemic, we already knew good government was to diversify the base of implementing partners that we're working with. So under the leadership of Mark Green, who was administrator at the time, we started a pilot program called the New Partnership Initiative. So we started out in 14 missions. So we already knew the good government solution was to not depend on just a few implementers and partners, so what we are doing is that we've been already working with our workforce. We've gotten to

pilot – the pilot program has been very successful, so next week I'll be signing an order expanding that pilot to all of our missions worldwide. This is something that was going to occur regardless of the pandemic.

So with the pandemic coming on here, we're already starting to work with new partners. That does not necessitate new contracting staff either in DC or the missions, but what we've been doing is providing guidance to our contracting staff to look and consider other partners. Are there other NGOs, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations which are localized in the country that have more permanence? So this was going to go on regardless of the implementing – regardless of the onset of the pandemic, so we're just fortunate that we've already been thinking along these lines and are able to execute now without any additional investment in staff or personnel.

MS ORTAGUS: Thanks so much, guys. Don't forget about the 1:00 p.m. with Brownlee, the repatriation briefing.

#

[1] USAID is providing \$5 million from International Disaster Assistance funds to an implementer for COVID-19 response in the West Bank. These funds are not being provided to the Palestinian Authority.

[2] USAID is providing \$67 million in migration and refugee assistance to support displaced populations.

Sender:	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	Stilwell, David R	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)**To:** Stilwell, David R (b)(6)**Subject:** Re: Netizens imply Wuhan lab created the virus: M3 Censorship Snapshot**Date:** Fri, 13 Mar 2020 23:20:52 +0000

Not hard. They'll just do it.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 13, 2020, at 7:18 PM, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

Last one. See attached Tweet from 2018 announcing the opening of the Wuhan virology research lab, courtesy People's Daily. Hard for them to walk that back.

<image002.jpg>

People's Daily, China

January 6, 2018

China's top-level biosafety lab begins work

China has put its first level-four biosafety laboratory into operation, capable of conducting experiments with highly pathogenic microorganisms that can cause fatal diseases, according to the national health authority.

Level four is the highest biosafety level, used for diagnostic work and research on easily transmitted pathogens that can cause fatal diseases, including the Ebola virus.

The Wuhan national level-four biosafety lab recently passed an assessment organized by the National Health and Family Planning Commission, according to a news release on Friday from the Wuhan Institute of Virology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

After evaluating such things as the lab's management of personnel, facilities, animals, disposals and viruses, experts believed the lab is qualified to carry out experiments on highly pathogenic microorganisms that can cause fatal diseases, such as Marburg, Variola, Nipah and Ebola.

"The lab provides a complete, world-leading biosafety system. This means Chinese scientists can study the most dangerous pathogenic microorganisms in their own lab," the Wuhan institute said.

It will serve as the country's research and development center on prevention and control of infectious diseases, as a pathogen collection center and as the United Nations' reference laboratory for infectious diseases, the institute said.

Previous media reports said the Wuhan P4 lab will be open to scientists from home and abroad. Scientists can conduct research on anti-virus drugs and vaccines in the lab.

The lab is part of Sino-French cooperation in the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases, according to the news release.

The central government approved the P4 laboratory in 2003 when the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome spread alarm across the country. In October 2004, China signed a cooperation agreement with France on the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases. This was followed by a succession of supplementary agreements.

With French assistance in laboratory design, biosafety standards establishment and personnel training, construction began in 2011 and lasted for three years. In 2015, the lab was put into trial operation. (China Daily)

[<image003.jpg>](#)

[<image004.jpg>](#)

[<image005.jpg>](#)

Top of Form

[2.7K2.7K](#)

[127 Comments](#)[742 Shares](#)

[Share](#)

Bottom of Form

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 11:35 AM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) Keshap, Atul

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

Subject: Netizens imply Wuhan lab created the virus: M3 Censorship Snapshot

Just heard a story that there were "Chinese agents" working at a lab in Canada last year that had exfiltrated ("accidentally shipped") a virus strain that originally came from a Dutch lab...the (conspiracy) plot thickens...

From: (b)(6)**Sent:** Wednesday, January 29, 2020 6:23 AM**To:** (b)(6)**Subject:** [Non-DoD Source] [Right-click to view in HTML] Netizens imply Wuhan lab created the virus: M3 Censorship Snapshot

M3 Censorship Snapshot

28–29 January

As large-scale censorship and propaganda around coronavirus continues, one explosive netizen theory is keeping a low profile: that the "P4 laboratory" in Wuhan may have created this virus (full name of laboratory 中国科学院武汉国家生物安全实验室, short name 武汉P4实验室).

This is a continuation in our daily alerts on the Wuhan Coronavirus; to request censorship alerts for other items, please reach out at any time. If you have trouble viewing this email, please right-click and select "View in HTML." To download photos, right-click again and select "Download images." If you still cannot view properly, please get in touch.

<image006.png>

Wuhan's P4 laboratory comes into question for possibly creating the virus as netizens revive old TV clip, but state propaganda refutes the implication

What happened: Last week, netizens revived a CCTV news clip of an interview with the P4 laboratory from 2018, in which the interviewed scientist said they have discovered a new virus similar to SARS. This discussion did not spread far as it was censored early on, but has cropped up again on Weibo in the past 24 hours, and thus far been censored at 10%.

Video clip of interview, starts at 20 min (Chinese website):

tv.cctv.com/2018/04/06/VIDEqHGAS6gzKEdORECZ5AVy180406.shtml

Propaganda: On 1/24, an article claiming that Wuhan's P4 laboratory would be able to handle the crisis appeared in 12 posts (Title:

"中国首个P4实验室就在武汉，大家要相信专家们有能力应对这次病毒危机"). The

state-backed Chinese Academy of Sciences (中国科学院) authored four posts

refuting the rumor on a scientific basis, but no mainstream media or major

government account addressed this rumor, likely to avoid drawing attention to it.

Other censored news since 28 January: After working 48 hours constructing a new hospital in Wuhan, a tractor driver went home to sleep, then came back to find the local police had towed his vehicle and demanded a fine. News was censored to prevent public doubt about the Wuhan government's competence in handling the crisis of hospital bed shortage. **58% censorship**

Additional new government narratives since 28 January: The disease can be spread through contact, including contact of clothes for up to a few hours since initial contact of virus. News promoted to encourage citizens to continue to stay home. / **1,373 posts**

<image006.png>

That's all for now. If you have any questions or would like additional information about these or other topics, we are happy to help. Please reach out to us through the appropriate channel as determined by your organization.

Thank you,

M3 Team

Thresher Ventures, LLC

(b)(6)

--

This email is for the sole use of intended recipients(s) and may contain confidential, privileged, or contractually restricted information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. The distribution or citation of M3 material is controlled by a license agreement. For questions send an email to m3@thresher.io. To request a Custom Report or to obtain permission to forward this content please contact the China SFG office.

** Censorship is ongoing, so statistics will change and links may be removed. Please reach out to the M3 team if you need more information as events unfold.*

*** Please use caution and follow your organization's guidelines for safe browsing on Chinese-hosted sites, including Weibo, Sina News, and others.*

Thresher Ventures, LLC, www.thresher.noclick_io, McLean, VA

[Unsubscribe](#) [Manage preferences](#)

<image007.jpg>

<image007.jpg>

<mime-attachment>

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

From: "Harris, Harry B (Seoul)" (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020
Date: Sun, 15 Mar 2020 05:09:31 +0000

Good on him!

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2020 1:17 PM
To: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

(b)(6)

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2020 11:18:12 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

I agree completely. What is Rob Spalding doing these days? Just saw the cable on global Authorized Departure for at-risk individuals.

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2020 11:46 AM
To: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

I do object to the idea of "extent of distrust and toxic state of relations". All the blame goes to the Chinese side—we've acted in good faith for 40 years while China has signed and ignored every document put in front of them. There is only one side guilty of distrust; but you know that more than most. Things are markedly better than they were 5 years ago—at least this administration acknowledges the problem.

Best
Stilly

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:32:28 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

Wow on the toilet picture photo! Love Spalding's tweet...what is Rob doing these days? Glad Rob and you are responding to Crazy Zhao but where's the GEC in this? Here's Yonden Lhatoo, editor of the South China Morning Post on this...he makes a good point -- why doesn't Twitter ban Zhao?

Why China is amplifying a conspiracy theory to blame America for coronavirus crisis

- Yonden Lhatoo breaks down a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman's claim that the US military is behind the Covid-19 pandemic, highlighting the extent of mistrust and toxic state of relations between the two sides

Yonden Lhatoo

Published: 7:28pm, 14 Mar, 2020

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/3075227/why-china-amplifying-conspiracy-theory-blame-america-coronavirus>

There's no dearth of conspiracy theories flying around about the origins of the coronavirus pandemic, from reckless speculation in news reports to silly nonsense spread by social media, and they're all best left ignored at a time of global panic and paranoia.

But when a spokesman for China's foreign ministry jumps on the tinfoil-hat bandwagon to accuse the US military of unleashing a deadly disease that has infected well over 140,000 people in more than 120 countries, it begs closer scrutiny to understand what exactly is going on.

Zhao Lijian set off a storm this week by taking to Twitter to suggest there was something more to the story after the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention admitted, without giving a time frame, that some influenza deaths in America had turned out to be Covid-19 cases.

"When did patient zero begin in the US? How many people are infected? What are the names of the hospitals? It might be the US Army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation!"

The incendiary tweet echoed a Canada-based conspiracy website's unsubstantiated claims that America was the real source of the coronavirus, apparently linking it to the US Army's participation in the Military World Games, which drew competitors from more than 100 countries to Wuhan last October before the Chinese city became ground zero for the pandemic.

On the face of it, China has just accused the US of a jaw-dropping act of war, prompting the State Department to summon Beijing's ambassador to Washington for a dressing down.

Of course, Zhao has a reputation for being a bit of a loose cannon with a trigger-happy tweet finger, so Beijing can conveniently explain it away as rogue commentary in a personal capacity rather than an official statement. But it's also obvious he would not dare go so far without authorisation from higher up. Just look at how Geng Shuang, Zhao's foreign ministry colleague, responded when asked for an explanation: "You wonder if Zhao's opinions represent those of the Chinese government. I think you first should ask if remarks by certain US senior officials that vilify China represent the official stance of the US government."

And there you have it. It's a tit-for-tat, zero-sum blame game the two countries are playing to their mutual detriment, instead of joining forces to wipe out a common enemy that recognises no political or geographical boundaries.

China is at pains to point out that the source of the coronavirus is yet to be conclusively established by international experts, and that the assumption it must have first been transmitted to humans from all manner of wildlife being sold at a wet market in Wuhan is still to be proven. That's why it bristles at the likes of US President Donald Trump calling it a "foreign virus", or Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Republican leaders provocatively labelling it as the "Wuhan virus" or "Chinese coronavirus". Remember the other popular conspiracy theory that China may have engineered the coronavirus as a bioweapon at the Wuhan National Biosafety Laboratory, which has been debunked by scientists who studied its genetic make-up? Zero Hedge, a right-leaning financial blog popular among Wall Street insiders, was banned from Twitter last month for amplifying the same theory and doxxing a Chinese scientist from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, whom it identified as the man responsible for weaponising the coronavirus.

Isn't it only fair that Twitter should apply the same rules to Zhao and ban him for "spreading misinformation" about the pandemic? Why are Chinese officials even using Twitter in the first place when the platform is prohibited in China?

Yonden Lhatoo is the chief news editor at the Post

This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as: Why is China spreading a coronavirus conspiracy?

Yonden Lhatoo

Yonden Lhatoo is the Chief News Editor at the Post. He had worked as a television news anchor and editor in Hong Kong for nearly two decades before joining the SCMP in 2015.

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2020 8:11 AM

To: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

Our push-back on Zhao Lijian's idiotic attempt to blame us got decent coverage, in the US at least. I say that based on the number of emails/texts I got saying "attaboy!" from folks outside of government. Not much we can do about allies who choose to believe the worst about us.

The first attachment is of a Tweet we wrote, but couldn't get past the clearance chain so Rob Spalding put it out there. Probably more effective that way.

The second one is from Zhao's Chinese language Tweets where it seems like he's trying to defend himself. From his supervisors? From the Netizens? Hard to say, but he's definitely 'splaining.

All are well in Hawaii; very concerned about Seattle. Folks in DC are taking hand-washing and social distancing very seriously. They're also taking toilet paper too seriously (3rd attachment). Ft Myer commissary was still pretty well stocked this morning, but they'd cleared out all the toilet paper. What's up with that?

From: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)

Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:00 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

Stilly -- I have a white face mask with a Sharpie-mustache painted on it ready to deploy. Re Wu-flu, China is turning the narrative on its head by suggesting broadly in China that the virus started in U.S. weapons labs and deployed to the Wuhan area. This is getting some traction in the PRC and this theory has jumped to the ROK and, I suspect, elsewhere. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Hope you're well and healthy. (b)(6) Here's a new graph on state-by-state infections. Hawaii is looking good. Not so much Colorado! (b)(6)

(b)(6) My best,

Harry

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/03/health/us-coronavirus-cases-state-by-state/index.html>

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2020 6:53 AM
To: Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

I saw a Korean conspiracy theoretical rag mistook your mask for a bigger moustache. . . ☺

This Tweet made my entire week, as we watch morons claim that saying "Wuhan Coronavirus" is racist. Didn't know Wuhan is a race, and these same perma-protesters were saying Wuhan Coronavirus mere days prior. Commie stooges.

<https://mobile.twitter.com/peterjhasson/status/1238213711900393473?s=12>

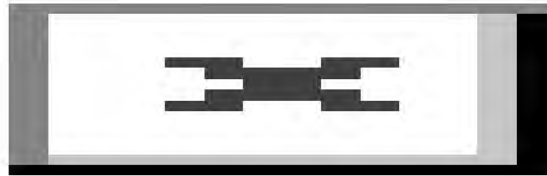
From: (b)(6) Seoul (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 3:35 AM
To: Seoul PD Highlights (UNCLASS Only) <SeoulPDHighlights@state.gov>
Subject: Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights , March 13, 2020

Greetings friends,

Our apologies for a much reduced highlights product as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. In case it's not clear from the small photo, Ambassador Harris is the guy in the black mask.

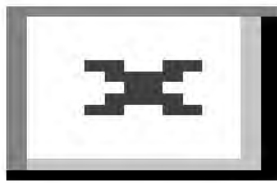
Wishing everyone an enjoyable weekend (while maintaining 1m social distance).

(b)(6)



Issue Date: March 13, 2020

Ambassador Harris Tours COVID-19 Screening at Incheon International Airport



PD's Media Unit provided press support for Ambassador Harris' March 11 visit to Seoul's Incheon International Airport to observe first-hand new COVID-19 screening procedures for passengers of U.S.-bound flights. Both broadcast and print media widely and positively covered the Ambassador's interaction with screening staff and expressions of gratitude to them, due in part to the Press Unit's work with its MOFA counterparts to get wording in reporting changed from "inspection" to "visit," changing the tone of subsequent stories. (COVID-19, Security/Alliance, Health)

Further Reading: Please see our cable 20 Seoul 406, Seoul: PD Seoul Makerspace Fellow Lessons Learned.

* * *

Mission Korea Public Diplomacy Highlights showcases significant public diplomacy programs and activities. Thanks for reading, and as always, to request to be removed or to add someone to the distribution list, just drop us a line.

(b)(6)

Minister Counselor for Public Affairs
U.S. Embassy Seoul

Sender: "Harris, Harry B (Seoul)" (b)(6)

Recipient: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post
Date: Mon, 6 Apr 2020 13:00:27 +0000

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2020 8:52 AM
To: EAP-J-ECON-DL <EAP-J-ECON-DL@state.gov>
Subject: Fw: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post

Paging (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2020 8:49 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(6)@state.gov>; EAP-FO-Principals-DL (b)(6)@state.gov>; INR-China-Small Group (b)(6)@state.gov> (b)(6)@state.gov> (b)(6)@state.gov> (b)(6)
Subject: Re: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post

Hi (b)(6)

Thank you for flagging the WAPO article. I shared the below article with (b)(6) early last week which also provides a summary of the debate. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thank you,

Kristin

Experts know the new coronavirus is not a bioweapon. They disagree on whether it could have leaked from a research lab

By Matt Field, March 30, 2020

Much remains uncertain about the new coronavirus. What treatments will prove effective against COVID-19? When will a vaccine for the disease be ready? What level of social distancing will be required to tame the outbreak, and how long will it need to last? Will outbreaks come in waves? Amid all these vital forward-looking questions remains a more retrospective but still important one: Where did SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, come from in the first place? Experts seem to agree it wasn't the product of human engineering. Much research has been focused on the hypothesis that bats passed a virus to some intermediate host—perhaps pangolins, scaly ante-eating mammals—which subsequently passed it to humans. But the pangolin theory has not been conclusively proven. Some experts wonder whether a virus under study at a lab could have been accidentally released, something that's happened in the past.

Among the latest entrants to the debate about the provenance of SARS-CoV-2 are the authors of a March 17 *Nature Medicine* piece that takes a look at the virus's characteristics—including the sites on the virus that allow it to bind to human cells. They looked at whether the virus was engineered by humans and present what appears to be convincing evidence it was not. They also considered the possibility that the outbreak could have resulted from an inadvertent lab release of a virus under study but concluded "we do not believe that any type of laboratory-based scenario is plausible."

Not all experts agree.

Professor Richard Ebright of Rutgers University's Waksman Institute of Microbiology, a biosecurity expert who has been speaking out on lab safety since the early 2000s, does agree with the *Nature Medicine* authors' argument that the new coronavirus wasn't purposefully manipulated by humans, calling

their arguments on this score strong. Ebright helped *The Washington Post* debunk a claim that the COVID-19 outbreak can somehow be tied to bioweapons activity, a conspiracy theory that's been promoted or endorsed by the likes of US Sen. Tom Cotton, Iran's supreme leader, a high-ranking Chinese government official, and others.

But Ebright thinks that it is possible the COVID-19 pandemic started as an accidental release from a laboratory such as one of the two in Wuhan that are known to have been studying bat coronaviruses.

Except for SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, two deadly viruses that have caused outbreaks in the past, coronaviruses have been studied at laboratories that are labelled as operating at a moderate biosafety level known as BSL-2, Ebright says. And, he says, bat coronaviruses have been studied at such labs in and around Wuhan, China, where the new coronavirus first emerged. "As a result," Ebright says, "bat coronaviruses at Wuhan [Center for Disease Control] and Wuhan Institute of Virology routinely were collected and studied at BSL-2, which provides only minimal protections against infection of lab workers."

Higher safety-level labs would be appropriate for a virus with the characteristics of the new coronavirus causing the current pandemic. "Virus collection, culture, isolation, or animal infection at BSL-2 with a virus having the transmission characteristics of the outbreak virus would pose substantial risk of infection of a lab worker, and from the lab worker, the public," Ebright says.

Ebright points out that scientists in Wuhan have collected and publicized a bat coronavirus called RaTG13, one that is 96 percent genetically similar to SARS-CoV-2. The *Nature Medicine* authors are arguing "against the hypothesis that the published, lab-collected, lab-stored bat coronavirus RaTG13 could be a proximal progenitor of the outbreak virus." But, Ebright says, the authors relied on assumptions about when the viral ancestor of SARS-CoV-2 jumped to humans; how fast it evolved before that; how fast it evolved as it adapted to humans; and the possibility that that the virus may have mutated in cell cultures or experimental animals inside a lab.

The *Nature Medicine* authors "leave us where we were before: with a basis to rule out [a coronavirus that is] a lab construct, but no basis to rule out a lab accident," Ebright says.

Yanzhong Huang, a senior fellow for Global Health at the Council on Foreign Relations, recently wrote an article for *Foreign Affairs* that is dismissive of

conspiracy theories about the origins of the pandemic but also mentions circumstantial evidence that supports the possibility that a lab release was involved. That evidence includes a study "conducted by the South China University of Technology, [that] concluded that the coronavirus 'probably' originated in the Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention," located just 280 meters from the Hunan Seafood Market often cited as the source of the original outbreak.

"The paper was later removed from ResearchGate, a commercial social-networking site for scientists and researchers to share papers," Huang wrote. "Thus far, no scientists have confirmed or refuted the paper's findings."

While vaccines, treatments, and social distancing strategies are critical to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, figuring out where this new coronavirus originated is, too. "It is reasonable to wonder why the origins of the pandemic matter," the *Nature Medicine* authors write. "Detailed understanding of how an animal virus jumped species boundaries to infect humans so productively will help in the prevention of future [animal to people transfer] events. For example, if SARS-CoV-2 pre-adapted in another animal species, then there is the risk of future re-emergence events. In contrast, if the adaptive process occurred in humans, then even if repeated zoonotic transfers occur, they are unlikely to take off without the same series of mutations."

Kristian Andersen, the lead author of the *Nature Medicine* piece, did not respond to a request for comment on the article, and W. Ian Lipkin, another of the authors, declined to answer any questions about it. Thomas Gallagher, a virus expert and professor at Loyola University of Chicago, seconded the authors in dismissing the idea that the pandemic could have lab roots. "The authors of the new letter in *Nature Medicine* are arguing that the SARS-CoV-2 originated in animals, not in a research laboratory," Gallagher says. "I agree completely with the authors' statement."

"Suggesting that SARS-CoV-2 is a purposely manipulated laboratory virus or a product of an accidental laboratory release would be utterly defenseless, truly unhelpful, and extremely inappropriate," Gallagher says.

Still, lab safety has been a problem in China. "A safety breach at a Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention lab is believed to have caused four suspected SARS cases, including one death, in Beijing in 2004. A similar accident caused 65 lab workers of Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute to be infected with brucellosis in December 2019," Huang wrote. "In January

2020, a renowned Chinese scientist, Li Ning, was sentenced to 12 years in prison for selling experimental animals to local markets.

And China is hardly the only place to experience such accidents. A *USA Today* investigation in 2016, for instance, revealed an incident involving cascading equipment failures in a decontamination chamber as US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention researchers tried to leave a biosafety level 4 lab that likely stored samples of the viruses causing Ebola and smallpox. In 2014, the agency revealed that staff had accidentally sent live anthrax between laboratories, exposing 84 workers. In an investigation, officials found other mishaps that had occurred in the preceding decade.

Whether a lab accident could have led to the COVID-19 outbreak remains unclear, but making that determination is worthwhile, Ebright says: "Understanding the origin of the outbreak is a crucial step to reduce the risk of future outbreaks."

<https://thebulletin.org/2020/03/experts-know-the-new-coronavirus-is-not-a-bioweapon-they-disagree-on-whether-it-could-have-leaked-from-a-research-lab/#>

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 8:18 AM
To: EAP-CM-Office-DL <EAP-CM-Office-DL@state.gov>; EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; INR-China-Small Group (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post

David Ignatius runs through the possible origins...

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/how-did-covid-19-begin-its-initial-origin-story-is-shaky/2020/04/02/1475d488-7521-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d_story.html

April 2, 2020 at 6:56 p.m. EDT

The story of how the novel coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, China, has produced a nasty propaganda battle between the United States and China. The two sides have traded some of the sharpest charges made between two nations since the Soviet Union in 1985 falsely accused the CIA of manufacturing AIDS.

U.S. intelligence officials don't think the pandemic was caused by deliberate wrongdoing. The outbreak that has now swept the world instead began with a simpler story, albeit one with tragic consequences: The prime suspect is "natural" transmission from bats to humans, perhaps through unsanitary markets. But scientists don't rule out

that an accident at a research laboratory in Wuhan might have spread a deadly bat virus that had been collected for scientific study.

"Good science, bad safety" is how Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) put this theory in a Feb. 16 tweet. He ranked such a breach (or natural transmission) as more likely than two extreme possibilities: an accidental leak of an "engineered bioweapon" or a "deliberate release." Cotton's earlier loose talk about bioweapons set off a furor, back when he first raised it in late January and called the outbreak "worse than Chernobyl."

President Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo added to the bile last month by describing the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" and the "Wuhan virus," respectively. China dished wild, irresponsible allegations of its own. On March 12, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lijian Zhao charged in a tweet: "It might be [the] US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan." He retweeted an article that claimed, without evidence, that U.S. troops might have spread the virus when they attended the World Military Games in Wuhan in October 2019.

China retreated on March 22, when Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai told "Axios on HBO" that such rumors were "crazy" on both sides. A State Department spokesman said Cui's comment was "welcome," and Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged in a March 27 phone call to "focus on cooperative behavior," a senior administration official told me.

To be clear: U.S. intelligence officials think there's no evidence whatsoever that the coronavirus was created in a laboratory as a potential bioweapon. Solid scientific research demonstrates that the virus wasn't engineered by humans and that it originated in bats.

But how did the outbreak occur? Solving this medical mystery is important to prevent future pandemics. What's increasingly clear is that the initial "origin story" — that the virus was spread by people who ate contaminated animals at the Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan — is shaky.

Scientists have identified the culprit as a bat coronavirus, through genetic sequencing; bats weren't sold at the seafood market, although that market or others could have sold animals that had contact with bats. The Lancet noted in a January study that the first covid-19 case in Wuhan had no connection to the seafood market.

There's a competing theory — of an accidental lab release of bat coronavirus — that scientists have been puzzling about for weeks. Less than 300 yards from the seafood market is the Wuhan branch of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Researchers from that facility and the nearby Wuhan Institute of Virology have posted articles about collecting bat coronaviruses from around China, for study to prevent future illness. Did one of those samples leak, or was hazardous waste deposited in a place where it could spread?

Richard Ebright, a Rutgers microbiologist and biosafety expert, told me in an email that "the first human infection could have occurred as a natural accident," with the virus passing from bat to human, possibly through another animal. But Ebright cautioned that it "also could have occurred as a laboratory accident, with, for example, an accidental infection of a laboratory worker." He noted that bat coronaviruses were studied in Wuhan at Biosafety Level 2, "which provides only minimal protection," compared with the top BSL-4.

Ebright described a December video from the Wuhan CDC that shows staffers "collecting bat coronaviruses with inadequate [personal protective equipment] and

unsafe operational practices.” Separately, I reviewed two Chinese articles, from 2017 and 2019, describing the heroics of Wuhan CDC researcher Tian Junhua, who while capturing bats in a cave “forgot to take protective measures” so that “bat urine dripped from the top of his head like raindrops.”

And then there’s the Chinese study that was curiously withdrawn. In February, a site called ResearchGate published a brief article by Botao Xiao and Lei Xiao from Guangzhou’s South China University of Technology. “In addition to origins of natural recombination and intermediate host, the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan. Safety level may need to be reinforced in high risk biohazardous laboratories,” the article concluded. Botao Xiao told the Wall Street Journal in February that he had withdrawn the paper because it “was not supported by direct proofs.” Accidents happen, human or laboratory. Solving the mystery of how covid-19 began isn’t a blame game, but a chance for China and the United States to cooperate in a crisis, and prevent a future one.

Read more from [David Ignatius’s archive](#), [follow him on Twitter](#) or [subscribe to his updates on Facebook](#).

Sender: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
To: EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(6)@state.gov;
EAP-FO-Principals-DL (b)(6)@state.gov;
INR-China-Small Group (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post
Date: Fri, 3 Apr 2020 15:06:44 +0000

This doesn't hurt.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-21350013>

The Italian fashion capital being led by the Chinese

By Sylvia Smith Business reporter, BBC News, Tuscany

- 12 February 2013

W

Media playback is unsupported on your device

Italian fashion capital being led by Chinese

Exit player

Media captionItalian fashion capital being led by Chinese

The transformation of a town in Tuscany from a traditional stronghold of the Italian textile industry into a capital of cheap clothing is causing widespread discontent among locals who complain they are losing out to the Chinese on their own turf.

But the Chinese view the rapidly expanding fast-fashion market in Prato, a satellite town of fashionable Florence, as an opportunity for Italian companies to exploit the desirability of the "Made in Italy" brand in new ways.

According to Marco Landi, president of the Tuscany branch of trade body CNA, which represents small and medium-sized firms, the remaining 3,000 small-scale Italian enterprises in Prato's industrial district face unprecedented upheaval.

Italian companies can't compete on price, their strength lies in the area of aesthetics
Xu Lin, Chinese entrepreneur in Italy

"As a result of backdoor globalisation, Italian businesses are being forced to restructure," he says.

"At the moment there are approximately 4,000 Chinese-run clothing factories in Prato. These new production dynamics are compelling the remaining Italian businesses based there to rethink their markets."

'Can't compete'

The long thread of history connecting Prato with textiles stretches back to the 12th Century, when garment manufacturing was regulated by the wool merchants' guild.

Before the arrival of the Chinese, thousands of small Italian textile units were a source of cheap "Italian made" clothes, producing them on the side from Italian-made fabric - often with the help of hired Chinese workers.

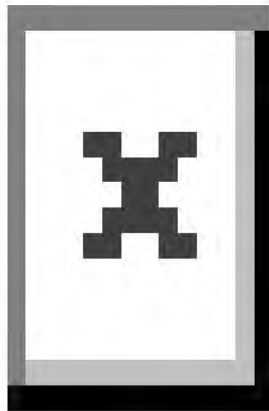


Image caption [Screenshot of a video frame showing a person in a white shirt and black pants standing in a room with a white wall and a black floor.](#)

But the Chinese have beaten the Italians at their own game by setting up their own businesses and driving down prices by importing far cheaper fabrics from China.

The Prato industrial zone now accounts for more than 30% of Italy's textile imports from China.

"More than half of Italian-owned businesses in the industrial zone have gone to the wall over the past decade," Mr Landi continues. "There are now more Chinese garment manufacturers than there are Italian textile producers."

The Chinese newcomers have opened up the market in mainland China in a way Italians never could. They are exporting millions of low-cost garments bearing the Made in Italy tag in a seemingly

unregulated export drive. They have also notched up increased demand in Europe through cost-cutting.

But Xu Lin, a Chinese entrepreneur who set up Giupel, a clothing business, in Prato more than 10 years ago, believes that economic currents are set to favour Italian companies if they innovate and wake up to new opportunities.

"Italian companies can't compete on price, their strength lies in the area of aesthetics," he says.

"Italian textile companies have long outsourced the early stages of tissue production. But they have the traditional skills needed for the unique finishes and state-of-the art features that come at the end of the fabric production chain. The same is true of clothes."

'World leaders'

Prato still remains the world's fabric development leader - a sort of laboratory where future fabric trends are tested out.

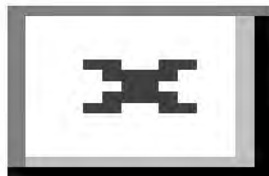


Image caption

Italian companies invest heavily in technological research producing innovative textiles for the couture end of the market.

Mr Xu believes that there is a burgeoning market back home not only for cheap apparel, but for the most expensive and refined Italian garments and fabrics.

"Hand-made in Tuscany is the best you can find," confirms Ermanno Scervino, one of Italy's top couture designers. "Its artisans are the most creative in the world and that is why my business is here in Florence and not in Milan or Paris."

Mr Scervino uses Tuscan specialist knowledge to produce original technological fabrics for each of his collections. He is planning to open shops in Shanghai and Beijing within the coming year.

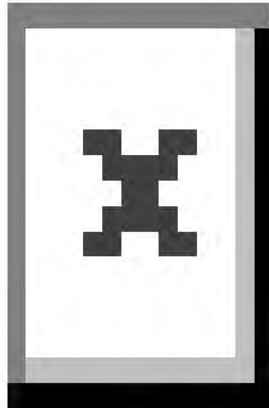


Image caption [Chinese workers in Prato](#)

The long hours put in by the Chinese in Prato are helping fill High Street chains such as Primark, H&M and Topshop in Europe with trendy, disposable fashion. But the Chinese have already raised their sights to the top end of the fashion market.

Lu Chen, a 24 year-old Chinese model living in Italy, says that young Chinese are studying at fashion schools in Italy in order to pick up the Italian design skills - the benchmark for international couture fashion .

"The Chinese really connect with the best quality Italian fashion and want to learn how to replicate that," she says.

Mr Xu says that he is already employing Italians as designers and in key factory positions.

"If the Chinese weren't in Prato and the clothes were made in mainland China instead, the Italians would be suffering far more," he says. "We have helped the Italians by ensuring the Made in Italy brand is ever more popular in China."

As Mr Scervino fits an exquisite leather and silk skirt in his Florentine studio on the tall and elegant Ms Lu, he expresses doubts that flair and chic can be taught in schools.

"You need to live in a country where beauty, art and craftsmanship have been treasured since the Renaissance," he says.

"It isn't something you can copy. I have Chinese customers in my shops around the world who want to buy Italian flair and handwork. It's unique and that is what wealthy people seek."

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 8:18 AM

To: EAP-CM-Office-DL <EAP-CM-Office-DL@state.gov>; EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; INR-China-Small Group <INR-ChinaSmallGroup@state.gov>

Subject: How did covid-19 begin? Its initial origin story is shaky. from The Washington Post

David Ignatius runs through the possible origins...

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/how-did-covid-19-begin-its-initial-origin-story-is-shaky/2020/04/02/1475d488-7521-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d_story.html

April 2, 2020 at 6:56 p.m. EDT

The story of how the novel coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, China, has produced a nasty propaganda battle between the United States and China. The two sides have traded some of the sharpest charges made between two nations since the Soviet Union in 1985 falsely accused the CIA of manufacturing AIDS.

U.S. intelligence officials don't think the pandemic was caused by deliberate wrongdoing. The outbreak that has now swept the world instead began with a simpler story, albeit one with tragic consequences: The prime suspect is "natural" transmission from bats to humans, perhaps through unsanitary markets. But scientists don't rule out that an accident at a research laboratory in Wuhan might have spread a deadly bat virus that had been collected for scientific study.

"Good science, bad safety" is how Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) put this theory in a Feb. 16 tweet. He ranked such a breach (or natural transmission) as more likely than two extreme possibilities: an accidental leak of an "engineered bioweapon" or a "deliberate release." Cotton's earlier loose talk about bioweapons set off a furor, back when he first raised it in late January and called the outbreak "worse than Chernobyl."

President Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo added to the bile last month by describing the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" and the "Wuhan virus," respectively. China dished wild, irresponsible allegations of its own. On March 12, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lijian Zhao charged in a tweet: "It might be [the] US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan." He retweeted an article that claimed, without evidence, that U.S. troops might have spread the virus when they attended the World Military Games in Wuhan in October 2019.

China retreated on March 22, when Ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai told "Axios on HBO" that such rumors were "crazy" on both sides. A State Department spokesman said Cui's comment was "welcome," and Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged in a March 27 phone call to "focus on cooperative behavior," a senior administration official told me.

To be clear: U.S. intelligence officials think there's no evidence whatsoever that the coronavirus was created in a laboratory as a potential bioweapon. Solid scientific

research demonstrates that the virus wasn't engineered by humans and that it originated in bats.

But how did the outbreak occur? Solving this medical mystery is important to prevent future pandemics. What's increasingly clear is that the initial "origin story" — that the virus was spread by people who ate contaminated animals at the Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan — is shaky.

Scientists have identified the culprit as a bat coronavirus, through genetic sequencing; bats weren't sold at the seafood market, although that market or others could have sold animals that had contact with bats. The Lancet noted in a January study that the first covid-19 case in Wuhan had no connection to the seafood market.

There's a competing theory — of an accidental lab release of bat coronavirus — that scientists have been puzzling about for weeks. Less than 300 yards from the seafood market is the Wuhan branch of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Researchers from that facility and the nearby Wuhan Institute of Virology have posted articles about collecting bat coronaviruses from around China, for study to prevent future illness. Did one of those samples leak, or was hazardous waste deposited in a place where it could spread?

Richard Ebright, a Rutgers microbiologist and biosafety expert, told me in an email that "the first human infection could have occurred as a natural accident," with the virus passing from bat to human, possibly through another animal. But Ebright cautioned that it "also could have occurred as a laboratory accident, with, for example, an accidental infection of a laboratory worker." He noted that bat coronaviruses were studied in Wuhan at Biosafety Level 2, "which provides only minimal protection," compared with the top BSL-4.

Ebright described a December video from the Wuhan CDC that shows staffers "collecting bat coronaviruses with inadequate [personal protective equipment] and unsafe operational practices." Separately, I reviewed two Chinese articles, from 2017 and 2019, describing the heroics of Wuhan CDC researcher Tian Junhua, who while capturing bats in a cave "forgot to take protective measures" so that "bat urine dripped from the top of his head like raindrops."

And then there's the Chinese study that was curiously withdrawn. In February, a site called ResearchGate published a brief article by Botao Xiao and Lei Xiao from Guangzhou's South China University of Technology. "In addition to origins of natural recombination and intermediate host, the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan. Safety level may need to be reinforced in high risk biohazardous laboratories," the article concluded. Botao Xiao told the Wall Street Journal in February that he had withdrawn the paper because it "was not supported by direct proofs."

Accidents happen, human or laboratory. Solving the mystery of how covid-19 began isn't a blame game, but a chance for China and the United States to cooperate in a crisis, and prevent a future one.

Read more from David Ignatius's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6) (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6) (b)(6)

EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(6)@state.gov>;

EAP-FO-Principals-DL (b)(6)@state.gov>;

INR-China-Small Group (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: Re: FW: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)
Date: Mon, 20 Apr 2020 01:27:57 +0000

Funny, was just about to share this one as quite interesting (also in light of our phone call). Got delayed by a negotiation over bedtime with a certain three year old.

--

(b)(6)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(c)

(b)(6)

On April 19, 2020 at 9:17:39 PM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:
If true, this one is interesting.

[China] Senior Chinese security official under investigation

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 3:44 PM, Bill Gertz, 482K, Negative] reports China's Communist Party announced Sunday that a senior Public Security Ministry is under investigation – another apparent political casualty of Beijing's handling of the devastating coronavirus outbreak. Sun Lijun, vice minister of Public security, is being investigated for suspected "severe violations of discipline and law," the official Xinhua news agency said in a two-sentence dispatch. The probe is being carried out by the Chinese Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission. Reports from Asia say Mr. Sun was sent from Beijing to Wuhan in February to take charge of security operations in the city. That commission is the party's leading investigatory agency and under President Xi Jinping has conducted a nationwide crackdown on corruption within China. Mr. Sun was among four Chinese intelligence officials who came to Washington and New York in 2017 and improperly abused the visas to pressure a Chinese dissident. The FBI wanted to arrest the Chinese officials but was blocked by State Department official under then-Assistant Secretary of State Susan Thornton who feared the arrests would disrupt favorable U.S.-China relations.

From: TechMIS - DOS Daily <dos@techmis.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 8:42 PM
To: noreply@techmis.com
Subject: State Department News Briefing (4-19-20 - 9 PM ET)

STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS BRIEFING

Prepared for the U.S. Department of State

By TechMIS

www.TechMIS.com

Mobile User Copy

TO: State Department & Staff

DATE: Sunday, April 19, 2020 9:00 PM ET

State Department News

Americans at World Health Organization transmitted real-time information about coronavirus to Trump administration

The [Washington Post](#) [4/19/2020 4:46 PM, Karen DeYoung, Lena H. Sun and Emily Rauhala, 12625K, Neutral] reports more than a dozen U.S. researchers, physicians and public health experts, many of them from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, were working full time at the Geneva headquarters of the World Health Organization as the novel coronavirus emerged late last year and transmitted real-time information about its discovery and spread in China to the Trump administration, according to U.S. and international officials. A number of CDC staffers are regularly detailed to work at WHO in Geneva as part of a rotation that has operated for years. Senior Trump-appointed health officials also consulted regularly at the highest levels with the WHO as the crisis unfolded, the officials said. The presence of so many U.S. officials undercuts President Trump's charge that the WHO's failure to communicate the extent of the threat, born of a desire to protect China, is largely responsible for the rapid spread of the virus in the United States. Asked early Sunday about the presence of CDC and other officials at the WHO, and whether it was "fair to blame the WHO for covering up the spread of this virus," Deborah Birx, the State Department expert who is part of the White House pandemic team, gently shifted the onus to China, and the need to "over-communicate." U.S. participation in the range of Geneva-based U.N. organizations is supervised by the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs, whose assistant secretary left office last November after the department's inspector general issued a sweeping condemnation of his leadership, including "political harassment" of career officials deemed insufficiently loyal to Trump. It is currently headed in an acting capacity by a deputy. But below the level of political appointments, communication between the U.S. government's public health bureaucracy and the WHO has continued throughout the Trump administration. In addition to working at WHO, on assignments first reported Saturday by Washington Post columnist Dana Milbank, CDC officials are often members of its many advisory groups.

US and Russia blocking UN plans for a global ceasefire amid crisis

[Yahoo News/The Guardian](#) [4/19/2020 7:00 AM, Simon Tisdall, 4742K, Neutral] reports the Trump administration and Russia are blocking efforts to win binding UN security council backing for a global ceasefire to help fight the coronavirus pandemic, which has claimed more than 150,000 lives worldwide. The UN secretary-general, António Guterres, called for an immediate end to fighting involving governments and armed groups in all conflict areas almost one month ago. "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war," he said. Yet despite

strong support for a universal truce from dozens of countries, including leading US allies such as Britain, France and Germany, as well as human rights groups, charities and the pope, the Trump administration is refusing to be bound by the measure. In an attempt to break the impasse, Emmanuel Macron, the French president, has proposed a draft security council resolution which attempts to overcome US and Russian objections by, in effect, making it impossible to enforce. The US objections arise from White House, Pentagon and State Department concerns that an all-encompassing measure could hinder their ability to prosecute military operations against terrorist groups, for example Isis in Iraq, and other targets that are deemed hostile to US interests. Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, is believed to have similar reservations regarding the impact on Russian military operations in Syria and on Moscow's unacknowledged support for proxy groups and non-state militias in wartorn countries such as Libya. Kelly Craft, US ambassador to the UN, expressed support for a global truce earlier this week and said she hoped the French resolution could be agreed soon, possibly this week. But a State Department spokesman was more circumspect. "The United States supports the secretary-general's call for a global ceasefire, but have noted that we will continue to fulfil our legitimate counter-terrorism mission," the spokesman told Foreign Policy.

G20 health ministers acknowledge health systems' vulnerability to pandemics: statement

Reuters [4/19/2020 5:10 PM, Dahlia Nehme and Marwa Rashad, 23673K, Neutral] reports health ministers from the Group of 20 major economies discussed weaknesses in health systems that made the world vulnerable to the coronavirus outbreak and other pandemics, a statement said after a virtual meeting on Sunday. The Saudi G20 secretariat said that the ministers shared their national experiences, addressed necessary actions to improve preparedness and discussed systemic weaknesses exposed by the pandemic. "Health Ministers recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted systemic weaknesses in health systems," the statement said. "It also has shown vulnerabilities in the global community's ability to prevent and respond to pandemic threats." The statement said the ministers adopted preventative measures to contain the pandemic, but did not elaborate. Leaders from Spain, Singapore, Jordan and Switzerland were invited to attend Sunday's meeting as well as international and regional organisations including the World Health Organization and the World Bank, an earlier G20 statement said.

Nato chief defends virus response after 'everyone caught off-guard' by pandemic

Yahoo News/PA Media [4/19/2020 4:15 AM, Trevor Marshallsea, 10942K, Neutral] reports the Nato general leading the group's response to the coronavirus in Europe has conceded all key figures were caught "off-guard" by the outbreak. Defending Nato's work in reaction to the virus, including co-ordinating the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) through various European countries, Lieutenant-General Olivier Rittiman said "no-one" fully understood the depth of the crisis that lay ahead in the early days of the outbreak. "I think that everybody was taken a little bit off-guard by this crisis," Lt Gen Rittiman, the commander of Nato's Europe Covid-19 Task Force, told Sky News' Sophy Ridge on Sunday. "No-one was really completely understanding the full expanse of the health crisis we are facing." Lt Gen Rittiman said it was not fair of former defence minister Tobias Ellwood to have said last week that Nato needed to "wake up" to the Covid-19 threat. The general said the organisation had so far deployed 4,000 medics and 250 field hospitals – amounting to some 25,000 beds – across various nations.

[Iran] Iran's Guard acknowledges encounter with US, says will give decisive response to any mistake by US in Gulf

The AP [4/19/2020 1:53 PM, Amir Vahdat, 23673K, Negative] reports Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard acknowledged Sunday it had a tense encounter with U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf last week, but alleged without offering evidence that American forces sparked the incident. The incident Wednesday saw the U.S. Navy release video of small Iranian fast boats coming close to American warships as they operated in the northern Persian Gulf near Kuwait, with U.S. Army Apache helicopters. In the Guard's telling, its forces were conducting a drill and faced "the unprofessional and provocative actions of the United States and their indifference to warnings." It said the Americans later withdrew. The Guard released no evidence to support its allegation, but did release a video showing an Iranian boat traveling in parallel with a U.S. warship. At one point, a deck-mounted machine gun on the Iranian vessel is seen pointed toward the American ship. The Guard also accused American forces of blocking Iranian warships on April 6 and April 7 as well. Lt. Pete Pagano, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet, said the Navy stood by its earlier description of the incident Wednesday. Reuters [4/19/2020 7:19 AM, Babak Dehghanpisheh, 5304K, Neutral] reports Iran will give a decisive response to any mistake by the United States in the Gulf, the Revolutionary Guards navy said in a statement published on the Guards' news site Sepah News. "We advise the Americans to follow international regulations and maritime protocols in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman and to refrain from any adventurism and false and fake stories," Sunday's statement from the Guards navy said. "They should be assured that the Revolutionary Guards navy and the powerful armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran sees the dangerous actions of foreigners in the region as a threat to national security and its red line and any error in calculation on their part will receive a decisive response."

[Iran] Iran's Central Bank Head Urges IMF to Approve Virus Loan

Bloomberg [4/19/2020 7:28 AM, Golnar Motevalli, 6400K, Negative] reports Iran's central bank governor urged the International Monetary Fund to resist U.S. pressure and approve its application for financing to help bridge a 10 billion-euro (\$10.9 billion) deficit as the country's sanctions-hit economy struggles to cope with the coronavirus pandemic. The Islamic Republic asked the IMF on March 6 for \$5 billion in loans to help finance its efforts to combat the disease and support an economy severely weakened by U.S. sanctions that have devastated oil revenues and isolated the state from the global banking system. While the U.S. has said it will block the application, on April 15 the IMF's director for the Middle East and Central Asia said it's proceeding with Iran's request for assistance. "The last time I checked, it's not the United States running the IMF, but its management and the board of governors who oversee the work and ensure that the IMF delivers on its mandate," Abdolnaser Hemmati, head of the Central Bank of Iran, said in written answers to questions sent by Bloomberg. The U.S. says sanctions don't apply to humanitarian goods such as pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and food, but Iran says they are preventing it from accessing its own money, which is frozen overseas and hurting its ability to pay for imports. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has fiercely opposed Iran's request to the IMF, accusing it of seeking to funnel the money into "corrupt purposes."

[Israel] Israelis accuse Netanyahu of endangering democracy

The AP [4/19/2020 3:48 PM, Oded Balilty, 23673K, Negative] reports more than 2,000 Israelis took to the streets of Tel Aviv on Sunday, demonstrating against Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu's attempts to form an "emergency" government with his chief rival and accusing him of using the coronavirus crisis to escape prosecution on corruption charges. Demonstrators wore face masks and largely kept their distance from one another, in line with social-distancing rules, as speakers criticized Netanyahu's possible partnership with rival Benny Gantz. Some held black flags, which have become the symbol of their campaign in recent weeks. Gantz, who during three bitter election campaigns over the past year vowed never to sit in a government with Netanyahu due to his legal problems, announced last month that he had accepted the prime minister's suggestion to form an "emergency" government to deal with the coronavirus crisis. The announcement infuriated many of Gantz's supporters and caused his Blue and White party to fracture. Netanyahu has been charged with fraud, breach of justice and accepting bribes. He denies the charges and says he is the victim of a hostile media and aggressive police and prosecutors.

[Turkey] Erdogan, Trump agree on 'close cooperation' in virus crisis

The AP [4/19/2020 2:26 PM, Staff, 2182K, Neutral] reports Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and U.S. President Donald Trump have spoken on the phone, discussing the coronavirus pandemic, bilateral relations and regional developments. According to an account of the phone call shared by the Turkish presidency's office on Sunday, the two leaders agreed to continue their "close cooperation" against the threats posed by the coronavirus on public health and the economy. This would be a "necessity of the spirit of solidarity required by being NATO allies," the message said. The two leaders also spoke on the phone at the end of March. The U.S. has the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the world and Turkey now ranks seventh, according to Johns Hopkins University's data on the coronavirus pandemic. They have both surpassed China, where COVID-19 emerged, the figures show.

[China] Pence Says Trump 'not happy' with China as Wuhan Lab Says Virus Did Not Originate From Them

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 5:48 AM, Tom Howell Jr., 482K, Neutral] reports Vice President Mike Pence said President Trump is "not happy" with China over its early fumbles in disclosing the coronavirus that erupted in Wuhan but stopped short of outlining consequences Sunday, saying the administration is looking into it. "The president's made it clear he's not happy," Mr. Pence told "Fox News Sunday." "We're going to make proper inquiries into this at the proper time." Mr. Trump is highlighting China's culpability in failing to contain a virus that's raced around the globe, sickening 2.3 million people and killing 161,400 people, including nearly 40,000 deaths in the U.S. "If they were knowingly responsible, certainly. If it was a mistake, a mistake is a mistake. But if they were knowingly responsible, yeah, then there should be consequences," Mr. Trump said Saturday at the White House. "I haven't ruled out anything — I want to look at the facts as they come in." Mr. Trump's critics say the White House is highlighting China to deflect attention from his slow start in preparing and testing for the virus. The Washington Examiner [4/19/2020 11:35 AM, Caitlin Yilek, 570K, Negative] reports Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House Coronavirus Task Force Coordinator, said it was too soon to determine whether the virus originated in a Chinese laboratory. "Anytime we have a new virus, it's important to figure out its origins. I think we're still a long way from figuring it out. It took us decades to figure out HIV and Ebola. It's gonna take us a while to really map and trace this particular virus, map it through its experience in humans, and get the scientific evidence of where this virus originated. We know it originated in China, we just don't know specifically how and where," Birx told CBS

News's Face the Nation on Sunday. "I don't have the evidence that it was a laboratory accident. I also don't know precisely where it originated," she said, adding, "Right now, the general consensus is animal-to-human [transmission]." Yahoo News/RFI [4/19/2020 9:27 AM, Staff, 10942K, Negative] reports the head of a research laboratory in the Chinese city of Wuhan, ground zero of the coronavirus, has broken his silence to reject claims the facility could be the source of the pandemic. In comments published in Chinese state media Saturday, Yuan Zhiming, director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, said the accusations were a "conspiracy theory," adding "there's no way this virus came from us." The move comes after France on Friday said there was no evidence of a link between the Covid-19 outbreak and the work of the institute's high-security biosafety P4 laboratory, which is equipped to handle dangerous viruses and which France helped to set up.

[China] Senior Chinese security official under investigation

The Washington Times [4/19/2020 3:44 PM, Bill Gertz, 482K, Negative] reports China's Communist Party announced Sunday that a senior Public Security Ministry is under investigation – another apparent political casualty of Beijing's handling of the devastating coronavirus outbreak. Sun Lijun, vice minister of Public security, is being investigated for suspected "severe violations of discipline and law," the official Xinhua news agency said in a two-sentence dispatch. The probe is being carried out by the Chinese Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission. Reports from Asia say Mr. Sun was sent from Beijing to Wuhan in February to take charge of security operations in the city. That commission is the party's leading investigatory agency and under President Xi Jinping has conducted a nationwide crackdown on corruption within China. Mr. Sun was among four Chinese intelligence officials who came to Washington and New York in 2017 and improperly abused the visas to pressure a Chinese dissident. The FBI wanted to arrest the Chinese officials but was blocked by State Department official under then-Assistant Secretary of State Susan Thornton who feared the arrests would disrupt favorable U.S.-China relations.

[Hong Kong] 'Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted': Barr condemns Hong Kong protester arrests

The Washington Examiner [4/19/2020 1:44 PM, Jerry Dunleavy, 570K, Neutral] reports Attorney General William Barr and other U.S. leaders condemned the Chinese government's move to arrest more than a dozen leaders from Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement for alleged crimes stemming from last year's mass protests. "I condemn the latest assault on the rule of law and the liberty of the people of Hong Kong," Barr said on Saturday. "These events show how antithetical the values of the Chinese Communist Party are to those we share in Western liberal democracies. These actions — along with its malign influence activity and industrial espionage here in the United States — demonstrate once again that the Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted." Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had said this weekend that the U.S. "condemns the arrest of pro-democracy advocates in Hong Kong" and noted that "Beijing and its representatives in Hong Kong continue to take actions inconsistent with commitments made under the Sino-British Joint Declaration that include transparency, the rule of law, and guarantees that Hong Kong will continue to enjoy a high degree of autonomy."

[North Korea] North Korea Says Kim Jong Un Didn't Send Letter to Trump

Bloomberg [4/19/2020 9:13 AM, Shinhye Kang, 6400K, Neutral] reports an official at North Korea's foreign ministry said Kim Jong Un didn't send any letter to U.S. President Donald Trump recently although it's unclear that Trump mentioned about letters exchanged in the past, Korean Central News Agency reported. North Korea will analyze the U.S. leadership's purpose of leaking groundless information to the media. Relations between the leaders of two countries should not be used for "selfish purpose." Trump earlier said he got nice note from North Korean leader recently. The AP [4/19/2020 11:30 AM, Hyung-Jin Kim, 2182K, Neutral] reports North Korea's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that there was no letter addressed to Trump recently by "the supreme leadership," a reference to Kim. It said it would examine why the U.S. leadership released "the ungrounded story" to the media. "The relations between the top leaders of (North Korea) and the U.S. are not an issue to be taken up just for diversion nor it should be misused for meeting selfish purposes," the statement said.

[North Korea] UN experts want to blacklist 14 ships over N. Korea sanctions

The AP [4/19/2020 3:17 AM, Edith M. Lederer, Neutral] reports U.N. experts have recommended blacklisting 14 vessels for violating sanctions against North Korea in a report that accuses the country of increasing illegal coal exports, imports of petroleum products and continuing with cyber attacks on financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges to gain illicit revenue. The 267-page report, obtained Saturday by The Associated Press, also accused North Korea of importing luxury vehicles, watches and liquor and other sanctioned items including robotic machinery, and continuing to illegally access international banking channels "mainly by using third party intermediaries." The U.N. Security Council has imposed increasingly tough sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the country's official name, including banning most of its exports and severely limiting its imports, to pressure Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The full report by the panel of experts monitoring the sanctions provides more details to the summary and some excerpts reported by AP in February. It includes photos of ballistic missile launchers, nuclear sites and vessels recommended for blacklisting. The panel made 39 recommendations to the Security Council, including on the blacklisting of 14 vessels. In China, Russia and elsewhere, there is strong demand for cheap North Korean workers. The U.S. State Department previously estimated there were about 100,000 North Korean workers worldwide, and civilian experts said those workers brought the DPRK an estimated \$200 million to \$500 million in revenue a year. The report said "in multiple cases, workers were not repatriated to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but moved to a third country."

[Afghanistan] Dozens Test Positive for Coronavirus at Afghan President's Palace

The New York Times [4/19/2020 3:30 PM, Mujib Mashal and Fahim Abed, 23673K, Negative] reports at least 40 staff members in Afghanistan's presidential palace have tested positive for Covid-19, Afghan officials said on Sunday, forcing President Ashraf Ghani to isolate himself and manage the country's response to the virus — amid a raging war — largely via video conference. There is no evidence that Mr. Ghani himself is infected. His spokesman would not comment on whether the president had been tested. But the reach of the virus deep into the center of Afghan power, guarded behind several layers of security to protect against truck bombings and suicide assaults, was a troubling omen of difficult times ahead. Officials are grappling with the spread of the disease and its economic ramifications for the impoverished nation even as they fend off Taliban onslaughts. An official at the

palace said that most of the 40 people who tested positive work for the administrative wing of the president's office, the National Security Council and the office of Mr. Ghani's chief of staff. A second senior official confirmed that dozens had tested positive after hundreds of palace workers were tested more than a week ago. The official did not provide further details, but said those with confirmed infections were sent into quarantine.

[Pakistan] IMF Approves \$1.4 Billion in Coronavirus Aid to Pakistan to Deal With Covid-19 Pandemic

Yahoo News/News18 [4/19/2020 2:10 PM, Staff, 4742K, Neutral] reports the IMF on Thursday approved nearly \$1.4 billion in emergency aid to Pakistan to help it weather the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. "While uncertainty remains high, the near-term economic impact of COVID-19 is expected to be significant, giving rise to large fiscal and external financing needs," the international lender said in a statement. Pakistan has recorded just over 100 deaths but experts have voiced fear that the country of 215 million people could see a rapid and devastating increase due to its shortage of medical infrastructure and crowded cities. Worried about hurting an already weak economy, Prime Minister Imran Khan has resisted a sweeping, nationwide lockdown but provinces have shuttered schools and companies. "The domestic containment measures, coupled with the global downturn, are severely affecting growth and straining external financing," said Geoffrey Okamoto, the IMF's first deputy managing director. "This has created an urgent balance of payments need," he said.

[Canada] At Least 10 Killed in Nova Scotia Shooting, Police Say

The New York Times [4/19/2020 5:52 PM, Dan Bilefsky and Johnny Diaz, 23673K, Negative] reports a police officer and a 51-year-old gunman were dead after a 12-hour shooting rampage in Nova Scotia in which at least 10 people were killed, the police said Sunday. The authorities responded to reports of a shooting about 10:30 p.m. on Saturday in the area of Portapique Beach Road, Bay Shore Road and Five Houses Road in Portapique, a small rural community about 35 miles from Truro, Nova Scotia. Police confirmed at a news conference on Sunday afternoon that at least 10 people were killed in multiple locations during the 12-hour rampage, which ended at a gas station. It was not immediately clear if that figure included the gunman. During a news media briefing on Sunday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada briefly touched on the tragedy and thanked the police for their work. "My heart goes out to everyone affected in what is a terrible situation," he said.

[Chad] Boko Haram suspects 'die of poison' in Chad jail

Yahoo News/BBC [4/19/2020 5:55 AM, Staff, 10942K, Negative] reports forty-four suspected Boko Haram militants in Chad have died in detention from apparent poisoning, the country's public prosecutor says. The men were part of a group of 58 suspects captured during a recent major army operation against the Islamist group around Lake Chad. An investigation has been launched after four autopsies showed a lethal substance had led to their deaths. The justice minister told AFP the prisoners had not been ill treated. Djimet Arabi was responding to allegations that the prisoners were placed in a single cell and given no food or water after their transfer to the capital, N'Djamena, on Tuesday. The military offensive was launched after jihadists killed nearly 100 Chadian troops on 23 March during a seven-hour attack on an island base in Lake Chad. It was the deadliest attack on the Chad's army by Boko Haram since their insurgency spread across the border from Nigeria several years ago. The prisoners, who were being held as part of an anti-terrorism

investigation, had been found dead on Thursday morning, public prosecutor Youssouf Tom said.

[Congo] Escape of Ebola patient in Congo sparks fear of further infection

Reuters [4/19/2020 2:38 PM, Erikas Mwisi Kambale in Beni and Hereward Holland, 5304K, Negative] reports an Ebola flare-up in eastern Congo may spread again after a patient escaped from a clinic, complicating efforts to contain the disease that has infected six people since last week, the World Health Organization said on Sunday. The Democratic Republic of Congo was two days away from declaring the end of the world's second-largest Ebola epidemic when a new chain of infection was discovered on April 10, following more than seven weeks without a new case. Since then, health authorities have sought to contain any renewed spread of infections. But on Friday a 28-year-old motorbike taxi-driver who had tested positive for Ebola ran away from the centre where he was being treated in the town of Beni. "We are using all the options to get him out of the community," said Boubacar Diallo, deputy incident manager for the WHO's Ebola response operation. "We are expecting secondary cases from him." Small outbreaks are common towards the end of an epidemic, but healthworkers need to ensure the virus is contained by tracking, quarantining and vaccinating the contacts of new cases. "We do not have any details yet. All have been working with the authorities, youths and civil society to find him. Search is ongoing," Diallo said by WhatsApp message.

[Lesotho] Lesotho's army withdraws as calls mount for PM to resign

Yahoo News/AFP [4/19/2020 10:22 AM, Pascalinah Kabi, 10942K, Neutral] reports Lesotho troops deployed by Prime Minister Thomas Thabane amid a showdown with opponents demanding the octogenarian leader resign withdrew from the capital's streets on Sunday. Thabane faces mounting calls to step down from rivals within his ruling party and opposition groups over suspicions he had a hand in the murder of his estranged wife in 2017. An AFP journalist in the capital Maseru reported that soldiers backed by armoured vehicles had returned to barracks by Sunday morning. Thabane had deployed them the day before to "restore order" while accusing unnamed law enforcement agencies of undermining democracy. The army spokesman was not immediately available for comment. Diplomatic moves to calm the situation were meanwhile gathering pace. A South African envoy has arrived in Lesotho, Thabane's senior private secretary Thabo Thakalekoala told AFP on Sunday. He did not elaborate but many in Maseru suspect President Cyril Ramaphosa had dispatched the envoy to the tiny kingdom surrounded by South Africa in a bid to facilitate talks between Thabane and his opponents. US, British and European Union (EU) ambassadors and commissioners, leaders called on Maseru to remember "the importance of maintaining stability and the rule of law." "We urge a united approach that prioritises the protection of citizens and the provision of essential services," they said in a signed statement.

[Nigeria] 'Armed bandits' kill 47 in northwest Nigeria's Katsina state: police

Reuters [4/19/2020 1:58 PM, Ardo Hazzad, 5304K, Negative] reports gunmen killed 47 people in attacks on villages in the northwestern Nigerian state of Katsina in the early hours of Saturday, local police said. "Armed bandits", some of whom wielded AK 47 guns, carried out the attacks, Katsina police said in a statement on Sunday. Hundreds of people have been killed in the last year by criminal gangs carrying out robberies and kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. Such attacks have added to security challenges in Africa's most

populous country, which is already struggling to contain Islamist insurgencies in the northeast and communal violence over grazing rights in central states. Gunmen, some with AK 47 guns, carried out the attacks in three local government authorities in the state in the early hours of Saturday between 12:30 a.m. (2330 GMT) and around 3 a.m., Katsina police said in its statement. "There was reports of organised and simultaneous attacks in villages in Danmusa, Dutsenma and Safana by groups of armed bandits," the statement said of some of the attacks. "Detachments of Police, Nigerian Army, Nigeria Airforce, Civil Defence and DSS (Department of State Services) have been drafted to the area," it added.

{End of Report}

<State Department News Briefing (4-19-20).docx>

<State Department News Briefing (4-19-20).pdf>

Sender: (b)(6)**Recipient:** Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>;
OES-STC-China <OES-STC-China@state.gov>;
To: ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>;
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Beijing ESTH Americans <BeijingESTHAmericans@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: clearance (OOB Monday): AM to request access to Wuhan Institute of Virology
Date: Mon, 4 May 2020 09:21:15 +0000

(b)(1)

I discussed this (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Environment, Science, Technology, and Health (ESTH) (b)(6)

U.S. Embassy Beijing | 美国驻华大使馆

P: (b)(6)

E: (b)(6)@state.gov

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Sent: Saturday, May 2, 2020 4:31 AM
To: (b)(6); OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; OES-STC-China <OES-STC-China@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; (b)(6) (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; Beijing ESTH Americans <BeijingESTHAmericans@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>
Subject: Re: clearance (OOB Monday): AM to request (b)(5)

Hi (b)(6)

(b)(6) clears for CGRCU (b)(5)
(b)(5)

Thanks, (b)(6)

(b)(6)
Currently: ESTH

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

U.S. Department of State

202-280-0602

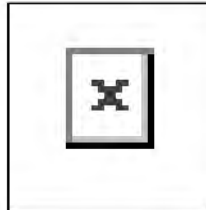
Normally: ESTH Officer

U.S. Embassy Beijing

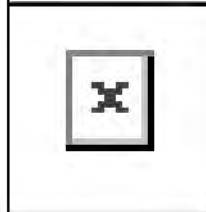
From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 2:34 PM
To: OES-IHB-DG <OES-IHB-DG@state.gov>; OES-STC-China <OES-STC-China@state.gov>; ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>; (b)(6) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) Beijing ESTH Americans <BeijingESTHAmericans@state.gov>
Cc: EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>
Subject: clearance (OOB Monday): AM to request (b)(5)

Colleagues,

We've been tasked to draft an AM recommending (b)(5) (b)(5)
(b)(5) The draft AM and letter are linked below for your review.



AM for S Yang Letter (b)(5) docx



S Yang Letter (b)(5) docx

I would greatly appreciate your clearance by OOB Monday.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)
Economic Unit (b)(6) EAP/CM

Economic Unit: EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov

Personal: (b)(6)

Mobile: (b)(6)

From: EAP-Staffers Mailbox <EAP-StaffersMailbox@state.gov>

Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 2:48 PM

To: (b)(6); EAP-Staffers Mailbox <EAP-StaffersMailbox@state.gov>

Cc: EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.gov>

Subject: RE: ACTION FOR STAFFERS - TASKER - S-Yang Letter

Rec'd and tasked in OP: (b)(6)

T	CM,	Action Memo S: (b)(5) Yang (b)(5) AM (b)(5)	05/04/2020
---	-----	---	------------

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 2:29 PM
To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox <EAP-StaffersMailbox@state.gov>
Cc: EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.gov>
Subject: ACTION FOR STAFFERS - TASKER - S-Yang Letter

Staffers,

Please task an AM and letter to CM from the Secretary to (b)(5) Yang (b)(6) regarding (b)(5) (b)(5) (b)(6) has additional details. Due to the EAP/FO NLT COB Monday. I will ask whether (b)(6) intends to task formally.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

Sender: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6);
OES-IFB-DG <OES-IFB-DG@state.gov>;
OES-STC-China <OES-STC-China@state.gov>;
ISN-BPS-DL <ISN-BPS-DL@STATE.GOV>;
Recipient: (b)(6)
(b)(6);
(b)(6)
Beijing ESTH Americans <BeijingESTHAmericans@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
EAP-CM-ECON-DL <EAP-CM-ECON-DL@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
To: TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>;
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
CC: EAP-J-ECON-DL (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article
Date: Tue, 10 Mar 2020 16:19:40 +0000

+ Tokyo PAS colleagues.

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:17 PM
To: TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>
Cc: EAP-J-ECON-DL (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Caixin Article

Have you all seen any local reporting corroborating this article?

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:11 PM
To: EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: Caixin Article

J Desk colleagues:

Would it be possible to ask if Embassy Tokyo has seen a message from the Chinese embassy (sent apparently to Chinese nationals in Japan) calling the virus the "Japanese coronavirus?" Or perhaps some local press stories about the message?

Thanks,

(b)(6)
Office of Chinese & Mongolian Affairs
(b)(6)
HST Room 4318 | U.S. Department of State

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:04 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D

(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Will see if we can find it...

Sent from Workspace ONE Boxer

On March 10, 2020 at 11:26:12 AM EDT, (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:

Is there anyway we can find this message from the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo?

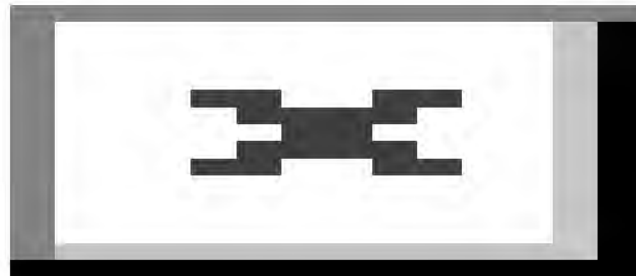
Chinese virus becomes "Japanese virus"

More insidious, the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo last week sent all its nationals a message on certain directives to apply if they are confronted with ... "Japanese coronavirus". As if the virus once arrived in Japan took Japanese nationality.

No corrective action was required from Tokyo, but this qualification did not go unnoticed. Faced with the scale of the epidemic, Tokyo postponed the official visit of leader Xi Jinping to Japan, scheduled for April, and prohibited, two months after the crisis, the entry into its territory of Chinese nationals.

<https://www.la-croix.com/Monde/Asie-et-Oceanie/Chine-reecrit-deja-lhistoire-coronavirus-Wuhan-2020-03-09-1201082887>

I searched their embassy's website for "Japanese coronavirus" and "coronavirus" in general and just got this back. Would be hilarious if it wasn't so sad.



~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:39 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L

(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Received.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:37 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L

(b)(6) (b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

OK. GPA colleagues, please confirm receipt.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:37 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

That's correct.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:36 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Team, a note of caution here ((b)(6)) please correct me if I'm wrong) -

Note that Xi says "outbreak" and not "origin." We can safely say the outbreak started in Wuhan, but we cannot say the CCP admitted the origin of the virus is in Wuhan.

Small distinction but important.

Again, China hands, let me know if I'm misreading anything here.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:08 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

John do you have a link to the speech below?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:03 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) @state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

GOLD.

GPA we should spray this out, IMHO.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:02 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Full sentence is:

After the outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan, on January 7, I presided over a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, (where) I put forward requirements for the prevention and control of the epidemic situation of new coronavirus.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

(b)(6) that Xi quote is GOLD. Is it possible for you to translate the complete first sentence? Where did he deliver the speech? We should cite date, location.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:57 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

It's an official source, so I don't see a problem citing it.

Btw, you can also quote the first line of Xi Jinping's February 3 speech, which reads in its first sentence, "After the outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan..."

武汉新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情发生后,1月7日,我主持召开中央政治局常委会会议时,就对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情防控工作提出了要求。1月20日,我专门就疫情防控工作作出批示,指出必须高度重视疫情,全力做好防控工作,要求各级党委和政府及有关部门把人民群众生命安全和身体健康放在第一位,采取切实有效措施,坚决遏制疫情蔓延势头。1月22日,鉴于疫情迅速蔓延、防控工作面临严峻挑战,我明确要求湖北省对人员外流实施全面严格管控。正月初一,我再次主持召开中央政治局常委会会议,对疫情防控特别是患者治疗工作进行再研究、再部署、再动员,并决定成立中央应对疫情工作领导小组。

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:33 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6); Buangan, Richard L; (b)(6); Ortagus,
Morgan D; (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

+ (b)(6) in case they have a view?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6); (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:32 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D; (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can we also cite this from the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission on December 31st? They hadn't yet called it coronavirus, but said it was a possibility. Instead referred to it as a "viral pneumonia."

"Recently, some medical institutions found that many of the pneumonia cases received were related to South China Seafood City. After receiving the report, the Municipal Health and Health Commission immediately launched a case search and retrospective investigation related to South China Seafood City in the city's medical health institutions. Twenty-seven cases have been found, of which 7 are in serious condition, and the remaining cases are stable and controllable. Two patients are expected to be discharged in the near future. The clinical manifestations of the cases were mainly fever, a few patients had

difficulty breathing, and chest radiographs showed bilateral lung infiltrative lesions. At present, all cases have been isolated for treatment, follow-up investigations and medical observations of close contacts are ongoing, and hygiene investigations and environmental sanitation disposals for South China Seafood City are ongoing. ”

<http://wjw.wuhan.gov.cn/front/web/showDetail/2019123108989>

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:27 PM
To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can I use that exact language to pass along OTR?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:24 PM
To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

So we can say that even China' s own media apparatus admits that the virus has local Hubei origins.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:23 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: FW: Caixin Article

Here is what I forwarded to (b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:20 PM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: FW: Caixin Article

Here is the Caixin article. I've highlighted where I think the authors allege that the virus originated in Hubei. This article is more about how the Hubei authorities tried to cover up the emergence of the outbreak in the early stages but it's easy to assume that Chinese authorities knew they were responding to a Hubei-originated disease.

Also interesting: On Dec 31, it was China (not any other country) who notified the WHO of the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:11 PM

To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Sorry for delay - literally just had to renew my subscription:

eb 29, 2020 09:19 PM
SOCIETY & CULTURE

In Depth: How Early Signs of a SARS-Like Virus Were Spotted, Spread, and Throttled

By Gao Yu, Peng Yanfeng, Yang Rui, Feng Yuding, Ma Danmeng, Flynn Murphy, Han Wei and Timmy Shen

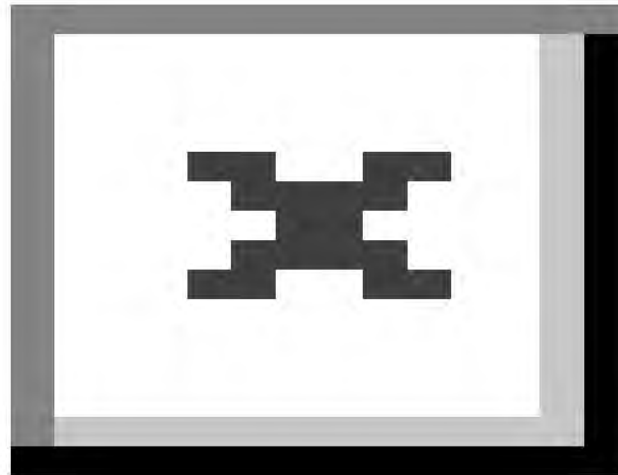
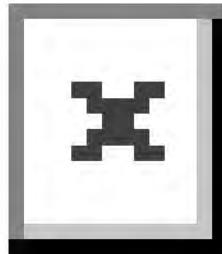


Photo: Pixabay



The new coronavirus that has claimed nearly 3,000 lives and spread to almost 50 countries was sequenced in Chinese labs — and found to be similar to SARS — weeks before officials publicly identified it as the cause of a mysterious viral pneumonia cluster in Wuhan, a Caixin investigation has found.

Test results from multiple labs in December suggested there was an outbreak of a new virus. However, the results failed to trigger a response that could have prepared the public, despite being fed into an infectious disease control system that was designed to alert China's top health officials about outbreaks. The revelations show how health officials missed early opportunities to control the virus in the initial stages of the outbreak, as questions mount about who knew what and when, and whether these actions helped the disease to spread.



As early as Dec. 27, a Guangzhou-based genomics company had sequenced most of the virus from fluid samples from the lung of a 65-year old deliveryman who worked at the seafood market where many of the first cases emerged. The results showed an alarming similarity to the deadly SARS coronavirus that killed nearly 800 people between 2002 and 2003.

Around that time, local doctors sent at least eight other patient samples from hospitals around Wuhan to multiple Chinese genomics companies, including industry heavyweight BGI, as they worked to determine what was behind a growing number of cases of unexplained respiratory disease. The results all pointed to a dangerous SARS-like virus.

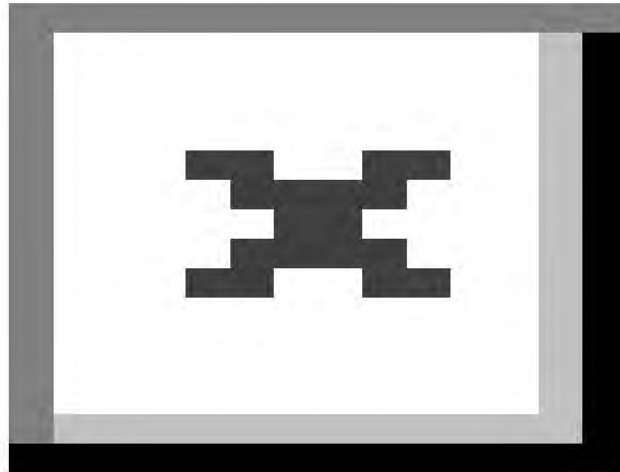
That was days before China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 31 about the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease, two weeks before it shared the virus's genome sequence with the world, and

crucially, more than three weeks before Chinese authorities confirmed publicly that the virus was spreading between people.

Concerns about the new disease were initially kept within a small group of medical workers, researchers and officials. On Dec. 30, Dr. Li Wenliang was one of several in Wuhan who sounded the first alarms and released initial evidence online. Li, who was punished for releasing the information, would perish from the disease five weeks later, after contracting it from a patient.

On Jan. 1, after several batches of genome sequence results had been returned to hospitals and submitted to health authorities, an employee of one genomics company received a phone call from an official at the Hubei Provincial Health Commission, ordering the company to stop testing samples from Wuhan related to the new disease and destroy all existing samples. The employee spoke on condition of anonymity, saying they were told to immediately cease releasing test results and information about the tests, and report any future results to authorities.

Then on Jan. 3, China's National Health Commission (NHC), the nation's top health authority, ordered institutions not to publish any information related to the unknown disease, and ordered labs to transfer any samples they had to designated testing institutions, or to destroy them. The order, which Caixin has seen, did not specify any designated testing institutions.



WHO epidemiologist Bruce Aylward explains the process and response to the outbreak at a news conference in Beijing Tuesday. Photo: CGTN

It was Jan. 9 when Chinese authorities finally announced that a novel coronavirus was behind Wuhan's viral pneumonia outbreak. Even then, the transmissibility of the virus was downplayed, leaving the public unaware of the imminent danger.

Finally, on Jan. 20, Zhong Nanshan, a leading authority on respiratory health who came to national attention in his role fighting SARS, confirmed in a TV interview that the disease was spreading from person-to-person.

Two days later, Wuhan, a city of 11 million, was placed in lockdown. It remains quarantined today.

Social media posts provide clues

The earliest results, for a 65-year-old deliveryman who worked at the Wuhan seafood market, were returned on Dec. 27 by Vision Medicals, a genomics

company based in Huangpu district in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province.

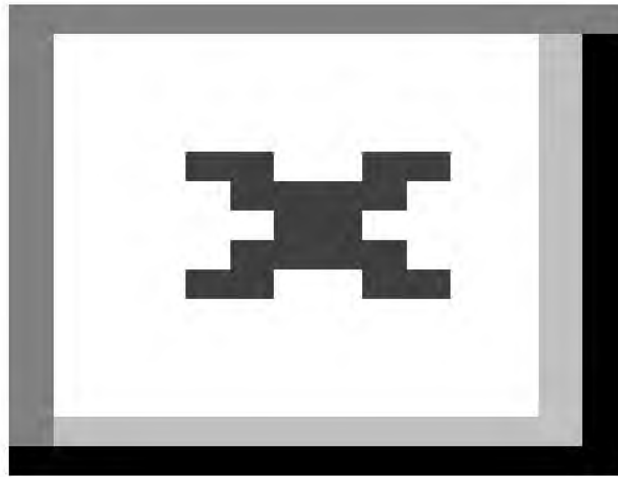
The patient was admitted to the Central Hospital of Wuhan on Dec. 18 with pneumonia and his condition quickly deteriorated. On Dec. 24, the doctors took fluid samples from his lungs and sent them to Vision Medicals for testing, according to Zhao Su, head of respiratory medicine at the hospital. In an unusual move, the company did not send back results, but instead called the doctor on Dec. 27. "They just called us and said it was a new coronavirus," Zhao said.

Vision Medicals confirmed the tests took place in a post it published on social media late last week. The post said the company was involved in early studies on the new coronavirus and contributed to an _____ published on the English version of the Chinese Medical Journal about its discovery. That article makes specific mention of a sample collected on Dec. 24 from a 65-year-old patient who had contact with the seafood market.

A different social media post, believed to have been made by a Vision Medicals employee, sheds more light on the company's early work. The author of the post, made on Jan. 28, said only that they worked at a private company based in Huangpu, Guangzhou, where Vision Medicals is located. The post's author said they noticed a close similarity with the SARS coronavirus in test results of a sample collected on Dec. 24, but decided to study the results more closely before returning them, due their significance. The company did, however, share the data with the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, according to the article.

On Dec. 27, the lab worked had sequenced most of the virus's genome and had confirmed it was a coronavirus similar to SARS virus, the article said. In the following days, company executives paid a visit to Wuhan to discuss their findings with local hospital officials and disease control authorities, the article said. "There was an intensive and confidential investigation underway, and officials from the hospital and disease control center had acknowledged many similar patients," it said.

Little information about this early study has been officially released. The patient, who was transferred to Wuhan Jinyintang Hospital, later died.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology, part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Photo: Ding Gang/Caixin

Revelations triggered by ‘small mistake’

While researchers at Vision Medicals mulled their findings, the Central Hospital of Wuhan sent swabs from another patient with the mysterious pneumonia to a Beijing-based lab, CapitalBio Medlab Co. Ltd., for study. The sample came from a 41-year-old man who had no history of contact with the seafood market, who was admitted on Dec. 27.

Test results delivered by the company showed a false positive for SARS. It was a “small mistake,” a gene sequencing expert told Caixin, which may have been down to a limited gene database or a lack of retesting.

But it was this mistake that triggered the first concerns heard by the public — recalling painful memories of the cover-up that defined the SARS outbreak 17 years before.

On the evening of Dec. 30, several doctors in Wuhan, including the late Li Wenliang, privately shared CapitalBio's results as a warning to friends and colleagues to take protective measures. Those messages then circulated widely online and sparked a public uproar demanding more information. Several people, including Li and two other doctors who sent the messages that night, were later punished by authorities for "spreading rumors."

Zhang Jixian, who heads the respiratory department at Hubei Xinhua Hospital, noticed on Dec. 26 that he had received a growing number of patients with symptoms of pneumonia from the neighboring seafood market. He reported the situation to the hospital the next day, with that report passed on to city and provincial health authorities.

Following the reports, disease control authorities in Wuhan and Hubei on Dec. 30 issued an internal notice warning of the emergence of pneumonia patients with links to the seafood market and requiring hospitals to monitor similar cases.

The notice, later leaked online, offered the first glimpse to the public of officials' acknowledgement of the outbreak.

Silenced alarms

Several other genomics companies also tested samples from patients in Wuhan with the then-unidentified virus in late December, Caixin learned. Industry leader BGI received a sample from a Wuhan hospital on Dec. 26. Sequencing was completed by Dec. 29, and showed while it was not the virus that causes SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome, it was a previously unseen coronavirus that was about 80% similar to the virus that causes SARS.

A BGI source told Caixin that when they undertook the sequencing project in late December the company was unaware that the virus had sickened many people. "We take a lot of sequencing commissions every day," the source said.

Caixin has learned that the Wuhan hospital sent BGI at least 30 samples from different pneumonia cases for sequencing in December, and three were found to contain the new coronavirus. In addition to the Dec. 26 case, the second

and third positive samples were received on Dec. 29 and Dec. 30. They were tested together and the results were reported to the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission as early as Jan. 1.

On Jan. 1, gene sequencing companies received an order from Hubei's health commission to stop testing and destroy all samples, according to an employee at one. "If you test it in the future, be sure to report it to us," the person said they were told by phone.

Two days later on Jan. 3, the National Health Commission issued its gag order and said the Wuhan pneumonia samples needed to be treated as highly pathogenic microorganisms — and that any samples needed to be moved to approved testing facilities or destroyed.

One virologist told Caixin that even the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences was not qualified for the tests and told to destroy samples in its lab.

But that day, Professor Zhang Yongzhen of Fudan University in Shanghai received biological samples packed in dry ice in metal boxes and shipped by rail from Wuhan Central Hospital. By Jan. 5, Zhang's team had also identified the new, SARS-like coronavirus through using high-throughput sequencing.

Zhang reported his findings to the Shanghai Municipal Health Commission as well as China's National Health Commission, warning the new virus was like SARS, and was being transmitted through the respiratory route. This sparked a secondary emergency response within the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Jan. 6.

On Jan. 9, an expert team led by the CDC made a preliminary conclusion that the disease was caused by a new strain of coronavirus, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

On Jan. 11, Zhang's team became the first to publish the genome sequence of the new virus on public databases Virological.org and GenBank, unveiling its structure to the world for the first time. The NHC shared the virus genomic information with the World Health Organization the next day.

Also on Jan. 11, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission resumed updating infection cases of the new virus after suspending reports for several days. But the government repeated its claim that there had been no medical worker infections and that there was no evidence of human transmission.

Meanwhile it reported that the number of confirmed cases had dropped to 41.

Contact reporters Flynn Murphy (flynnmurphy@caixin.com), **Han Wei**

(weihan@caixin.com) **and Timmy Shen** (hongmingshen@caixin.com,

Twitter: [@timmyhmshen](https://twitter.com/timmyhmshen)), **and editor Michael Bellart**

(michaelbellart@caixin.com)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:10 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6)

Subject: Caixin Article

Send me the Caixin article when you have it.

Thanks

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

Sender: (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6)

TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>;

Recipient: (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (b)(6)

EAP-J-ECON-DL <EAP-J-ECON-DL@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>
CC: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article
Date: Tue, 10 Mar 2020 16:15:35 +0000

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for flagging. We'll reach back to Tokyo overnight to see if they have heard anything.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:11 PM
To: EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: Caixin Article

J Desk colleagues:

Would it be possible to ask if Embassy Tokyo has seen a message from the Chinese embassy (sent apparently to Chinese nationals in Japan) calling the virus the "Japanese coronavirus?" Or perhaps some local press stories about the message?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Office of Chinese & Mongolian Affairs

(b)(6)

HST Room 4318 | U.S. Department of State

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:04 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6); Buangan, Richard (b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Will see if we can find it...

Sent from Workspace ONE Boxer

On March 10, 2020 at 11:26:12 AM EDT, Abboud, (b)(6)
wrote:

Is there anyway we can find this message from the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo?

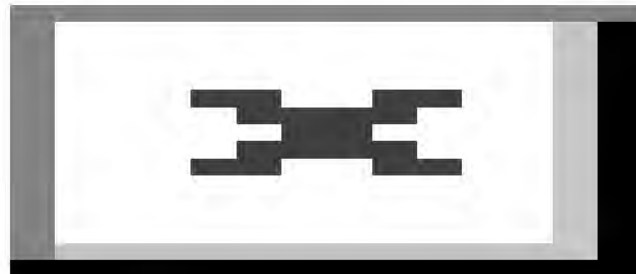
Chinese virus becomes "Japanese virus"

More insidious, the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo last week sent all its nationals a message on certain directives to apply if they are confronted with ... "Japanese coronavirus". As if the virus once arrived in Japan took Japanese nationality.

No corrective action was required from Tokyo, but this qualification did not go unnoticed. Faced with the scale of the epidemic, Tokyo postponed the official visit of leader Xi Jinping to Japan, scheduled for April, and prohibited, two months after the crisis, the entry into its territory of Chinese nationals.

<https://www.la-croix.com/Monde/Asie-et-Oceanie/Chine-reecrit-deja-lhistoire-coronavirus-Wuhan-2020-03-09-1201082887>

I searched their embassy' s website for "Japanese coronavirus" and "coronavirus" in general and just got this back. Would be hilarious if it wasn' t so sad.



~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:39 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6); (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Received.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:37 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ortagus, Morgan D <OrtagusMD@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

OK. GPA colleagues, please confirm receipt.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:37 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

That's correct.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:36 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Team, a note of caution here ((b)(6)) please correct me if I'm wrong) -

Note that Xi says "outbreak" and not "origin." We can safely say the outbreak started in Wuhan, but we cannot say the CCP admitted the origin of the virus is in Wuhan.

Small distinction but important.

Again, China hands, let me know if I'm misreading anything here.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:08 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

(b)(6) do you have a link to the speech below?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:03 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

GOLD.

GPA we should spray this out, IMHO.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:02 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Full sentence is:

After the outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan, on January 7, I presided over a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, (where) I put forward requirements for the prevention and control of the epidemic situation of new coronavirus.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6); (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D; (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

(b)(6) that Xi quote is GOLD. Is it possible for you to translate the complete first sentence? Where did he deliver the speech? We should cite date, location.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:57 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6); (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D; (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

It's an official source, so I don't see a problem citing it.

Btw, you can also quote the first line of Xi Jinping's February 3 speech, which reads in its first sentence, "After the outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan..."

武汉新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情发生后,1月7日,我主持召开中央政治局常委会会议时,就对新型冠状病毒肺炎疫情防控工作提出了要求。1月20日,我专门就疫情防控工作作出批示,指出必须高度重视疫情,全力做好防控工作,要求各级党委和政府及有关部门把人民群众生命安全和身体健康放在第一位,采取切实有效措施,坚决遏制疫情蔓延势头。1月22日,鉴于疫情迅速蔓延、防控工作面临严峻挑战,我明确要求湖北省对人员外流实施全面严格管控。正月初一,我再次主持召开中央政治局常委会会议,对疫情防控特别是患者治疗工作进行再研究、再部署、再动员,并决定成立中央应对疫情工作领导小组。

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:33 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6); Buangan, Richard L (b)(6); Ortagus,
Morgan D (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

+ Miles and Rick in case they have a view?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:32 PM
To: (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can we also cite this from the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission on December 31st? They hadn't yet called it coronavirus, but said it was a possibility. Instead referred to it as a "viral pneumonia."

"Recently, some medical institutions found that many of the pneumonia cases received were related to South China Seafood City. After receiving the report, the Municipal Health and Health Commission immediately launched a case search and retrospective investigation related to South China Seafood City in the city's medical health institutions. Twenty-seven cases have been found, of which 7 are in serious condition, and the remaining cases are stable and controllable. Two patients are expected to be discharged in the near future. The clinical manifestations of the cases were mainly fever, a few patients had

difficulty breathing, and chest radiographs showed bilateral lung infiltrative lesions. At present, all cases have been isolated for treatment, follow-up investigations and medical observations of close contacts are ongoing, and hygiene investigations and environmental sanitation disposals for South China Seafood City are ongoing. ”

<http://wjw.wuhan.gov.cn/front/web/showDetail/2019123108989>

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:27 PM
To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can I use that exact language to pass along OTR?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:24 PM
To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

So we can say that even China' s own media apparatus admits that the virus has local Hubei origins.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:23 PM

To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: Caixin Article

Here is what I forwarded to (b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:20 PM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Caixin Article

Here is the Caixin article. I've highlighted where I think the authors allege that the virus originated in Hubei. This article is more about how the Hubei authorities tried to cover up the emergence of the outbreak in the early stages but it's easy to assume that Chinese authorities knew they were responding to a Hubei-originated disease.

Also interesting: On Dec 31, it was China (not any other country) who notified the WHO of the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:11 PM
To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Sorry for delay - literally just had to renew my subscription:

eb 29, 2020 09:19 PM
SOCIETY & CULTURE

In Depth: How Early Signs of a SARS-Like Virus Were Spotted, Spread, and Throttled

By Gao Yu, Peng Yanfeng, Yang Rui, Feng Yuding, Ma Danmeng, Flynn Murphy, Han Wei and Timmy Shen

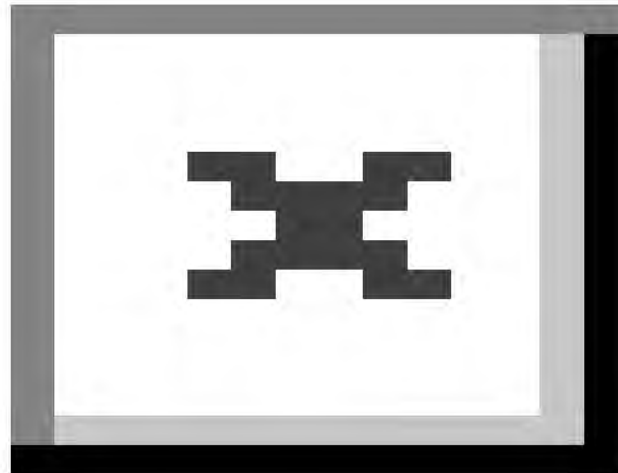
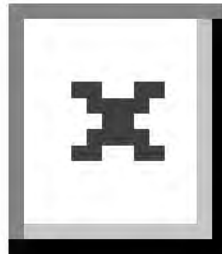


Photo: Pixabay



The new coronavirus that has claimed nearly 3,000 lives and spread to almost 50 countries was sequenced in Chinese labs — and found to be similar to SARS — weeks before officials publicly identified it as the cause of a mysterious viral pneumonia cluster in Wuhan, a Caixin investigation has found.

Test results from multiple labs in December suggested there was an outbreak of a new virus. However, the results failed to trigger a response that could have prepared the public, despite being fed into an infectious disease control system that was designed to alert China's top health officials about outbreaks. The revelations show how health officials missed early opportunities to control the virus in the initial stages of the outbreak, as questions mount about who knew what and when, and whether these actions helped the disease to spread.



As early as Dec. 27, a Guangzhou-based genomics company had sequenced most of the virus from fluid samples from the lung of a 65-year old deliveryman who worked at the seafood market where many of the first cases emerged. The results showed an alarming similarity to the deadly SARS coronavirus that killed nearly 800 people between 2002 and 2003.

Around that time, local doctors sent at least eight other patient samples from hospitals around Wuhan to multiple Chinese genomics companies, including industry heavyweight BGI, as they worked to determine what was behind a growing number of cases of unexplained respiratory disease. The results all pointed to a dangerous SARS-like virus.

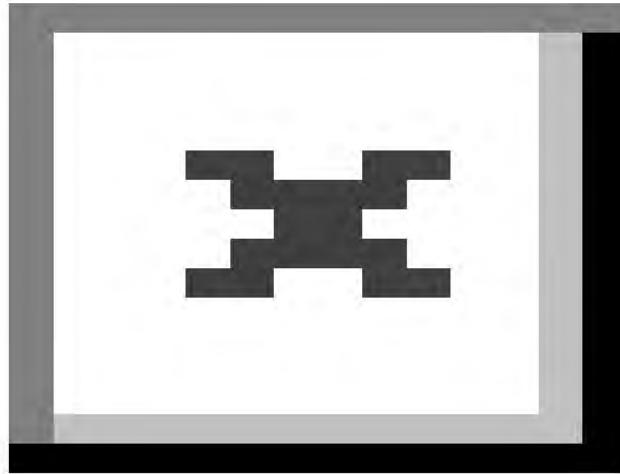
That was days before China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 31 about the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease, two weeks before it shared the virus's genome sequence with the world, and

crucially, more than three weeks before Chinese authorities confirmed publicly that the virus was spreading between people.

Concerns about the new disease were initially kept within a small group of medical workers, researchers and officials. On Dec. 30, Dr. Li Wenliang was one of several in Wuhan who sounded the first alarms and released initial evidence online. Li, who was punished for releasing the information, would perish from the disease five weeks later, after contracting it from a patient.

On Jan. 1, after several batches of genome sequence results had been returned to hospitals and submitted to health authorities, an employee of one genomics company received a phone call from an official at the Hubei Provincial Health Commission, ordering the company to stop testing samples from Wuhan related to the new disease and destroy all existing samples. The employee spoke on condition of anonymity, saying they were told to immediately cease releasing test results and information about the tests, and report any future results to authorities.

Then on Jan. 3, China's National Health Commission (NHC), the nation's top health authority, ordered institutions not to publish any information related to the unknown disease, and ordered labs to transfer any samples they had to designated testing institutions, or to destroy them. The order, which Caixin has seen, did not specify any designated testing institutions.



WHO epidemiologist Bruce Aylward explains the process and response to the outbreak at a news conference in Beijing Tuesday. Photo: CGTN

It was Jan. 9 when Chinese authorities finally announced that a novel coronavirus was behind Wuhan's viral pneumonia outbreak. Even then, the transmissibility of the virus was downplayed, leaving the public unaware of the imminent danger.

Finally, on Jan. 20, Zhong Nanshan, a leading authority on respiratory health who came to national attention in his role fighting SARS, confirmed in a TV interview that the disease was spreading from person-to-person.

Two days later, Wuhan, a city of 11 million, was placed in lockdown. It remains quarantined today.

Social media posts provide clues

The earliest results, for a 65-year-old deliveryman who worked at the Wuhan seafood market, were returned on Dec. 27 by Vision Medicals, a genomics

company based in Huangpu district in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province.

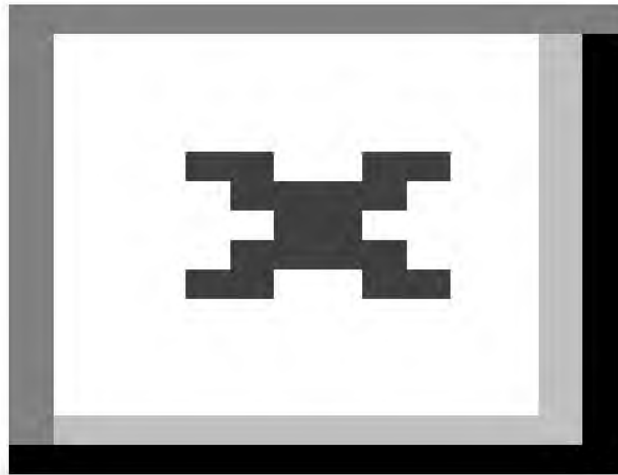
The patient was admitted to the Central Hospital of Wuhan on Dec. 18 with pneumonia and his condition quickly deteriorated. On Dec. 24, the doctors took fluid samples from his lungs and sent them to Vision Medicals for testing, according to Zhao Su, head of respiratory medicine at the hospital. In an unusual move, the company did not send back results, but instead called the doctor on Dec. 27. "They just called us and said it was a new coronavirus," Zhao said.

Vision Medicals confirmed the tests took place in a post it published on social media late last week. The post said the company was involved in early studies on the new coronavirus and contributed to an _____ published on the English version of the Chinese Medical Journal about its discovery. That article makes specific mention of a sample collected on Dec. 24 from a 65-year-old patient who had contact with the seafood market.

A different social media post, believed to have been made by a Vision Medicals employee, sheds more light on the company's early work. The author of the post, made on Jan. 28, said only that they worked at a private company based in Huangpu, Guangzhou, where Vision Medicals is located. The post's author said they noticed a close similarity with the SARS coronavirus in test results of a sample collected on Dec. 24, but decided to study the results more closely before returning them, due their significance. The company did, however, share the data with the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, according to the article.

On Dec. 27, the lab worked had sequenced most of the virus's genome and had confirmed it was a coronavirus similar to SARS virus, the article said. In the following days, company executives paid a visit to Wuhan to discuss their findings with local hospital officials and disease control authorities, the article said. "There was an intensive and confidential investigation underway, and officials from the hospital and disease control center had acknowledged many similar patients," it said.

Little information about this early study has been officially released. The patient, who was transferred to Wuhan Jinyintang Hospital, later died.



The Wuhan Institute of Virology, part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Photo: Ding Gang/Caixin

Revelations triggered by ‘small mistake’

While researchers at Vision Medicals mulled their findings, the Central Hospital of Wuhan sent swabs from another patient with the mysterious pneumonia to a Beijing-based lab, CapitalBio Medlab Co. Ltd., for study. The sample came from a 41-year-old man who had no history of contact with the seafood market, who was admitted on Dec. 27.

Test results delivered by the company showed a false positive for SARS. It was a “small mistake,” a gene sequencing expert told Caixin, which may have been down to a limited gene database or a lack of retesting.

But it was this mistake that triggered the first concerns heard by the public — recalling painful memories of the cover-up that defined the SARS outbreak 17 years before.

On the evening of Dec. 30, several doctors in Wuhan, including the late Li Wenliang, privately shared CapitalBio's results as a warning to friends and colleagues to take protective measures. Those messages then circulated widely online and sparked a public uproar demanding more information. Several people, including Li and two other doctors who sent the messages that night, were later punished by authorities for "spreading rumors." Zhang Jixian, who heads the respiratory department at Hubei Xinhua Hospital, noticed on Dec. 26 that he had received a growing number of patients with symptoms of pneumonia from the neighboring seafood market. He reported the situation to the hospital the next day, with that report passed on to city and provincial health authorities.

Following the reports, disease control authorities in Wuhan and Hubei on Dec. 30 issued an internal notice warning of the emergence of pneumonia patients with links to the seafood market and requiring hospitals to monitor similar cases.

The notice, later leaked online, offered the first glimpse to the public of officials' acknowledgement of the outbreak.

Silenced alarms

Several other genomics companies also tested samples from patients in Wuhan with the then-unidentified virus in late December, Caixin learned. Industry leader BGI received a sample from a Wuhan hospital on Dec. 26. Sequencing was completed by Dec. 29, and showed while it was not the virus that causes SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome, it was a previously unseen coronavirus that was about 80% similar to the virus that causes SARS.

A BGI source told Caixin that when they undertook the sequencing project in late December the company was unaware that the virus had sickened many people. "We take a lot of sequencing commissions every day," the source said.

Caixin has learned that the Wuhan hospital sent BGI at least 30 samples from different pneumonia cases for sequencing in December, and three were found to contain the new coronavirus. In addition to the Dec. 26 case, the second

and third positive samples were received on Dec. 29 and Dec. 30. They were tested together and the results were reported to the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission as early as Jan. 1.

On Jan. 1, gene sequencing companies received an order from Hubei's health commission to stop testing and destroy all samples, according to an employee at one. "If you test it in the future, be sure to report it to us," the person said they were told by phone.

Two days later on Jan. 3, the National Health Commission issued its gag order and said the Wuhan pneumonia samples needed to be treated as highly pathogenic microorganisms — and that any samples needed to be moved to approved testing facilities or destroyed.

One virologist told Caixin that even the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences was not qualified for the tests and told to destroy samples in its lab.

But that day, Professor Zhang Yongzhen of Fudan University in Shanghai received biological samples packed in dry ice in metal boxes and shipped by rail from Wuhan Central Hospital. By Jan. 5, Zhang's team had also identified the new, SARS-like coronavirus through using high-throughput sequencing.

Zhang reported his findings to the Shanghai Municipal Health Commission as well as China's National Health Commission, warning the new virus was like SARS, and was being transmitted through the respiratory route. This sparked a secondary emergency response within the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Jan. 6.

On Jan. 9, an expert team led by the CDC made a preliminary conclusion that the disease was caused by a new strain of coronavirus, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

On Jan. 11, Zhang's team became the first to publish the genome sequence of the new virus on public databases Virological.org and GenBank, unveiling its structure to the world for the first time. The NHC shared the virus genomic information with the World Health Organization the next day.

Also on Jan. 11, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission resumed updating infection cases of the new virus after suspending reports for several days. But the government repeated its claim that there had been no medical worker infections and that there was no evidence of human transmission.

Meanwhile it reported that the number of confirmed cases had dropped to 41.

Contact reporters Flynn Murphy (flynnmurphy@caixin.com), **Han Wei**

(weihan@caixin.com) **and Timmy Shen** (hongmingshen@caixin.com,

Twitter: [@timmyhmshen](https://twitter.com/timmyhmshen)), **and editor Michael Bellart**

(michaelbellart@caixin.com)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:10 PM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Caixin Article

Send me the Caixin article when you have it.

Thanks

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

Sender: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Recipient:

EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>;

(b)(6);

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: "Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC" (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
CC: Dawson, Camille (b)(6)
Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Human Rights; DPRK; Digital Economy
Date: Sun, 1 Mar 2020 01:35:05 +0000

(b)(5)

Sent from my iPhone

> On Feb 29, 2020, at 7:58 PM, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

>

(b)(5)

>

(b)(5) credibility. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

>

> Liza, (b)(5) I wonder what that's all about?

>

>

>

> Using science and reason to debunk conspiracy theories

>

> People's Daily Zhongsheng

editorial<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fpaper.people.com.cn%2Frmrb%2Fhtml%2F2020-02%2F28%2Fnw.D110000renmrb_20200228_5-03.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483456112&sdata=i5E7H75V3CAUhMfVdFnCwKDujIQAj2WSnFXRNGpkzaw%3D&reserved=0> (pg. 3)

>

> Although the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic first appeared in China, it did not necessarily originate in China. In contrast to cautious scientists, some Western politicians and media have made rash assertions and even conjectured a so-called biochemical war to stigmatize China. Their despicable political intentions are evident. On the positive side, the mainstream of the international community has stayed objective and fair to withstand the attack of the "political virus." In the face of the epidemic, all countries are a community with a shared future and

common responsibilities, as viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance with science, smash rumors with truth, resist prejudice with cooperation, and stop "political viruses" such as conspiracy theories from causing chaos.

>

>

> From: Beijing PAS <BeijingPAS@state.gov>

> Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 4:56 AM

> To: Beijing Press Office <BeijingPressOffice@state.gov>

> Subject: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Human Rights; DPRK; Digital Economy

>

> U.S. Embassy Beijing Media Reaction – A Summary of Select PRC Media Commentary

>

> Produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Press Office

> Unofficial news excerpts for reference only. Not for distribution outside the USG.

>

>

> Friday, February 28, 2020

>

>

> BLUF—China's Public Messaging Summary: The outbreak unleashed our innovative capacity. The use of AI, drones, big data platforms, and other new technologies allowed us to meet people's needs. Viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance and stop "political viruses," such as conspiracy theories, from causing chaos.

>

> News

>

> [cid:image001.png@01D5EE60.3546EF50]

> People's Daily: Xi says China and Mongolia help each other in the face of difficulties

>

>

>

>

> Global Times-Chinese: Internal, external pressure tests China's epidemic control ability;
Subtitle: Rebound of confirmed cases sounds alarm; offshore "backflow" constitutes challenge;
Sidebar: Accelerating spread of disease constitutes global challenge

>

> 21st Century Business Herald editorial: Unique position and huge market are China's
irreplaceable advantages

>

>

>

>

> CCTV (02/27): Xi says China and Mongolia help each other in the face of difficulties; Chinese premier meets Mongolian president; state council task force: strengthen support for micro, small and medium-sized businesses; 32,495 cases cured and discharged; CCTV commentary: Don't slack off during the containment effort while speeding up production and development; major

national transportation and energy projects resume operation; China resumes 80% of agricultural production, advancing poverty alleviation in an orderly manner; international community: Xi's remarks deliver confidence, unleashing development potential.

>

>

> Trending News Stories (02/28):

>

> 1. China's GDP up 6.1% in

2019<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbaijiahao.baidu.com%2Fs%3Fid%3D1659744625466518840%26wfr%3Dspider%26for%3Dpc&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483426128&sdata=PfJYj%2Fxdsl9K5%2BtDd5To6luKsee4HHcVVZ79Zq3l7yc%3D&reserved=0><>

> The National Bureau of Statistics announced that China's gross domestic product totaled 99.09 trillion yuan in 2019, up 6.1 percent year-on-year. The per capita GDP was 70,892 yuan, an increase of 5.7% over the previous year. China's foreign exchange reserves stood at \$3.1079 trillion at the end of the year, an increase of \$35.2 billion over the previous year.

>

> 2. Yang Jiechi to start a two-day visit to Japan

<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.xinhuanet.com%2Fworld%2F2020-02%2F27%2Fc_1125635139.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483426128&sdata=LqyCNXXUnUWI42pm2c9qw1TlodUvW75vSv9%2BMrkaPM%3D&reserved=0<>

> MFA spokesperson Zhao Lijian announced that China's senior official, Yang Jiechi, will start a two-day visit to Japan on Friday. Yang, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, will engage in a new round of China-Japan high-level political dialogue with Shigeru Kitamura, chief of the Japanese National Security Council.

>

>

> COVID-19 Factual Coverage:

>

> The

Paper<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thepaper.cn%2FnewsDetail_forward_6206007&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483426128&sdata=ThT7b6NBCcj%2FmAbB8Y2jJvCEbSqG7x9KIL7XI79PTas%3D&reserved=0<> reported that Chinese health authorities received reports of 327 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and 44 new deaths on Feb 27. The overall confirmed cases on the Chinese mainland reached 78,824 with a total of 2,788 deaths.

Xinhua<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.xinhuanet.com%2Fpolitics%2Fleaders%2F2020-02%2F27%2Fc_1125635659.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483426128&sdata=LqyCNXXUnUWI42pm2c9qw1TlodUvW75vSv9%2BMrkaPM%3D&reserved=0<>

02%2F27%2Fc_1125635659.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483426128&sdata=LqyCNXXUnUWI42pm2c9qw1TlodUvW75vSv9%2BMrkaPM%3D&reserved=0

05483436124&sdata=Jj2CLhq2aG%2FMa%2BhYP6LgrhY6ambkuP9EE0yn6U%2FnAio%3D&reserved=0<> reported that Xi Jinping held talks with Mongolian President Khaltmaa Battulga in Beijing. Xi said the special visit by Battulga to express consolations and support to China fully embodies the high attention he pays to the China-Mongolia ties and the profound friendship between the two peoples.

Xinhua<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.xinhuanet.com%2Fpolitics%2F2020-02%2F27%2Ffc_1125635977.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483436124&sdata=Ju09or%2BesxaMNkis8Yc47%2FDe1YUwVmfdntMQbfvJIe0%3D&reserved=0

02%2F27%2Ffc_1125635977.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483436124&sdata=Ju09or%2BesxaMNkis8Yc47%2FDe1YUwVmfdntMQbfvJIe0%3D&reserved=0<> also reported that Zong Changqing, Director-General of the Department of Foreign Investment Administration under the Ministry of Commerce said, "the fundamentals of China's long-term economic development and competitive advantage of attracting foreign capital has not changed." Zong added that most multinationals are confident and have not changed their investment strategy for the country. In another article,

Xinhua<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.xinhuanet.com%2Fpolitics%2F2020-02%2F27%2Ffc_1125636285.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483436124&sdata=UnzjN4vgi9rju3KZe15iaOp4xehGqvoigTzs2N3oeQ4%3D&reserved=0

02%2F27%2Ffc_1125636285.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483436124&sdata=UnzjN4vgi9rju3KZe15iaOp4xehGqvoigTzs2N3oeQ4%3D&reserved=0<> said the National Forestry and Grassland Administration announced that all venues where wild animals are artificially bred should be closed and quarantined and the trade and transportation of wild animals should stop. The Global

Times<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.globaltimes.cn%2Fcontent%2F1181040.shtml&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483446115&sdata=cuNstHBBvjeQfByBhIls7Y4JHHRplQOMjOX80ZrtE%2F4%3D&reserved=0>> reported that Beijing is facing mounting pressure in efforts to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) as new confirmed infections surged due to imported cases of infection and cluster outbreaks. Officials from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC) confirmed that authorities made the capital the top priority of its epidemic prevention and control work, with measures matching those adopted in Hubei. In another article, The Global

Times<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.globaltimes.cn%2Fcontent%2F1181041.shtml&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483446115&sdata=Tbuab4Y7bzo%2FIV8SIFyHghJQRiUAotY7Gnbkk3u4Slo%3D&reserved=0>> reported that Chinese experts said the U.S. might not be able to effectively contain the outbreak of COVID-19, as the White House and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have different perspectives on the situation, and President Donald Trump's priority is still the economic data and the presidential election.

>

>

> Editorial Commentary:

>

>

> 1. Coronavirus

>

>

>

> Using science and reason to debunk conspiracy theories

>

> People's Daily Zhongsheng

editorial<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fpaper.people.com.cn%2Frmrb%2Fhtml%2F2020-02%2F28%2Fnw.D110000renmrb_20200228_5-03.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483456112&sdata=i5E7H75V3CAUhMfVdFnCwKDujlQAJ2WSnFXRNGpkzaw%3D&reserved=0<> (pg. 3)

>

> Although the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic first appeared in China, it did not necessarily originate in China. In contrast to cautious scientists, some Western politicians and media have made rash assertions and even conjectured a so-called biochemical war to stigmatize China. Their despicable political intentions are evident. On the positive side, the mainstream of the international community has stayed objective and fair to withstand the attack of the “political virus.” In the face of the epidemic, all countries are a community with a shared future and common responsibilities, as viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance with science, smash rumors with truth, resist prejudice with cooperation, and stop “political viruses” such as conspiracy theories from causing chaos.

>

>

> Long-term economic prospects remain positive

> Guangming Daily (pg. 02) Op-

ed<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpaper.gmw.cn%2Fgmrb%2Fhtml%2F2020-02%2F28%2Fnw.D110000gmrb_20200228_2-02.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483456112&sdata=UXPRpeZ1DSHJiCzbyLt0Zt92ZgpgWHQ%2BFFWdIGcoj0c%3D&reserved=0<>

> Party School researcher Ding Maozhan: President Xi's important remarks—that our long-term economic prospects remain positive, and that the impact of COVID-19 is temporary and manageable—boosted our confidence while specifying how we should work to balance epidemic control and the economy. The outbreak's repercussions are external variables. Our growth drivers remain strong— from investment to consumption, manufacturing to emerging sectors, domestic and global demand to our unshakable comparative advantages, and innovation to our reform and opening. Now we need to unleash this enormous potential. While prioritizing epidemic control, we need to strengthen macro control to keep the economy on track, secure our foreign investment and trade bases, and ensure employment, agricultural production, and people's livelihood.

>

> Shoulder the responsibility for the world

> Guangming Daily (pg 12) Op-

ed<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpaper.gmw.cn%2Fgmrb%2Fhtml%2F2020-02%2F28%2Fnw.D110000gmrb_20200228_5-03.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483456112&sdata=i5E7H75V3CAUhMfVdFnCwKDujlQAJ2WSnFXRNGpkzaw%3D&reserved=0<>

12.htm&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483456112&sdata=CYOEnfkLWrM5Oy20218sHolx3cxgmjtDVXeDToJV5iY%3D&reserved=0<>

> The battle against COVID-19 is also a war to defend the world. China's response demonstrates our major power's sense of responsibility. The shrewd, courageous lockdown of Wuhan minimized the spread of the virus to other countries; our timely information sharing saved the world precious time to rise to the epidemic; we did what we could to help others hit by the epidemic as well; and our efforts to resume production helped ensure global supply chain stability. With such a battle, we gained true friends from across the world while helping others better understand the "shared community of mankind." Meanwhile, the digital economy will emerge as a new growth engine for both China and the world. The outbreak unleashed our innovation capacity. AI, drones, big data platforms, and other new technologies played an important role in medical diagnosis, delivery of supplies, and meeting people's needs in maintaining a normal life.

>

>

> Unique position and large market are China's irreplaceable strengths

> 21st Century Business Herald

editorial<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fm.21jingji.com%2Farticle%2F20200228%2Fcc43534642762e799ebb0e8b70c5dc6b.html&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483466108&sdata=%2BC%2BK50rJiY2PIBv99V1ZTtTa36fD2ZHRLVZ5q5Wy5IA%3D&reserved=0><>

> After China and the United States reached the phase-one trade deal, hawkish politicians in Washington are moving fast to find ways to choke supplies to China's high-tech companies in a self-defeating and costly bid to suppress China's tech sector and contain China's rise. As China busies itself with epidemic control, Washington is planning to further tighten export controls to make it harder for Huawei to acquire chips and asking allies to shun Huawei's gear and curtail exports of military technologies to China. Such plans are unlikely to succeed. To start, China's sophisticated industrial chains and low operating costs give it unique competitive advantages. Without viable alternatives, foreign companies will not move their operations out of China for political reasons alone. Second, China is the largest market for technological products. Not a single company can decouple from the Chinese market without risking its own survival. If the United States insists on decoupling and tighter export controls, the result will be "de-Americanization" as companies from other countries happily replace American ones and sell products with fewer U.S. components to Chinese buyers. Moreover, cutting China from global supply chains is inherently at odds with the administration's pursuit of a smaller deficit with China. As China commits more resolutely to indigenous innovation, Washington's strategy to hinder China's technological development will also cost U.S. companies dearly.

>

> Why the claim that epidemic will accelerate China's decoupling from the West is ridiculous

> Global Times

commentary<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fopinion.huangqiu.com%2Farticle%2F9CaKrnpDgX&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483466108&sdata=%2BnLIDPJkwBlczXCKXE5QC7Z5gHVla1aVUHvT%2FSnsc>

3Y%3D&reserved=0<>

> Commenting on the impact of the viral outbreak, Western media believes it will accelerate the decoupling between China and developed economies and predicts a shake-up of global industrial chains. Their analysis is misguided. First, there is inherent economic logic and stability to China's role in the global industrial and supply chains. Since China joined the WTO in 2001 and started to integrate into the global market, it has developed complete industrial chains covering the high-, middle-, and low-end of the global manufacturing sector. Other emerging economies like Vietnam are unlikely to replace China as a global supplier in the short term given their infrastructure and economic growth. Governments of developed countries tried to bring back manufacturing jobs around 2009, but to no avail, proving that politics cannot dictate how global industrial chains work. Second, as China develops its manufacturing sector, moves up the global value chain, and opens its financial market, it will unleash huge dividends driving unstoppable economic globalization. Western companies benefiting from China's economic development and relying on overseas profits are unlikely to give up the Chinese market unless they find attractive alternatives. In the foreseeable future, no country can afford the visible and invisible costs of splitting the global technological, trade, industrial, and financial systems into two.

>

>

>

>

>

>

> 2. Korean Peninsula

>

>

>

> Postponed U.S.-ROK military exercise amid outbreak brings "window period" for DPRK issue; undercurrent remains surging

>

> The

Paper<>https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.thepaper.cn%2FnewsDetail_forward_6191762&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483476100&sdata=ZNOFbMR6svwEHY8%2FW6NoVXGJvtrMiVxBjk1L%2BTRZ3%2BE%3D&reserved=0<>

>

> Wang Junsheng, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that if the U.S.-ROK joint military exercise went ahead as planned, a new round of a "war of words" would follow, or the DPRK might even test missiles or hold military exercises in response, thus intensifying tensions on the Peninsula. The delayed military drill brings an "unexpected" window for continued easing of tensions, which all parties should cherish. North Korea, thinking the United States is using the talks to serve its domestic politics, i.e., the Trump campaign, is more concerned about whether the talks can generate tangible results, such as lifting some of the sanctions. When the epidemic outbreak is over, the bilateral talks will return to the fore and North Korea may possibly take stronger military action than it did last year to pressure the United States. Time is not on the DPRK's side since, over time, the impact of sanctions will become increasingly pronounced.

>

>

>

>

>

> 3. Human Rights

>

>

>

> Chinese experts give accounts of human rights in China and expose the true colors of East Turkistan in Geneva

>

> Global Times-Chinese

commentary<><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fworld.huanqiu.com%2Farticle%2F9CaKrnKpDfH&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483476100&sdata=F%2BEFgso0qwQUuSxdKtIbselpOBIsVXV%2BqDcdBouK25E%3D&reserved=0><>

>

> At a recent UNHCR meeting in Geneva, Chinese human rights experts illustrated how China protects human rights in Xinjiang in terms of its efforts to counter terrorism and promote ethnic languages. They criticized the East Turkistan terrorist group's rumor-mongering and Western countries' double standards. Experts also talked about how China protects human rights during the coronavirus epidemic. The meeting "gave voice to the other side of the story," said a foreign participant. Here is a summary of the experts' remarks delivered in the meeting: Mahemuti Abuduwaili, Deputy Director of the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, said "Xinjiang is now at its best with people of all ethnicities working hard to live a better life together." He described some countries' groundless accusations against China's Xinjiang policies and counterterrorism measures as "irresponsible and disappointing." Jinan University's Zheng Liang noted China is not the only target for the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, as the organization's ideological system was completed under the influence of al-Qaeda. He said some countries' disregard for the harm of terrorism and their adoption of a double standard will be detrimental to the international community. Xinjiang University's Liu Zhengjiang said "the goal of China's ethnic language education is to cultivate multi-lingual talents." Nankai University's Xu Yao shared China's experience in human rights protection in the fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic, saying "China has protected patients' rights to medical treatment, privacy, information, and non-discrimination."

>

>

>

>

>

> Chinese Media Outlets Cited

>

>

>

> "Trending News Stories" is a curated list of news articles selected from China's principal media outlets. The stories selected reflect top trending issues in Chinese press, with a focus on topics of interest to U.S. Government readers.

>

>

>

> CCTV (中国中央电视台, Zhongguo Zhongyang Dianshitai, viewership in the hundreds of millions): China's primary state broadcaster, generally considered a mouthpiece for the Communist Party. Regional television outlets view the scope of CCTV's reporting as indicative of permissible reporting options. Headlines reported herein are from the preceding evening's CCTV Channel 1 news programs.

>

> selected reflect top trending issues in Chinese press, with a focus on topics of interest to U.S. Government readers.

>

>

>

> Guangming Daily (光明日报, Guangming Ribao, circ. 1 million): One of the leading state-run dailies with principal readership among government officials and scholars.

>

>

>

> Global Times-Chinese (环球时报, Huanqiu Shibao, circ. 1.5 million): Daily commercial publication that focuses on international affairs and features a nationalist, hawkish, editorial line. Though wholly owned by People's Daily, it is not authoritative and has more latitude in expressing opinions, including editorials that are not in sync with party leadership.

>

>

>

> People's Daily (人民日报, Renmin Ribao, circ. 2.4 million): Daily flagship publication of the Chinese Communist Party; editorials are considered to reflect CCP policy.

>

>

>

> The Paper (澎湃, Peng Pai,

> www.thepaper.cn <> https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thepaper.cn%2F%23_blank&data=02%7C01%7CStilwellDR%40state.gov%7C242cb549b538473eefd008d7bc345dcf%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C637184805483486095&sdata=F6TILz7MMOgpKD0BkYfT7HXtHZR5G%2Bva9mWcQjN5k%2Bg%3D&reserved=0 <>, estimated 2 million daily visits): Launched in 2014, it is one of the most influential online-only news outlets in China. The Oriental Morning Post, its initial sponsor, closed its print operations in January 2017 and moved its staff to The Paper.

>

>

>

> 21st Century Business Herald (21世纪经济报道, 21 Shiji Jingji Baodao, circ. 780,000):
Influential economic and business daily affiliated to the Southern Daily Newspaper Group;
primary readers include business professionals and Chinese government officials.

>
>
>
>
>

> Note: Beijing Early Alert is produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Public Affairs Section. To
request addition or removal of a recipient please email
beijingpressoffice@state.gov<mailto:beijingpressoffice@state.gov>. You must have a U.S.
Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

Sender: "Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC" (b)(6)

Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

(h)(6)

Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Recipient: Dawson, Camille (h)(6)

Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on February 3, 2020
Date: Tue, 4 Feb 2020 23:14:07 +0000

First comment from MFA spokeswoman is annoying. Gives us lots to attack (if we get a green light). "I'd like to remind the MFA that China should be focused on saving its people, not scoring political points against its most generous donor."

Sent from Workspace ONE Boxer

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (b)(6)
Date: February 4, 2020 at 12:56:49 PM HST
Subject: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on February 3, 2020
To: PACOM.J514 (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)



(b)(6)



(b)(6)



(b)(6)

ALCON,

This day's MOFA press conference largely highlighted actions and statements of the Chinese government and how China is responding to the outbreak of coronavirus. Main takeaways include:

- At the heels of travel advisory and temporary ban on entry to the US of all foreigners who traveled to China, MFA criticized the US side in particular for "inappropriately" overreacting in which MFA stated that the US actions themselves "run counter to WHO advice." MFA commented that the US side created a "bad example" for spreading fear by being the first ones to evacuate personnel and embassy staff from Wuhan, to impose a travel ban on Chinese travelers and not providing "any substantive assistance." MFA also claimed that the US is "violating civil rights" by taking those actions. The spokesman added the Chinese government "has taken the most comprehensive and strict prevention/control measures after the outbreak of the epidemic."
- MFA stated that the ROK, Japan, the UK, France, Turkey, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Hungary, Iran, Belarus, Indonesia and the UNICEF donated the epidemic prevention and control supplies. Of note, according to the US press, US also delivered a plane-full of basic medical supplies as it was picking up the first US consulate members and citizens from Wuhan.
- MFA praised Pakistan and several other countries for expressing "full confidence in China" in its ability to "win the fight against the outbreak."
- MFA showcased Chinese government's "swift actions" that enabled "4 chartered flights to bring home 399 Chinese citizens who wanted to return [from overseas], showing the impressive speed of a caring motherland." The spokesman continued to showcase how the Chinese government "always puts people's well-being first and its commitment to people-first governing philosophy."

That is all.

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Daily Briefing Online on February 3, 2020

2020/02/03

Good afternoon. I'm Hua Chunying, spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Glad to see you in our ministry's first online press conference.

It's an unusual platform at an unusual time. But I believe we will be seeing each other in Lanting soon.

Now I'm happy to take your questions.

*** Q: Some countries announced travel restrictions on Chinese citizens. Specifically, the US has raised its China travel advisory to the highest level and temporarily banned the entry of all foreigners who traveled to China in the past 14 days starting from February 2. I wonder if you have any comment?

*** A: Acting with a high sense of responsibility to people's health, the Chinese government has taken the most comprehensive and strict prevention and control measures after the outbreak of the epidemic, many of which have far exceeded what International Health Regulations required. As the WHO Director-General noted, China is setting a new standard for outbreak response. In the same speech, he said specifically that declaring a public health emergency of international concern is not a vote of no confidence in China. On the contrary, WHO continues to have confidence in China's capacity to control the outbreak. There is no reason for measures that unnecessarily interfere with international travel.

Most countries appreciate and support China's efforts to fight against the novel coronavirus, and we understand and respect them when they adopt or enhance quarantine measures at border entry. But in the meantime, some countries, the US in particular, have inappropriately overreacted, which certainly runs counter to WHO advice.

The US government hasn't provided any substantive assistance to us, but it was the first to evacuate personnel from its consulate in Wuhan, the first to suggest partial withdrawal of its embassy staff, and the first to impose a travel ban on Chinese travelers. What it has done could only create and spread fear, which is a very bad example. Even American media and experts doubted the government's decision, saying that the US government's restrictions on China are precisely what the WHO rejects, that the US is turning from overconfidence to fear and overreaction, and that banning the entry of visitors who traveled to China in the past 14 days is suspected to be violating civil rights instead of reducing risks of virus spreading. In fact, according to a recent CDC report, the US flu from 2019 to 2020 has caused 19 million infection cases and at least 10,000 deaths. By contrast, by February 2, 17,205 cases of nCoV pneumonia were confirmed, 361 died and 475 cured and discharged, while there are only 11 confirmed cases in the US. The contrast is thought-provoking. I also noted that the Canadian Minister of Health said Canada won't follow the US and impose travel restrictions on Chinese or foreign nationals who have been to China. Canada believes the ban of entry has no basis, which is a sharp contrast to the US behaviors.

We hope countries will make reasonable, calm and science-based judgments and responses. In an open, transparent and highly responsible attitude, China will enhance cooperation with the WHO and the international community. We have confidence and capability in winning this battle as soon as possible.

Q: The Canadian government says it is waiting for Chinese government clearance to send an aircraft from Vietnam to pick up Canadian citizens from Wuhan. Can you tell me when you expect this authorization to be provided?

A: China attaches great importance to the life and health of Chinese and foreign nationals in Wuhan and takes effective measures to address their concerns and needs in a timely manner. For countries wishing to evacuate their citizens out of Wuhan, we make arrangements and provide assistance to them following international customary practices and our epidemic control measures. Relevant countries have expressed thanks to us.

I understand China and Canada are in communication on this.

Q: How many countries have provided humanitarian aid to China so far? Which countries are preparing to send it? And which items does China need the most?

A: Since the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak, some countries have expressed understanding and support to China through various means. As of noon February 2, epidemic prevention and control supplies donated by the ROK, Japan, the UK, France, Turkey, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Hungary, Iran, Belarus, Indonesia and the UNICEF have arrived in China. In addition, friends in many countries have also offered us support. A friend in need is a friend indeed. I'd like to thank them all.

What we urgently need at present are medical supplies for prevention and control, masks, protective suits and safety goggles among other items.

*** Q: Taiwan has complained that Italy has banned flights from Taiwan due to the WHO listing Taiwan as part of China as a "high risk" area from the coronavirus. Will China ask the WHO to list Taiwan separately so its flights are not affected by flight bans?

*** A: Taiwan compatriots are our brothers and sisters. If they encounter difficulties overseas, we are always ready to help. The WHO is a special UN agency consisting of sovereign states. Taiwan's participation in the activities of international organizations such as the WHO must be arranged properly through cross-strait consultations under the one-China principle.

The Taiwan region has timely access to information on global public health emergencies released by the WHO and information can also flow readily the other way. With these arrangements in place, Taiwan is able to cope promptly and effectively with local or global public health emergencies.

Q: Is China in discussions with other countries about not imposing restrictions? Is China disappointed with those restricting Chinese citizens' entry?

A: Attaching great importance to people's life and health, China has taken the most strict and comprehensive control measures that are far exceeding WHO recommendations and IHR requirements. As WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros noted, declaring a public health emergency of international concern is to help countries that have weaker health systems and are ill-prepared.

WHO doesn't approve of and even rejects travel bans on China. It has said repeatedly that China has taken firm and strong actions, that it is confident in China winning this battle, and that countries need to stay calm instead of overreacting under the current circumstances. We understand the reasonable measures taken by most countries to enhance quarantine following WHO advice.

However, regrettably, it was precisely the US and some other developed countries with sound health systems and advanced public health capabilities that imposed unnecessary or even excessive restrictions on China, which clearly runs counter to WHO advice.

We hope some countries will see the epidemic and China's efforts in an impartial and rational manner, follow IHR provisions and the professional, authoritative advice of WHO, and take proper measures that won't unnecessarily interfere with international travel.

Q: Pakistan said yesterday it will not be evacuating citizens from Hubei, saying that China has better medical facilities to handle the outbreak. Are there other countries who have expressed the same view in diplomatic discussions?

A: Indeed, as Pakistani Prime Minister and foreign minister noted, they highly commend and firmly support China's efforts to fight against the nCoV. They also appreciate China's assistance for Pakistani citizens in China and express confidence in China winning this battle with the strength of its system. The Pakistani people are standing firmly with their Chinese brethren.

Like Pakistan, many other countries have also expressed full confidence in China. We thank them. We have the confidence and the capability to win the fight against the outbreak as soon as possible and safeguard the life and health of their citizens in China.

Q: Will President Xi's visit to Japan this year be affected by the outbreak?

A: We've been in close communication with Japan. The two sides should continue working together and make sound preparations for the major diplomatic agenda in the near future.

Q: Is any update on recent cases of H5N1 bird flu in Hunan?

A: I'd refer you to information available online from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

*** Q: The US still says China is refusing US offer of help. Is this accurate?

*** A: Since the outbreak of the epidemic, some countries have provided support and assistance to help China fight against the epidemic through various means. We are grateful for that.

But as far as I know, the US government has not provided any substantive help to the Chinese side yet. On the contrary, it was the first to withdraw its consulate staff from Wuhan, the first to suggest the partial withdrawal of embassy staff, the first to announce a ban on entry by Chinese

citizens after the WHO made it clear that it doesn't recommend and even opposes travel and trade restrictions against China. What the US has done could create and spread panic.

In a globalized world, the destinies of all countries are closely linked. In the face of a public health crisis, countries should work together to overcome the difficulties, rather than resort to beggar-thy-neighbor practice, let alone take advantage of others' difficulties.

China has strengthened cooperation with the WHO and the international community in an open, transparent and responsible manner. Since January 3, we notified the US of the epidemic and our control measures altogether 30 times. Chinese Center for Disaster Control and Prevention and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention held many rounds of communications on the outbreak. On January 29, China's National Health Commission replied through official channel to the US that we welcome it to join a WHO joint expert group. The US thanked China for this on the same day. On January 31, the US told China's National Health Commission that it had contacted WHO headquarters and submitted a list of US experts wishing to join the group.

China will continue cooperating with WHO and countries concerned including the US to safeguard the life and health of people of all countries.

Q: Is China going to evacuate more of its citizens, those from Wuhan, Hubei especially, from other countries?

A: Due to the coronavirus outbreak, some Hubei citizens, especially those from Wuhan traveling overseas find themselves in difficult situations. Placing high importance on this, the Chinese government decided to make proper arrangements to bring them home. This shows how it always puts people's well-being first and its commitment to people-first governing philosophy.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs took swift actions. In two days, we arranged for 4 chartered flights to bring home 399 Chinese citizens who wanted to return, showing the impressive speed of a caring motherland. We will continue to closely monitor the situation and take all necessary steps to help Chinese citizens, especially those from Wuhan, Hubei stalled in foreign countries, to tide over their difficulties. Overseas Chinese citizens in need can reach our Global Emergency Call Center for Consular Protection and Services via the 12308 hotline.

Q: Recently, we've seen panic and even insulting and discriminatory comments about China's epidemic in some countries. What is your response?

A: The merciless virus has brought out great warmth from our fellow human beings. In response to this unexpected epidemic, government officials and people from all walks of life in many countries have expressed sympathy, confidence and support for China's fight against the epidemic in recent days. We're deeply moved by what they've said and done for us, which will never be forgotten.

In the meantime, we noted that a few extreme and irrational remarks have appeared in certain media of certain countries. We firmly reject them.

As WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros put it, "This is the time for facts, not fear. This is the time for science, not rumors. This is the time for solidarity, not stigma."

We hope that the international community can view the epidemic in a rational and calm way and make a science-based and measured response. China will continue to work more closely with other countries in an open, transparent and highly responsible manner to safeguard the life and health of the Chinese people and contribute to regional and global public health security.

Q: What measures has China taken to safeguard the health security of foreign nationals in China, especially Wuhan since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus? How can they access information on China's prevention and control efforts?

A: Attaching high importance to the well-being of foreign nationals in China, especially Wuhan, Hubei, China has taken effective measures to address their concerns and needs in a timely manner.

First, Hubei has set up a 24 hour hotline (027-87122256) for foreign citizens, students and tour groups in the province to access advice and assistance. In addition, its official website and the WeChat account of Hubei Foreign Office promptly relayed information on the epidemic situation and epidemic prevention knowledge in English, French, German, Russian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Many provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities like Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangdong, Jiangsu and Xinjiang have sent open letters to foreign citizens working and living there, sharing with them information channels and designated treatment centers and offering services in light of local realities.

Second, the MFA has set up a special column entitled "Fighting 2019-nCoV" on its website, gathering the latest information from the National Health Commission to keep foreign readers updated.

Third, to help equip foreign nationals in China with prevention know-how, the National Immigration Administration translated the Public Prevention of Pneumonia Caused by Novel Coronavirus released by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention into six foreign languages, namely English, French, Russian, German, Japan and Korean. They are all readily available online. Chinese diplomatic missions overseas have also been disseminating multilingual versions of the document.

The measures China has taken have gone far beyond WHO and IHR recommendations. We are doing our best to contain the spread of the coronavirus within the shortest time possible. We have the confidence and the ability to win this battle. There is no need for any panic from foreign friends in China. As Director-General Dr. Tedros put it: This is the time for facts, not fear. This is the time for science, not rumors. This is the time for solidarity, not stigma. China will continue to enhance cooperation with the international community in an open, transparent and highly responsible manner to safeguard the life and health of Chinese people and foreign nationals in China.

Q: Which countries have provided assistance to China for outbreak response? Could you share more information?

A: Please refer to the answer I gave to Tass.

Q: You just severely criticized the US government response to the outbreak. We understand the second US flight is experiencing delay - is it due to the lack of Chinese government authorization as some say?

A: As I just said, the US was the first to evacuate its consulate staff in Wuhan via charter flight. Further arrangements need to be coordinated based on a variety of factors including Wuhan airport capacity to receive supplies.

Q: Will the China-EU summit scheduled to be held in Beijing this year be affected or delayed because of the outbreak?

A: China and the EU have been in communication via political and diplomatic channels. We will continue to make meticulous preparations for the next-stage major diplomatic agenda.

Q: You just shared with us international assistance to China. I didn't hear you mention the US. But the US side said that it had offered China tremendous help in dealing with the epidemic. Could you clarify?

A: Please check my reply to the NBC.

Q: Has China received any request from Brazil to pick up its citizens from Wuhan?

A: China has the capacity and confidence to win this war against the epidemic and protect the life and health of the Chinese citizens and foreigners in China. Brazil is a friend to China. Please rest assured that we will take good care of Brazilians in China.

Q: How much international donation has China received? Which department is in charge of accepting donations?

A: Some countries have provided support and assistance to help China fight against the epidemic through various means. We are grateful for that. The Ministry of Commerce is responsible for receiving donations from foreign governments and international organizations. I would refer you to the competent authorities.

Q: As of now, how many of the confirmed cases in China are foreigners?

A: After checking with the relevant department, as of February 2, 16 foreigners in China have been infected with the 2019 n-CoV. Among them, two have recovered and been discharged from hospital, and 14 are in quarantine and in stable conditions.

Q: On January 29, Pakistan lifted restrictions on flights between Pakistan and china which were imposed temporarily. Following the decision one flight from Urumqi to Islamabad has been resumed. Will other airlines also lift restrictions?

A: China and Pakistan are iron-clad friends that share a good tradition of mutual assistance. As China fights the outbreak, Pakistan has stood firmly with us, maintaining flights and pooling medical supplies all over the country to help China. We are deeply grateful and touched by such trust and confidence. China will continue to work in close communication and coordination with Pakistan to safeguard the health of Pakistanis in China.

Very Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Principal Military Analyst
INDOPACOM China Strategic Focus Group
Alion Science and Technology

STE: (b)(6)

DSN: (b)(6)

Sender: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)

Recipient: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: FW: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday
Date: Thu, 14 Jun 2018 21:24:46 -0400

Morning, (b)(6)

I read through the CFR story and don't know enough to answer (b)(6) The article, for example, lists two Chinese-produced Ebola drugs. If there's interest, we could try to find out more, but guessing you already know the background. If you'd like me to report, please let me know. I could look for contacts.

Thanks, (b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2018 1:01 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (OS/OGA) (CTR)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi (b)(6)

Just to confirm, China sent their Ebola drug and ran clinical trials in 2014 too, right? Could you explain a little more about how the Chinese trial was rushed?

(b)(6) - the drug will probably at least be made available for those who want it, but having it on the WHO list would allow greater distribution. Even in 2014 a British nurse reportedly used the Chinese drug, and survived.

Here's a good resource:

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/tale-two-anti-ebola-drugs>

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 7:48 AM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (OS/OGA) (CTR)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Thanks (b)(6) – I appreciate the additional details. I didn't realize (b)(4) conducted a real-time test in 2014.

Looking forward to hear any additional news. Cheers,
giff

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2018 8:55 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (OS/OGA) (CTR)
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6) (Beijing)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Thanks (b)(6) – This is consistent with what I imagine China CDC may be aiming to do – negotiate a direct agreement with DRC and test in real time. HHS family here asking contacts today at WHO, China CDC so will get anything additional back to you on this.

(b)(6)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
(b)(6)

~~SECRET~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 8:46 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (OS/OGA) (CTR)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi (b)(1) and all:

I talked this morning with a contact at the (b)(4). She made a few points. She stated that China is working with the DRC to get permission to allow the vaccine's use, tho not sure for only Chinese or others; she thot it likely to be approved for at least limited use. She was more positive about trying the drug as, if it proves effective, it wld be another option, and it is easier to transport etc as it is a solid, vice other two liquid options. She also noted that a human clinical trial is only possible in a pop with ebola patients, so this could be their option to test.

(b)(4) ran a trial during the last outbreak. Ie, the lack of data so far might not mean it doesn't work, tho contacts said the China testing was rushed. I know others know more abt this process and background.

Hope this is useful.

Best, (b)(6)

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2018 9:17 PM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (OS/OGA)

(CTR); (b)(6) (Beijing)

Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA)

Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi (b)(6)

Post recently shared a night note (copied below) regarding shipment of a newly approved Ebola vaccine to the DRC – thanks for the report. (b)(6) I imagine this is the same drug that you mentioned in your email earlier this year concerning CFDA's licensing of an Ebola virus vaccine (translated media note attached). I note the media coverage indicates the drug will only be used on "Chinese living in Congo." Does that mean it'll only be dispensed from their embassy?

(b)(6) do either of you know whether the China CDC is working to obtain WHO-approval to use this drug? Also, given the drug had "not been demonstrated effective" in a human clinical trial, is there any indication that they're working on different formulation? For example, side effects aside, what is the benefit of shipping out a potentially expensive placebo?

Thanks!

(b)(6)

~~(SBU)~~ **Chinese Team Looks to Use New Ebola Vaccine in the D.R.C:** The government of China (GOC) has shipped a newly approved Ebola vaccine to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where a GOC team will seek to use the largely untested drug, according to Chinese media reports and Emb contacts. The team will "seek to use the Chinese developed vaccine... to help with control and prevention of the disease," the head of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention told state-run media. He added that "for the present," the vaccine

would likely "only cover Chinese living in Congo." ESTH contacts questioned the speed at which the Chinese Food and Drug Administration approved the vaccine last fall, noting that the drug had "not been demonstrated effective" in a human clinical trial and that "limited animal efficacy data" had been released. The DRC government had not received a request from China to use the vaccine, a DRC spokesman told foreign media on June 8. The World Health Organization has previously recommended use of an Ebola vaccine being developed by (b)(4) (ESTH - (b)(6))

~~Official - SBU~~
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 8, 2018 10:12 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (OS/OGA)'
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi (b)(6)

I know you shared this a while ago. I want to follow up to see whether the WHO has approved this drug for distribution in a possible future Ebola outbreak. I imagine licensing by the CFDA is the first step.

Thanks!

(b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 8:32 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6) (OS/OGA)
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Thanks for flagging, (b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 6:46 AM
To: (b)(6) (OS/OGA) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA)
Subject: Fw: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Flagging in case you hadn't seen this. CFDA translated announcement attached.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 17:30
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Fwd: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

(b)(6) here is a quick translation. Best, (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Date: October 20, 2017 at 5:22:50 PM GMT+8
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi all,

Please see the attached translation. There might be some typo and simplified summary (non-critical parts) due to the time limit, for your reference.

Have a nice weekend!

(b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 4:20 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Cc: (U) (b)(6) (Santiago) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Fwd: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

(b)(6) can you please assist?

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Date: October 20, 2017 at 3:47:30 PM GMT+8
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

(b)(6)

Could you all by chance provide any further info on the vaccine that was licensed yesterday by CFDA through your contacts perhaps?

Also, (b)(6) is out today, so could an FDA LE staff perhaps translate the announcement link below?

Thanks much!

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Health Attaché
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: (b)(6)

Mobile: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: RODEWALD, Lawrence Everett (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 3:37 PM

To: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing | NSF);
(b)(6) (Beijing)

Subject: RE: GVP

Dear (b)(6) – I just heard from (b)(6) the person on our team working on the WHO vaccine prequalification program, that the CanSino ebola vaccine was just licensed yesterday by CFDA. Attached is a link:

<http://www.sfda.gov.cn/WS01/CL1746/178705.html>

I've asked (b)(6) for more information – e.g., indication, use, and potential for PQ – and will share what I learn.

Thanks,
Lance

Sender: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
To: Kissel, Mary E (S) (b)(6)
Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
(b)(6)
CC: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Human Rights; DPRK; Digital Economy
Date: Sun, 1 Mar 2020 00:57:47 +0000

(b)(5)

(b)(7) note CCD has a little brother grafted onto it (common responsibilities). I wonder what that's all about?

Using science and reason to debunk conspiracy theories

People's Daily Zhongsheng editorial (pg. 3)

Although the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic first appeared in China, it did not necessarily originate in China. In contrast to cautious scientists, some Western politicians and media have made rash assertions and even conjectured a so-called biochemical war to stigmatize China. Their despicable political intentions are evident. On the positive side, the mainstream of the international community has stayed objective and fair to withstand the attack of the "political virus." In the face of the epidemic, all countries are a community with a shared future and common responsibilities, as viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance with science, smash rumors with truth, resist prejudice with cooperation, and stop "political viruses" such as conspiracy theories from causing chaos.

From: Beijing PAS (b)(2)
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 4:56 AM
To: Beijing Press Office (b)(2)
Subject: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Human Rights; DPRK; Digital Economy

U.S. Embassy Beijing Media Reaction – A Summary of Select PRC Media Commentary

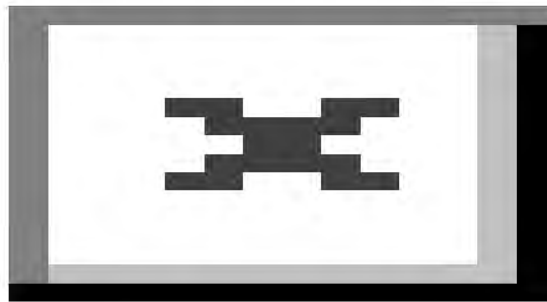
Produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Press Office

Unofficial news excerpts for reference only. Not for distribution outside the USG.

Friday, February 28, 2020

BLUF—China's Public Messaging Summary: The outbreak unleashed our innovative capacity. The use of AI, drones, big data platforms, and other new technologies allowed us to meet people's needs. Viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance and stop "political viruses," such as conspiracy theories, from causing chaos.

News



People's Daily: Xi says China and Mongolia help each other in the face of difficulties

Global Times-Chinese: Internal, external pressure tests China's epidemic control ability; Subtitle: Rebound of confirmed cases sounds alarm; offshore "backflow" constitutes challenge; Sidebar: Accelerating spread of disease constitutes global challenge

21st Century Business Herald editorial: Unique position and huge market are China's irreplaceable advantages

CCTV (02/27): Xi says China and Mongolia help each other in the face of difficulties; Chinese premier meets Mongolian president; state council task force: strengthen support for micro, small and medium-sized businesses; 32,495 cases cured and discharged; *CCTV* commentary: Don't slack off during the containment effort while speeding up production and development; major national transportation and energy projects resume operation; China resumes 80% of agricultural production, advancing poverty alleviation in an orderly manner; international community: Xi's remarks deliver confidence, unleashing development potential.

Trending News Stories (02/28):

1. China's GDP up 6.1% in 2019

The National Bureau of Statistics announced that China's gross domestic product totaled 99.09 trillion yuan in 2019, up 6.1 percent year-on-year. The per capita GDP was 70,892 yuan, an increase of 5.7% over the previous year. China's foreign exchange reserves stood at \$3.1079 trillion at the end of the year, an increase of \$35.2 billion over the previous year.

2. Yang Jiechi to start a two-day visit to Japan

MFA spokesperson Zhao Lijian announced that China's senior official, Yang Jiechi, will start a two-day visit to Japan on Friday. Yang, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, will engage in a new round of China-Japan high-level political dialogue with Shigeru Kitamura, chief of the Japanese National Security Council.

COVID-19 Factual Coverage:

The Paper reported that Chinese health authorities received reports of 327 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and 44 new deaths on Feb 27. The overall confirmed cases on the Chinese mainland reached 78,824 with a total of 2,788 deaths. *Xinhua* reported that Xi Jinping held talks with Mongolian President Khaltmaa Battulga in Beijing. Xi said the special visit by Battulga to express consolations and support to China fully embodies the high attention he pays to the China-Mongolia ties and the profound friendship between the two peoples. *Xinhua* also reported that Zong Changqing, Director-General of the Department of Foreign Investment Administration under the Ministry of Commerce said, "the fundamentals of China's long-term economic development and competitive advantage of attracting foreign capital has not changed." Zong added that most multinationals are confident and have not changed their investment strategy for the country. In another article, *Xinhua* said the National Forestry and Grassland Administration announced that all venues where wild animals are artificially bred should be closed and quarantined and the trade and transportation of wild animals should stop. *The Global Times* reported that Beijing is facing mounting pressure in efforts to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) as new confirmed infections surged due to imported cases of infection and cluster outbreaks. Officials from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC) confirmed that authorities made the capital the top priority of its epidemic prevention and control work, with measures matching those adopted in Hubei. In another article, *The Global Times* reported that Chinese experts said the U.S. might not be able to effectively contain the outbreak of COVID-19, as the White House and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have different perspectives on the situation, and President Donald Trump's priority is still the economic data and the presidential election.

Editorial Commentary:

1. **Coronavirus**

Using science and reason to debunk conspiracy theories

People's Daily Zhongsheng editorial (pg. 3)

Although the novel coronavirus pneumonia epidemic first appeared in China, it did not necessarily originate in China. In contrast to cautious scientists, some Western politicians and media have made rash assertions and even conjectured a so-called biochemical war to stigmatize China. Their despicable political intentions are evident. On the positive side, the mainstream of the international community has stayed objective and fair to withstand the attack of the "political virus." In the face of the epidemic, all countries are a community with a shared future and common responsibilities, as viruses know no borders. It is everyone's duty to defeat ignorance with science, smash rumors with truth, resist prejudice with cooperation, and stop "political viruses" such as conspiracy theories from causing chaos.

Long-term economic prospects remain positive

Guangming Daily (pg. 02) Op-ed

Party School researcher Ding Maozhan: President Xi's important remarks—that our long-term economic prospects remain positive, and that the impact of COVID-19 is temporary and manageable—boosted our confidence while specifying how we should work to balance epidemic control and the economy. The outbreak's repercussions are external variables. Our growth drivers remain strong—from investment to consumption, manufacturing to emerging sectors, domestic and global demand to our unshakable comparative advantages, and innovation to our reform and opening. Now we need to unleash this enormous potential. While prioritizing epidemic control, we need to strengthen macro control to keep the economy on track, secure our foreign investment and trade bases, and ensure employment, agricultural production, and people's livelihood.

Shoulder the responsibility for the world

Guangming Daily (pg 12) Op-ed

The battle against COVID-19 is also a war to defend the world. China's response demonstrates our major power's sense of responsibility. The shrewd, courageous lockdown of Wuhan minimized the spread of the virus to other countries; our timely information sharing saved the world precious time to rise to the epidemic; we did what we could to help others hit by the epidemic as well; and our efforts to resume production helped ensure global supply chain stability. With such a battle, we gained true friends from across the world while helping others better understand the "shared community of mankind." Meanwhile, the digital economy will emerge as a new growth engine for both China and the world. The outbreak unleashed our innovation capacity. AI, drones, big data platforms, and other new technologies played an important role in medical diagnosis, delivery of supplies, and meeting people's needs in maintaining a normal life.

Unique position and large market are China's irreplaceable strengths

21st Century Business Herald editorial

After China and the United States reached the phase-one trade deal, hawkish politicians in Washington are moving fast to find ways to choke supplies to China's high-tech companies in a self-defeating and costly bid to suppress China's tech sector and contain China's rise. As China busies itself with epidemic control, Washington is planning to further tighten export controls to make it harder for Huawei to acquire chips and asking allies to shun Huawei's gear and curtail exports of military technologies to China. Such plans are unlikely to succeed. To

start, China's sophisticated industrial chains and low operating costs give it unique competitive advantages. Without viable alternatives, foreign companies will not move their operations out of China for political reasons alone. Second, China is the largest market for technological products. Not a single company can decouple from the Chinese market without risking its own survival. If the United States insists on decoupling and tighter export controls, the result will be "de-Americanization" as companies from other countries happily replace American ones and sell products with fewer U.S. components to Chinese buyers. Moreover, cutting China from global supply chains is inherently at odds with the administration's pursuit of a smaller deficit with China. As China commits more resolutely to indigenous innovation, Washington's strategy to hinder China's technological development will also cost U.S. companies dearly.

Why the claim that epidemic will accelerate China's decoupling from the West is ridiculous
Global Times commentary

Commenting on the impact of the viral outbreak, Western media believes it will accelerate the decoupling between China and developed economies and predicts a shake-up of global industrial chains. Their analysis is misguided. First, there is inherent economic logic and stability to China's role in the global industrial and supply chains. Since China joined the WTO in 2001 and started to integrate into the global market, it has developed complete industrial chains covering the high-, middle-, and low-end of the global manufacturing sector. Other emerging economies like Vietnam are unlikely to replace China as a global supplier in the short term given their infrastructure and economic growth. Governments of developed countries tried to bring back manufacturing jobs around 2009, but to no avail, proving that politics cannot dictate how global industrial chains work. Second, as China develops its manufacturing sector, moves up the global value chain, and opens its financial market, it will unleash huge dividends driving unstoppable economic globalization. Western companies benefiting from China's economic development and relying on overseas profits are unlikely to give up the Chinese market unless they find attractive alternatives. In the foreseeable future, no country can afford the visible and invisible costs of splitting the global technological, trade, industrial, and financial systems into two.

2. Korean Peninsula

Postponed U.S.-ROK military exercise amid outbreak brings "window period" for DPRK issue; undercurrent remains surging

The Paper

Wang Junsheng, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that if the U.S.-ROK joint military exercise went ahead as planned, a new round of a "war of words" would follow, or the DPRK might even test missiles or hold military exercises in response, thus intensifying tensions on the Peninsula. The delayed military drill brings an "unexpected" window for continued easing of tensions, which all parties should cherish. North Korea, thinking the United States is using the talks to serve its domestic politics, i.e., the Trump campaign, is more concerned about whether the talks can generate tangible results, such as lifting some of the sanctions. When the epidemic outbreak is over, the bilateral talks will return to the fore and North Korea may possibly take stronger military action than it did last year to pressure

the United States. Time is not on the DPRK's side since, over time, the impact of sanctions will become increasingly pronounced.

3. Human Rights

Chinese experts give accounts of human rights in China and expose the true colors of East Turkistan in Geneva

Global Times-Chinese [commentary](#)

At a recent UNHCR meeting in Geneva, Chinese human rights experts illustrated how China protects human rights in Xinjiang in terms of its efforts to counter terrorism and promote ethnic languages. They criticized the East Turkistan terrorist group's rumor-mongering and Western countries' double standards. Experts also talked about how China protects human rights during the coronavirus epidemic. The meeting "gave voice to the other side of the story," said a foreign participant. Here is a summary of the experts' remarks delivered in the meeting: Mahemuti Abuduwaili, Deputy Director of the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, said "Xinjiang is now at its best with people of all ethnicities working hard to live a better life together." He described some countries' groundless accusations against China's Xinjiang policies and counterterrorism measures as "irresponsible and disappointing." Jinan University's Zheng Liang noted China is not the only target for the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, as the organization's ideological system was completed under the influence of al-Qaeda. He said some countries' disregard for the harm of terrorism and their adoption of a double standard will be detrimental to the international community. Xinjiang University's Liu Zhengjiang said "the goal of China's ethnic language education is to cultivate multi-lingual talents." Nankai University's Xu Yao shared China's experience in human rights protection in the fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic, saying "China has protected patients' rights to medical treatment, privacy, information, and non-discrimination."

Chinese Media Outlets Cited

"Trending News Stories" is a curated list of news articles selected from China's principal media outlets. The stories selected reflect top trending issues in Chinese press, with a focus on topics of interest to U.S. Government readers.

CCTV (中国中央电视台, Zhongguo Zhongyang Dianshitai, viewership in the hundreds of millions): China's primary state broadcaster, generally considered a mouthpiece for the Communist Party. Regional television outlets view the scope of CCTV's reporting as indicative of permissible reporting options. Headlines reported herein are from the preceding evening's CCTV Channel 1 news programs.

selected reflect top trending issues in Chinese press, with a focus on topics of interest to U.S. Government readers.

Guangming Daily (光明日报, *Guangming Ribao*, circ. 1 million): One of the leading state-run dailies with principal readership among government officials and scholars.

Global Times-Chinese (环球时报, *Huanqiu Shibao*, circ. 1.5 million): Daily commercial publication that focuses on international affairs and features a nationalist, hawkish, editorial line. Though wholly owned by People's Daily, it is not authoritative and has more latitude in expressing opinions, including editorials that are not in sync with party leadership.

People's Daily (人民日报, *Renmin Ribao*, circ. 2.4 million): Daily flagship publication of the Chinese Communist Party; editorials are considered to reflect CCP policy.

The Paper (澎湃, *Peng Pai*, www.thepaper.cn, estimated 2 million daily visits): Launched in 2014, it is one of the most influential online-only news outlets in China. The *Oriental Morning Post*, its initial sponsor, closed its print operations in January 2017 and moved its staff to *The Paper*.

21st Century Business Herald (21世纪经济报道, *21 Shiji Jingji Baodao*, circ. 780,000): Influential economic and business daily affiliated to the Southern Daily Newspaper Group; primary readers include business professionals and Chinese government officials.

Note: Beijing Early Alert is produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Public Affairs Section. To request addition or removal of a recipient please email (b)(6) You must have a U.S. Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)

Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)

Kissel, Mary E (S) (b)(6)

Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Keshap, Atul (b)(6)