



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

July 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 June 26, 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 18 responsive records subject to the FOIA. We have determined 11 records may be released in part and 7 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-0000200236, B-00002002370, B-00002002363, B-00002002262, B-00002002261, B-00002002260, and B-00002002259. 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)(1)

B-0000200236

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002370

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002363

(b)(1)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	
CC:	
Subject:	Package 202004794 (SBU) Mission China's 2018 Reporting on Coronaviruses and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) has been forwarded on to S
Date:	Mon, 20 Apr 2020 14:03:01 -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 02:02:45 PM.

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:	

From:	(b)(6)
To:	Indo-Pacific-DL (b)(6) SCA-Office Directors (b)(6) SCA-Front-Office-DL (b)(6)
Subject:	Indo-Pacific Cable Capture 3/6/2020
Date:	Fri, 6 Mar 2020 14:49:47 -0500

Flagging Indo-Pacific related cables in today's cable capture:

EAP China-related Indo-Pacific cables:

- (b)(1)
-
- **(SBU) PRC Transport Sector Resuming Activity:** Transport linkages are improving after outbreak containment measures had brought the sector to a standstill. Supply chains are beginning to recover, with significant regional variability. The recovery remains vulnerable to additional outbreaks and renewed travel restrictions. *(20 Beijing 450)*

Regards,

(b)(6)

Official - Sensitive

~~**SECRET//NOFORN**~~

Classified By: David Stilwell - A/S, Office:EAP, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 3/6/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	Indo-Pacific-DL (b)(6)

	SCA-Office Directors SCA-Front-Office-DL	(b)(6)	
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Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

B-00002002262

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002261

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002260

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

B-00002002259

(b)(1)

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To:	(b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
Subject:	FW: (S//NF) EAP Combined Morning Report 02-04-2020
Date:	Tue, 4 Feb 2020 08:11:35 -0500

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 7:11:29 AM (UTC-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada)
To: EAP-MorningReport-DL
Cc: EAP-Staffers Mailbox
Subject: ~~(S//NF)~~ EAP Combined Morning Report 02-04-2020

EAP Combined Morning Report
Tuesday, February 04, 2020

KEY ISSUES OF THE DAY

Nothing to report.

OTHER ITEMS

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (ANP)

~~(SBU)~~ **New Zealand Coronavirus Update:** The PRC Ambassador to NZ slammed NZ's border restrictions, implying the Deputy Prime Minister had backtracked on assurances on open trade and travel. An evacuation flight taking 70 Kiwis, 100 Australians, and possibly Pacific Islanders is expected to arrive in Auckland February 5. No confirmed cases in New Zealand. (*Wellington e-mail*)

(U) Chinese Ambassador's Confident Op-Ed: An op-ed titled "Confident China's in command of controlling the virus" appeared in the Australian Financial Review, expressing confidence in the capacity and focus of the Chinese Communist Party and President Xi Jinping to tackle coronavirus. (*Canberra e-mail*)

~~(SBU)~~ **Bougainville Referendum Update:** The Chief Referendum Officer said the absence of appeals during the 40 days after the referendum confirms the Commission's view that the referendum was conducted to international standards. The Joint Supervisory Body will meet later this month to start consultations (a delay of weeks). (*Port Moresby e-mail*)

CHINA, MONGOLIA, AND HONG KONG (CM)

CHINA

~~(SBU)~~ **China 2019-nCoV Update:** Two charter flights are expected to deliver relief supplies and evacuate approximately 500 U.S. citizens and family members from Wuhan February 4 (EST). Total 2019-nCoV cases in China rose to 20,438, with 425 deaths. One Amcit in Wuhan has been confirmed to have 2019-nCoV and is being treated. (20 Beijing 248)

~~(SBU)~~ **More Cities Outside Hubei Institute Restrictions:** Wenzhou in Zhejiang province continued to be under lockdown, while Hangzhou and Ningbo, the two largest cities in Zhejiang, issued notices February 3 prohibiting gatherings, requiring temperature checks, and extending office closures. Cities in Jiangsu and Heilongjiang provinces also announced various restrictions. (20 Beijing 248)

HONG KONG

(U) First 2019-nCoV Death in Hong Kong: Media reported that the 39-year old man, who returned from Wuhan January 23 and suffered from diabetes, died on February 4. Meanwhile, up to 9,000 medical workers (by some estimates) joined a strike to call for a complete closure of the border with mainland China. The strike is planned to continue throughout the week. (Hong Kong e-mail)

TAIWAN (TC)

(b)(1)

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JAPAN (J)

(U) Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) Destroyer Departs for Middle East:

MSDF destroyer Takanami departed Japan February 2 to conduct intelligence gathering activities in coordination with the U.S. International Maritime Security Construct and will be joined by two MSDF P-3Cs based out of Djibouti which began operations January 20. *(Tokyo e-mail)*

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

KOREA (K)

(U) ROK Confirms 16th Case of 2019-nCoV, Second Case Not Involving

China Travel: The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) confirmed the ROK's 16th case of 2019-nCoV, in a patient returning from Thailand, without a history of recent travel to China. *(Seoul e-mail)*

(U) DPRK Suspends Railway Traffic with Russia Following Coronavirus

Outbreak: Passenger train operations between Russia and the DPRK will be suspended as of February 3 to prevent the spread of the coronavirus following a request from the DPRK. Coupled with the earlier suspension of air traffic between Pyongyang and Vladivostok, essentially all means of transportation between the two countries have been completely shut down. *(Seoul e-mail)*

(U) Chinese President's ROK Visit to be Rescheduled for June:

The ROK and China have tentatively postponed Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit. The visit, initially scheduled in March or April, has been delayed until June due to

Chinese concerns over timing, domestic circumstances, and the ongoing coronavirus outbreak. (*Media reports*)

MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA (MLS)

~~(SBU)~~ **Hun Sen Says He will Visit Wuhan Feb. 5:** The PM dismissed calls to repatriate 26 Cambodian students in Wuhan as fear-mongering and said he will visit Wuhan himself to raise the students' morale. One Cambodian contact called the PM's response "crazy." (*Phnom Penh e-mail*)

(U) Three Chinese Test Positive for Coronavirus after Return to China: The three, who returned from Cambodia to Shenzhen, were on the same original Jan. 22 flight from Wuhan as the 60-year-old Chinese tourist who tested positive for coronavirus, and who remains the only confirmed case in Cambodia so far. (*Phnom Penh e-mail*)

~~(SBU)~~ **UNODC Confirms Decline in Opium Production:** Myanmar saw a year-on-year decline in opium poppy cultivation of 11 percent (33,100 hectares) and a 2 percent decline in raw opium production (508 metric tons) in 2019, per an INL supported 2019 UNODC Opium Survey. Myanmar dropped to the third largest producer behind Afghanistan and Laos. (*Rangoon e-mail*)

MARITIME SOUTHEAST ASIA (MTS)

(U) AirAsia CEO, Chairman Step Back from Positions Over Airbus Bribery Probe: The AirAsia CEO and chairman will relinquish executive roles in the company for two months due to an ongoing investigation of allegations that Airbus paid a \$50 million bribe to win plane orders from AirAsia and AirAsia X. The company denies the allegations. (*Kuala Lumpur e-mail*)

~~(SBU)~~ **Indonesia Still Waiting for nCoV Test Results:** Officials said 35 citizens have "tested negative" for the 2019-nCoV and will not be retested, but the tests were not conducted with the CDC-provided testing kits that arrived February 1. Only "new samples" will be tested. President Jokowi announced all flights to and from China would be suspended as of February 5. (*Jakarta e-mail*)

(U) Singapore Now at 24 nCoV Cases: Singapore has reported six more cases of the virus, raising its number of confirmed infections to 24. The health ministry said four cases involved human-to-human transmission with Chinese tourists, and the other two were Singaporeans who were evacuated from Wuhan. (*Media reports*)

~~Official Sensitive~~~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: Atul Keshap - Acting A/S, Office:EAP, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 2/4/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	Yu, Miles (b)(6)
CC:	(b)(6) EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL (b)(6)
Subject:	For Clearance: Readout of Congressional China Task Force Briefing
Date:	Thu, 28 May 2020 18:58:30 -0400

Hi Miles,

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)



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:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	Yu, Miles (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	EAP-CM-Unit Chiefs-DL (b)(6)

From:

(b)(6)

'Bray, Leah' (b)(6)

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H Yon (b)(6)

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JCartin (b)(6)

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To:

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Beijing DAO (b)(6)

Beijing Economic Section (b)(6)

Beijing ESTH (b)(6)

Beijing Executive Office (b)(6)

Beijing PAS (b)(6)

Beijing POL section (b)(6)

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Chengdu PolEcon DL (b)(6)

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D EAP Duty Officer (b)(6)

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EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(6)

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	INR China Team (b)(6)
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	P EAP Duty (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	Shanghai Pol-Econ DL (b)(6)
	SHENYANG POLECON DL (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
Subject:	BEIJING ECON NIGHT NOTE - April 19, 2018: Trade, AI, IPR, Overcapacity, ZTE, Cryptocurrency
Date:	Thu, 19 Apr 2018 18:33:04 +0800

EMBASSY BEIJING ECONOMIC NIGHT NOTE FOR APRIL 19, 2018

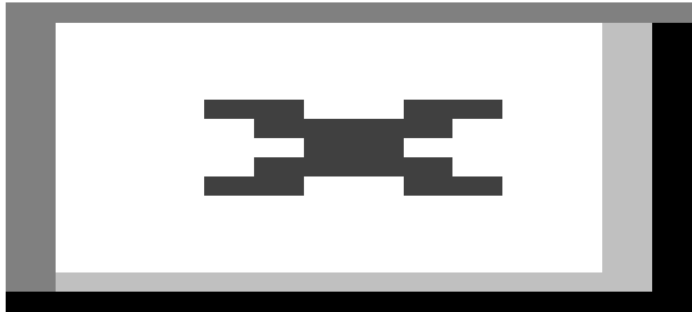
~~(SBU)~~ **China Pressures Likeminded Diplomats to Side with Beijing “Against U.S. Protectionism”:** Beijing-based diplomats from likeminded countries confirmed an April 17 Reuters report saying that they had been summoned to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) to ask them to stand together with Beijing against U.S. protectionism. Economic Ministers Counselor from several European countries, the EU Mission, Australia, and Canada told EconOff they were summoned to MOFCOM last week, and were made to listen to scripted talking points that portrayed China as a champion of global institutions and free trade. MOFCOM also hinted, indirectly, to the Australian Econ MinCouns that China was hoping Australia would join Beijing in a WTO case against the United States related to the Section 301 trade actions. The likeminded partners all said they pushed back, telling MOFCOM that China was not nearly as open to foreign companies as it claimed. (ECON – (b)(6))

~~(SBU)~~ **Increasing Exports of Chinese AI Surveillance Tech:** Media reports indicate that Chinese artificial intelligence (AI) startups are increasingly exporting facial and image recognition technology for surveillance to other countries. On April 13, China's *Global Times* reported that Guangzhou-based Cloudwalk signed a "strategic cooperation framework agreement with the Zimbabwean government for a mass facial recognition project ... as part of the Belt and Road Initiative." Japan's *Nikkei Asian Review* revealed on April 19 that Shanghai-based Yitu Technology will supply "wearable cameras with artificial intelligence-powered facial recognition technology" to "a unit of the Malaysian police that provides security at public facilities such as ports." Both companies have achieved "unicorn" valuation of more than \$1.5 billion, and are led by experts with PhDs from U.S. universities. (ESTH - (b)(6))

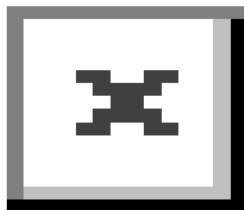
~~(SBU)~~ **AmCham Cites IPR as Number One Problem for Foreign R&D Centers in Shanghai....:** The primary barrier for foreign firms to conduct research and development (R&D) in China is the lack of protections for intellectual property, according to an advance copy of a forthcoming AmCham Shanghai report that interviewed 52 members and the heads for R&D and government affairs at major multinationals in East China. AmCham will publicly release the report on April 20. Three-quarters of respondents said their main R&D motivation was to meet the demands of the local market: slightly over 30 percent said their R&D operations adapt/redesign products for the Chinese market; 29 percent said they create new China-specific products. Approximately 11.5 percent admitted to conducting advanced/cutting edge research. The majority of respondents (44.3 percent) said China R&D operations are part of their broader global network of R&D centers; only 3.8 percent said China R&D centers are their most important. The report concludes that while the Shanghai government provides various incentives to attract foreign R&D centers, the government needs to address systemic problems, such as lack of market access and IPR protections and internet restrictions. There are 426 foreign-invested R&D centers in Shanghai, according to local government data. (SHANGHAI - (b)(6))

~~(SBU)~~ **...As Shanghai Touts its IPR Credentials:** The Shanghai government congratulated itself on strengthening IP protections and deepening "innovation-driven IP reform," at its annual IPR briefing to the consular corps on April 17. As evidence of success, the Director General of the Shanghai IP Administration Chen Yajuan said the number of patent filings in Shanghai increased 17.2 percent to 131,746. Shanghai's 2011-2020 IPR strategy calls for the city to become an "Asia-Pacific IPR hub." (SHANGHAI - (b)(6))

~~(SBU)~~ **Increases in Production While Press Claims Reductions in Overcapacity:** The three industries suffering from the highest rate of overcapacity, coal, steel and aluminum, all reported year-on-year production increases. In March, China produced 73.98 million tons of steel, 2.78 million tons of aluminum, and 290.22 million tons of coal, representing year-on-year increases of 4.5 percent, 4 percent and 1.3 percent respectively. Domestic media reports stated that China slashed 50 million tons of steel production in 2017 and expect to cut an additional 30 million tons in 2018. Contacts from the World Steel Organization noted that the numbers reported by media are misleading because they only focus on one side of the equation – production (often outdated and inefficient) cut – and not on new production put online (new and modern mills), which may result in lower reductions of actual production capacity. (ECON - (b)(6))



(U) **ZTE Founder Comes Out of Retirement to Save his Company:** Since April 16, ZTE's retired founder Hou Weigui, aged 76, has been the topic of microblog posts, many of them accompanied by a photo posted on Chinese social media, which shows him walking through an airport accompanied by current ZTE Chairman Yin Yimin and CEO Zhao Xianming. Many social media users expressed support for ZTE and were touched by the image of the retired entrepreneur rallying to his company's defense following the Commerce Department's export denial order. Some netizens also expressed hopes that China would soon develop an indigenous source of advanced microchips. Others, in contrast, criticized ZTE for breaking rules in other countries. While ZTE has publicly confirmed that the three men in the photo are its current and former executives, the firm has not said where they were going. (ECON – (b)(6))



CABLE SUMMARIES

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(SBU) China Virus Institute Welcomes More U.S. Cooperation on Global Health Security:

China's Wuhan Institute of Virology, a global leader in virus research, is a key partner for the United States in protecting global health security. Its role as operator of the just-launched Biosafety Level 4 (or "P4") lab – the first such lab in China – opens up even more opportunities for expert exchange, especially in light of the lab's shortage of trained staff. Given the legacy of SARS and the likelihood that the next global pandemic will originate in China, the United States should prioritize expanding our already significant cooperation with this institute. This should include partnering with the institute on basic science research and the Global Virome Project, and possibly trilateral U.S.-China-EU projects, building on the institute's strong ties with France. (18 WUHAN 38)

LOOK-AHEAD DATES

April 23-26	ENR DAS Sandra Oudkirk
April 24-27	Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao to Beijing
June 1-2 (TBC)	CODEL Hensarling to Beijing

~~Official - Sensitive~~**~~CONFIDENTIAL//REL TO USA, FVEY~~**

Classified By: (b)(6) Acting ECON Minister Counselor, Office:Embassy Beijing, Agency:U.S.

Department of State

Declassify On: 4/17/2043

Reasons: (Derived) Classification derived from previous message(s)

Sender:	(b)(6)
	Beijing Night Note (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	'Bray, Leah' (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
Recipient:	H Yon (b)(6)
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Beijing DAO (b)(6)

Beijing Economic Section (b)(6)

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INR China Team (b)(6)

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Shanghai Pol-Econ DL (b)(6)

SHENYANG POLECON DL (b)(6)

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From: (b)(6)

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Shanghai Pol-Econ DL (b)(6)

SHENYANG POLECON DL (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: BEIJING ECON NIGHT NOTE - April 12 2018: (b)(1)
(b)(1) H7N9, COP24, Coal Mine Explosion, Market Access

Date: Thu, 12 Apr 2018 05:19:14 -0400

EMBASSY BEIJING ECONOMIC NIGHT NOTE FOR APRIL 12, 2018

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

~~(SBU)~~ **Chicken Vaccination Program Credited for Quiet H7N9 Season:** Wuhan Institute of Virology officials credited an expanded chicken vaccination program for the successful suppression of H7N9 this past flu season. China has reported no H7N9 cases this past winter and spring, compared to the 2016-2017 flu season, when some 760 human infections were reported, with a nearly 40 percent fatality rate. Institute researchers also credited animal virologist Chen Hualan at the Harbin Veterinary Research Institute for her decade of work on an effective H7N9 vaccine for chicken populations. They expressed cautious optimism on curbing spread of the flu strain, but said it was premature to declare victory. “We had success this year, but we need to wait” to observe future flu seasons, one official said. (WUHAN – (b)(6))

~~(SBU)~~ **Minister Xie Zhenhua Hosts U.S. Climate Delegation to Identify Common Ground in Preparation for COP 24:** A U.S. delegation, led by OES/EGC Office Director (b)(6) concluded two days of discussions in Beijing under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with counterparts at the National Development and Reform Commission

(NDRC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and the National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC). Chinese working level negotiators were able to establish common ground on issues of concern and identify potential ways forward to resolve broader negotiations that will be discussed at the upcoming 24th Conference of the Parties (COP) to be held in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. Following the technical discussions, Minister Xie Zhenhua, China's Special Representative for Climate Change Affairs, hosted an official dinner for the delegation and underscored China's interest in continuing cooperation with the United States in the run up to the COP 24. Minister Xie repeated a request that the U.S. government identify a climate change lead that is empowered to represent the United States at these high level negotiations. (ESTH – (b)(6))

~~(SBU)~~ Heilongjiang Province Coal Mine Explosion Kills Five, Failure to Report Accident Leads to Dismissal of Coal Mine Party Secretary, Contacts Confirm. Two Heilongjiang contacts confirmed newspaper reports of a gas explosion at a local coal mine belonging to Heilongjiang Coal Mine Group in Jixi City, killing five miners. The explosion occurred on April 4 but no information was released about the incident until April 9. The failure to report the accident has led to the Heilongjiang Working Safety Supervisory Bureau asking for the dismissal of the coal mine's Party Secretary and other members of the leadership for the cover up, according to the Xinhua News Agency. A local human rights lawyer told ConGenOff that prior to the newspaper reports there were rumors of an explosion at the mine but the local government refused to confirm anything until after the decision was taken to dismiss the Party Secretary. The local government has not shared any further information about the explosion, "just the basics," and have not even shared the name of the Party Secretary or the other members of the mine's leadership who were dismissed, said the manager of a local waste recycling plant. (Shenyang – (b)(6))

CABLE SUMMARY

~~(SBU)~~ **Central Bank Governor Provides Some Details to Financial Market Access**

Openings Announcement: Following President Xi Jinping's April 10 announcement at the Boao Forum for Asia that China would implement previously announced financial-services-sector market openings, newly appointed People's Bank of China (PBOC) Governor Yi Gang announced a series of measures that China would take by June 30, and another set of actions China would adopt by the end of the year. China-based market analysts welcomed Yi Gang's intimations that China would not devalue its currency in response to U.S. trade actions. While some observers welcomed the announcements on the market-access openings, saying this was the sort of detail the markets and foreign press had been waiting for, other contacts believe these openings come a decade too late and should have happened soon after China's accession to the WTO. Chinese insurance and banking players have already achieved dominant positions in these sectors, so that even with the openings, it would be difficult for foreign banks to compete. Foreign firms presently have a market share of less than 2 percent of China's banking and insurance sector. Similar to previously announced market access openings, the devil will be in the details, including whether foreign firms will be issued the same set of licenses to compete fairly with local players. (18 BEIJING 722)

LOOK-AHEAD DATES

April 23-26	ENR DAS Sandra Oudkirk
April 24-27	Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao to Beijing
June 1-2 (TBC)	CODEL Hensarling to Beijing

~~Official Sensitive~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) Acting-EMIN, Office:Beijiing, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 4/11/2043

Reasons: (Derived) Classification derived from previous message(s)

Sender:	(b)(6)
	'Bray, Leah' (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	H Yon (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6)
	JCartin (b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	Beijing DAO (b)(6)
	Beijing Economic Section (b)(6)

Beijing ESTH (b)(6)

Beijing Executive Office (b)(6)

Beijing PAS (b)(6)

Beijing POL section (b)(6)

Bennett, Charles E (b)(6)

Bloom, Evan T (b)(6)

Chengdu PolEcon DL (b)(6)

(b)(6)

D EAP Duty Officer (b)(6)

(b)(6)

EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Guangzhou-EP (b)(6)

(b)(6)

INR China Team (b)(6)

(b)(6)

P EAP Duty (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Shanghai Pol-Econ DL (b)(6)

SHENYANG POLECON DL (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From:	"SMART Archive" <>
To:	SMART Core <>
Subject:	The Wuhan Watcher, December 2016 Edition
Date:	Fri, 16 Dec 2016 02:25:54 GMT

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SBU~~



MRN: 16 WUHAN 78
Date/DTG: Dec 16, 2016 / 160225Z DEC 16
From: AMCONSUL WUHAN
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SHLH, KHIV, CDC, FWS, CITES, FR, CN, ENRG, TRGY, ECON, KRG, PHUM, KR
Captions: SENSITIVE
Reference: A) 16 SHANGHAI 934
B) 16 BEIJING 2982
Subject: The Wuhan Watcher, December 2016 Edition

1. ~~(SBU)~~ Welcome to the December 2016 edition of the Wuhan Watcher, with reporting tidbits from the United States' newest consulate in China, covering China's heartland (Henan, Hubei, Hunan and Jiangxi provinces). This edition includes an update on China's first planned "P4" biosafety lab in Wuhan; concerns about the endangered yellow-breasted bunting, which winters in central China but is prized by status-seeking diners in southern China; and the sudden death of a long-time political activist in a Hubei Province prison.

Health and Disease Control

2. ~~(SBU)~~ **P4 Lab Still Not Operational, Says French Consulate:** A French Consulate official said China's "P4" biosafety lab—billed as being the first such lab in China—is still not operational. "P4" refers to the highest level of biosafety, with the strictest protections and protocols for handling and studying the most dangerous pathogens; the United States has about 15 such labs. Although a ceremony was held on January 31, 2015, to mark the completion of the Wuhan lab's construction, the French official said the French Ambassador to China and the lab's French architect came to Wuhan just this past June to join another ceremony marking the lab's overall completion. He said the lab was still awaiting formal central government certification and approval before it could begin working with live viruses.

3. ~~(SBU)~~ **P4 Lab, continued:** Chinese press reports describe the lab being built "in

cooperation” with the French and being a “copy” of a famous P4 lab in Lyon, France, but the French consulate official said it was a “completely Chinese” lab using only a French design. He said the project was being controlled centrally through the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing. In mid-December, the Hubei Foreign Affairs Office rejected U.S. Consulate Wuhan’s request to tour the lab facility and meet with its leadership, saying the lab was still making “preparations” and was not ready to receive visitors.

Energy

4. ~~(SBU)~~ “Smart” Meter Company Bemoans Lack of Government Support, Policy

Guidance: A representative of the private, Changsha, Hunan Province-based smart meter company Wasion complained that the central government supports electric car and charging infrastructure development in first-tier cities like Shanghai, but not in lower-tier cities like Changsha. He also said the private sector lacked clear government policies on energy efficiency for buildings and power distribution technology. Wasion makes “smart” electric, water, gas and other meters, as well as integrated systems that can play a key role in “smart” grids and also help firms boost energy efficiency. They have also recently begun producing electric vehicle charging posts, and said they are involved in a pilot project for electric car charging stations in the United States, supplying metering for a U.S. partner. Six years ago Wasion set up an office in Pennsylvania as a platform for technology partnerships with TransData Inc. Wasion is exploring opportunities to partner on smart metering and smart grids with industry leader iTron, a U.S. firm, as well as with Cisco Systems.

5. ~~(SBU)~~ Wasion (continued): During a visit to Wasion’s Changsha manufacturing base, opened in 2008, EconOff observed numerous photos and references to Xi Jinping’s November 2013 visit to the company. One brochure boasted in a blurb about the visit that “Wasion’s products have entirely replaced imported goods used in China,” a nod to Xi’s emphasis on import substitution and indigenous self-sufficiency. Wasion Vice President Li Xianhua said in a meeting that the company had drafted China’s national standards for electricity monitoring. He said the firm’s products met national low-carbon goals because “smart” meters helped companies sharply reduce energy consumption. He cited as an example a Dongfeng Motor factory that reduced power consumption by 23 percent by using Wasion’s meters and control systems. He said Wasion was helping improve energy efficiency at Chinese government buildings, hospitals and schools with “smart” systems that, for example, kept air conditioning settings no lower than 26 degrees Celsius, and automatically shut off lights at 9 p.m.

Economic Development

6. (U) Poverty Reduction, High-Speed Rail are Hunan’s Priorities: A top official from Hunan Province’s Development and Reform Commission (DRC) said that the DRC’s biggest priority is to relocate 800,000 out of an estimated total 5 million poor people in the province to cities, more developed rural areas, or industrial parks, as part of poverty reduction efforts. He put this in the context of the national goal to achieve a “moderately prosperous society” by 2021 (the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party), and said it was part of a national plan to relocate 10 million out of an estimated 70 million Chinese who live in poverty. He said the other priority is to complete construction of two high-speed rail lines: one

from Chongqing to Xiamen, in Fujian Province, a line that will cut across Hunan and through Changsha; and another that will cut through Hunan on its way from Inner Mongolia to Nanning, in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. He made the remarks for a visiting delegation from USAID, which is funding a low-carbon cities project in four Chinese cities including the Chang-Zhu-Tan Cluster City (composed of Changsha, Zhuzhou, and Xiangtan) in Hunan Province, through implementing partner the Institute for Sustainable Communities.

Academics and Research

7. (U) Hubei Academy Eager to Expand U.S. Exchanges, Particularly on Rural Issues: (b)(6)

(b)(6) the Hubei Academy of Social Sciences (HASS) requested assistance in contacting U.S. think tanks and research centers to establish exchanges, and is particularly interested in bringing U.S. experts on rural economy to speak in Wuhan. HASS (b)(6) and HASS (b)(6) made the request in a Nov. 16 meeting with Consul General Zadrozny. HASS has a strong economic focus and also includes institutes on Yangtze River economics and Central China development. (b)(6) said HASS cooperates with Russian and Korean institutes, for example by co-hosting an annual "China-Korea Economic Forum" with the Korean Institute of Economic Development, and has exchanged views with British and Australian experts, but so far have not had exchanges with U.S. experts or institutes.

NGOs

8. (SBU) WWF Wuhan Office Concerned About NGO Management Law: Office staff said that according to Chinese law the NGO was not able to raise funds in China, so had to rely entirely on foreign funding, with the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) U.S. office being one of the top three funding sources. The group is therefore closely watching developments around the Foreign NGO Management Law, which takes effect January 1 (Ref A). WWF is registered in Beijing as a corporate representative office, and is trying now to also register in Shanghai as a corporate representative office, and in Shenzhen, where they believe the atmosphere for NGOs is more "open," as a civil non-profit enterprise.

9. (SBU) Wildlife Trafficking Not As Big a Problem in Central China: WWF officials said that ivory trafficking, for example, was a much more serious issue in south, southwest, and northeast China (Ref B). However, they cited trafficking of the yellow-breasted bunting (classified as "endangered" in 2013), a migratory bird which winters in central China, as a top trafficking concern in central China. A WWF wildlife expert says hunters set nets in winter, catch the bird, and traffic it to southern China where it is coveted by wealthy, status-seeking Chinese diners. The expert also noted that the air cargo hub at Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport, in Henan Province, is an important transshipment point for trafficked wildlife.

From the Expatriate Community

10. (SBU) Police Checking "Foreigner-friendly" Hang-outs in Wuhan: A police officer on December 2 visited a coffee-shop run by an American who is active in Wuhan's expatriate Christian community, and asked to see the owner's passport and visa. Later the same day, eight

uniformed police officers visited a nearby restaurant that is a popular hangout for Wuhan's small expat community, particularly Americans and French. The police politely asked to see the passports and visas of the American owner and all Western customers present, without giving any reason. Both American establishments are in Hanyang near the Wuhan Yangtze International School and the fellowship where most Americans in Hanyang attend church services. School faculty and students and fellowship attendees make up a large percentage of these establishments' clientele.

11. ~~(SBU)~~ **Expat Christian Community Gets By with Good Government Relations:** A long-time American expatriate active in Wuhan's foreign Christian and business community said that his church maintained good relations with the local government and so had not so far received any pressure or harassment. He said church leaders are careful to stay within the Chinese government's red lines, for example by politely telling any Chinese citizens who show up at their Sunday service that Chinese government regulations bar them from joining, and turning them away. The local police actually advised the church not to pursue any official registration. He said he heard Wuhan's expatriate Korean Christian community had had some "issues" in the past, however. He said Wuhan's Chinese Christians maintained one large (at least 400 member) unofficial church in the city's Wuchang district that is often called the "Roots and Fruits" church. Although he said that church is an unregistered or "house" church, they worship in a large public facility and avoid government pressure because one of the leading pastors doubles as an official in the local government religious affairs bureau.

Human Rights

12. (U) **A Bad Month for Central China Activists, Rights Lawyers:** Police took citizen journalist Liu Feiyue, who founded the Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch website, into custody on November 17 and are holding him in criminal detention in his home city of Suizhou, Hubei Province, on suspicion of subversion of state power. Rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong disappeared on November 21 in Changsha, Hunan Province, and three weeks later local officials finally admitted they had detained him. Jiang had traveled to Changsha to visit the wife of another rights lawyer detained in last year's crackdown, Xie Yang, and to apply to visit Xie in detention. Meanwhile, longtime democracy activist Peng Ming died suddenly on November 29 in a prison in Xianning, Hubei Province. His relatives said he was kidnapped by Chinese security officials on the Thailand-Burma border in 2004 after trying to set up a safe haven in Thailand for Chinese political exiles, and sentenced to life in prison in 2005 on what his relatives insist were spurious charges that included "organizing and leading a terrorist organization."

Upcoming Events

Early February, 2017: Ground-breaking Ceremony for New Consulate Facility Fit-out Project

April 21, 2017: Foreign Commercial Services-led Second Annual U.S.-Central China Business Summit in Changsha, Hunan Province

Signature: ZADROZNY

Drafted By: WUHAN: (b)(6) (Wuhan)
Cleared By: CONS: (b)(6) (Wuhan)
PAS: (b)(6) (Wuhan)
Approved By: EXEC: (b)(6) (Wuhan)
Released By: WUHAN: (b)(6) (Wuhan)
Info: CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE *ROUTINE*

Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

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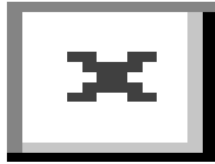
~~SBU~~

Sender:	"SMART Archive" <>
Recipient:	SMART Core <>

From:	(b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)
To:	CGRCU-Internal <CGRCU-Internal@state.gov>
CC:	CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>
Subject:	WaPo - State Department cables warned of safety issues at Wuhan lab studying bat coronaviruses
Date:	Tue, 14 Apr 2020 12:51:37 +0000

In case you guys haven't seen this morning's article yet, or don't have access:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/14/state-department-cables-warned-safety-issues-wuhan-lab-studying-bat-coronaviruses/>



State Department cables warned of safety issues at Wuhan lab studying bat coronaviruses - The Washington Post

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 ...

www.washingtonpost.com

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

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. "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.”

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 Institute 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."

Michael Dubray

Coronavirus Global Response Coordination Unit

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

(202) 790-3452

Sender:	(b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)
Recipient:	CGRCU-Internal <CGRCU-Internal@state.gov>; CGRCUPress <CGRCUPress@state.gov>

From:	"Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing)" (b)(6)
	(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
	(b)(6);
To:	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	(b)(6) (b)(6)
CC:	(b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6)
	(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
	(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject:	RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday
Date:	Thu, 14 Jun 2018 00:54:59 +0000

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.

Adrienne Parrish Fuentes
 Health Attaché
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 U.S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: (b)(6)
 Mobile: (b)(6)
 (b)(6)

~~SBU~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Thursday, June 14, 2018 8:46 AM
To: (b)(6) Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing); (b)(6) (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)(6) and all:

I talked this morning with a contact at the Gates Foundation. 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. Merck 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: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing); (b)(6) (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) Adrienne, 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?

Adrienne, (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 Merck. (ESTH – (b)(6))

Official - SBU
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 8, 2018 10:12 AM
To: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6) (OS/OGA)'
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Hi Adrienne,

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, Adrienne!

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (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: Chan, Irene (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 17:30

To: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing)

Subject: Fwd: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Adrienne, here is a quick translation. Best, Irene

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

Date: October 20, 2017 at 5:22:50 PM GMT+8

To: Chan, Irene (b)(6), Christensen, Lane (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6), Salazar, Julio (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: Chan, Irene (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: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing) (b)(6)

Date: October 20, 2017 at 3:47:30 PM GMT+8

To: Salazar, Julio (b)(6) Chan, Irene (b)(6)

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

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

Subject: CFDA licensed Ebola vaccine yesterday

Julio and Irene,

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!

Adrienne

Adrienne Parrish Fuentes
Health Attaché
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: +86-10-8531-3414

Mobile: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: RODEWALD, Lawrence Everett [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2017 3:37 PM
To: Chen, Ping (NIH/NIAID) [E]; (b)(6) (Beijing); (U) Sung, Nancy S (Beijing | NSF);
Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing)
Subject: RE: GVP

Dear (b)(6) – I just heard from Dr Tang Yi, 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 Tang Yi for more information – e.g., indication, use, and potential for PQ – and will share what I learn.

Thanks,
Lance

Sender:	"Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing) (b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6); (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (OS/OGA) (CTR) (b)(6) (b)(6) (HHS/OGA) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	(b)(6)
Subject:	Re: {Rogin's VIP List} Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables
Date:	Wed, 29 Apr 2020 11:56:22 +0000

If only. I suspect my chances of ever getting another visa to China are zero!

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:42:51 AM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Fw: {Rogin's VIP List} Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables

Oh, (b)(6) if they had only listened to you.....Nice to see your name in the paper. I'll bet the Chinese just love you right now....(b)(6)

From: josh-rogin---vip-distribution-list@googlegroups.com <josh-rogin---vip-distribution-list@googlegroups.com> on behalf of Josh Rogin (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 5:08 AM

To: josh-rogin---vip-distribution-list@googlegroups.com <josh-rogin---vip-distribution-list@googlegroups.com>

Subject: {Rogin's VIP List} Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables

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

Senators demand answers from Pompeo on Wuhan lab cables



By

Josh Rogin

Columnist

April 28, 2020 at 3:49 p.m. EDT

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.

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.

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.

“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.”

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.

Josh Rogin
Columnist - Washington Post
Political Analyst - CNN
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On the Ground in Wuhan, Signs of China Stalling Probe of Coronavirus Origins

Beijing at first appeared to be homing in fast on the source of the virus

By Jeremy Page and Natasha Khan

May 12, 2020 12:36 pm ET

WUHAN, China — Around 1 a.m. on Dec. 31, Lu Junqing woke to a phone call from his boss at a local disinfection company. Get a team together and head to the Huanan market, he was told: "Bring your best kit."

Mr. Lu knew the market, a sprawling maze of stalls near a railway station, but had no clue it was the suspected source of a mysterious illness spreading across this city, later identified as Covid-19.

When he got there, local officials directed him to a cluster of stalls selling wild animals for meat or traditional medicine. There were carcasses and caged live specimens, including snakes, dogs, rabbits and badgers, he said.

As his team started to spray disinfectant, the officials began taking samples from the stalls, sewers and goods, Mr. Lu says. They got his team to help with the dead animals, picking out feces and fur with tweezers, and sealing them in plastic bags.

More than four months later, Chinese officials have yet to share with the world any data from the animals Mr. Lu and others say were sampled. Beijing now appears to be stalling international efforts to find the source of the virus amid an escalating U.S. push to blame China for the pandemic, according to interviews with dozens of health experts and officials.

The lack of transparency and international involvement in the search has left room for speculation and blame. It also troubles health experts and officials who say finding the source is key to preventing the same virus from jumping again from animal to human—potentially unleashing another wave of disease.

Initially, Chinese officials seemed to be homing in quickly on the origins of the pathogen, they said. China's disease-control agency said in January it suspected the virus had come from a wild animal at the Huanan market and that identifying the beast was "only a matter of time."

Since then, Chinese officials have increasingly questioned whether the virus originated in the country and rejected calls for an international investigation from U.S., Australian and European officials.

China-U.S. relations have deteriorated as each side has aired allegations about the virus's origins. Chinese officials have suggested, without presenting evidence, that the outbreak stemmed from U.S. soldiers visiting Wuhan for a sports competition, which Washington denies and many scientists have dismissed as groundless.

President Trump and senior U.S. officials have alleged that the virus might have escaped from one of two laboratories in Wuhan doing experiments with coronaviruses in bats but haven't publicly shared evidence backing that claim. Beijing and the laboratories deny that, and several foreign scientists familiar with those experiments said they doubt the virus leaked that way.

China's National Health Commission didn't respond directly to detailed questions about the search for the virus's origins, saying only that it should be left to scientists.

"The virus should not be linked to any particular country, region or people," it said in a faxed statement. "Every country in the world should join forces and work together, rather than blaming each other and shirking responsibility."

China isn't the first country to resist an international investigation of a health crisis on its territory, and its early focus on controlling the virus is understandable, health experts said. They also said China had learned from the severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, outbreak in 2002-3, when it was slow to close wildlife markets where that virus spread to humans.

Yet China has only made public the genetic sequences of "environmental samples" from the market's sewers, stalls and a garbage truck—not material directly from any animals—Chinese and foreign researchers say. Some say they've been told by Chinese officials that animals taken from the market were destroyed. Several Huanan market vendors said they had not done tests to establish how many of them were infected.

Although Chinese officials said they were tracing the suppliers of wild meat in the market, they have not published any information on those people or animals they handled.

Meanwhile, China has frustrated efforts by foreign officials and researchers to join the hunt. When a World Health Organization mission visited Wuhan and other Chinese cities for nine days in February, Chinese officials and researchers appeared to be committed to the search, according to three people on the trip. They said they didn't go to the Huanan market, but discussed it and the potential animal origins of the virus with Chinese counterparts.

"Everyone acknowledged the importance of this," said Clifford Lane, the clinical director at the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who was part of the WHO mission. "My impression was that they were looking at it, they were thinking about it."

Officials from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention told the mission they would eventually be able to create an epidemiological map of the market showing details such as which animals were where, and which patients visited which section of the market, according to Dr. Lane. Such a map has yet to be shared.

The China CDC didn't respond to requests for comment.

The WHO has since made regular requests for updates on the search from the Chinese government, but has received none, the organization said in an emailed response to the Journal.

China's National Health Commission informed it only that those efforts were now being led by the Ministry of Science and Technology, the WHO said. The WHO also requested an update from the ministry but received none, the statement said.

China's Ministry of Science and Technology didn't respond to requests for comment.

"Information from these investigations is essential to public health, as it may hold the key to preventing further introductions" into the human population, the WHO said. It also said it was discussing with China another mission to the country, focusing on the virus' origins. Asked about that, China's foreign ministry said it would continue to cooperate with the WHO.

The Food and Agriculture Organization, a United Nations body trying to help coordinate research into animal origins of the virus, has been trying to get a team into China for weeks, according to people familiar with discussions. It planned an expert mission to China in mid-March but the trip has been postponed until at least the end of May, one of the people said.

The FAO said in an emailed statement: "We currently have no missions or official travels planned anywhere due to the pandemic situation."

EcoHealth Alliance, a nonprofit organization based in New York that has been studying coronaviruses in China for 15 years, has also offered its help, said Peter Daszak, the group's president. The group helped establish that the coronavirus that caused the SARS outbreak originated in bats and jumped to humans in a market in southern China, probably via catlike mammals called civets.

He said his partners in China had been unable to investigate the market. "It's really so sensitive now because of the conspiracy theories being put forward in China and the USA. In any case, I suspect it's simply too late," he said.

Likening the market to a potential crime scene, he said that since evidence there appeared to have been contaminated or inadvertently destroyed, the better option now was to test more widely for the virus in wild animals and humans who come into contact with them.

"It won't be fast and it won't be easy but we will get there, and it will need cooperation between China and other countries including the U.S.," he said.

Sensitive questions

Many health experts believe the new coronavirus lives naturally in bats and probably jumped to humans via another wild animal, possibly a civet cat or pangolin. The virus could have first jumped to a human at the Huanan market or it could have infected someone elsewhere, possibly a wild-meat trader, who then visited the market.

These are sensitive questions as much of the wild-animal trade in China is illegal and strict sanitary checks are required but not often done on those that can be bred and sold legally.

Huanan vendors and shoppers were reluctant to talk about the wild-meat trade. Some said they had seen various live and dead animals on sale—often in unsanitary conditions—at about 10 of the roughly 1,000 stalls in the market, which mostly sold seafood and closed on Jan. 1.

Among them was Dazhong Livestock and Game, which recently opened a new outlet in another Wuhan market. It offered live or dead animals including baby crocodiles, arctic foxes, raccoon dogs, bamboo rats and civets, according to a version of its now defunct website archived in July 2019.

Another vendor a few stalls down said that Dazhong had sold animals including dogs, snakes, donkeys and birds, often butchering them on site, but that he'd never seen illegal wildlife there.

Wang Konglin, Dazhong's owner, said in an interview that he stopped selling wild animals several years ago, and has since sold mainly beef and mutton. He said Chinese authorities had tested and questioned him but found no signs of infection or wrongdoing.

"I've never seen a pangolin, let alone sold one," he said. "Or a civet."

Some researchers and wildlife activists suspect that illicit animals were either not kept at the market or whisked away before Chinese officials arrived.

Mr. Lu, the 31-year-old manager of the Jiangwei Disinfection Company, said he didn't see any civets, pangolins or bats when he and his team arrived at the market to start spraying it down on Dec. 31.

Officials from the China CDC's local office were already there, and another team from its Beijing headquarters arrived on Jan. 1, when the market closed and vendors were ordered to leave all food products behind, he said.

Over the next few days, he said, he saw China CDC staff sampling and removing some of the live and dead animals. The officials got his team to help take about 70 to 80 specimens of feces and fur from the dead ones, mainly dogs and rabbits, he said.

Local officials didn't mention the disease on the first day, he said, and he used a regular concentration of 500 mg of chlorine dioxide per liter of water that day. He quadrupled the concentration the next day, after he learned more. The mixture was so strong it corroded much of his equipment, he said.

The China CDC's official account says only that its team from Beijing arrived on Jan. 1 and collected 585 "environment samples" from sewers, stalls and a garbage truck, and that 33 of them tested positive for the virus. Of those, 14 were from the area trading wildlife, it said. It doesn't mention animal samples.

When health experts from Taiwan and Hong Kong visited Wuhan in mid-January, a local CDC official told them no wild animals were found at the market, and such things were rarely eaten locally, according to one person present, who also said there was no discussion about other kinds of animals.

Ian Lipkin, a virologist at Columbia University who visited China in late January to help combat the virus, said his Chinese contacts told him that the China CDC did take samples from animals and meat at the market.

Dr. Lipkin, who also helped tackle SARS, said that George Gao, the China CDC chief, was initially convinced that the culprit was a bamboo rat, a rodent often sold as meat in China.

"After they went through and did this exhaustive search of the live and the dead and the frozen animals in various freezers, and they didn't come up with anything, they had to revise their model," said Dr. Lipkin.

He said Dr. Gao had told him that Chinese scientists had found the virus in the environmental samples but had been unable to identify which animal they likely came from.

There was "too much contamination, various animal parts, various species," Dr. Lipkin said. Dr. Gao didn't respond to requests for comment.

Dr. Lipkin said he and a Chinese counterpart had since proposed other ways to identify the source of the virus, including by testing blood samples of pneumonia patients across China from before December to see if it might have originated somewhere other than Wuhan.

Chinese authorities have yet to provide access to the relevant samples, however, according to Dr. Lipkin's Chinese counterpart, Lu Jiahai at Sun Yat-sen University.

The consensus that bats were the most likely original host derives largely from a research paper published on Jan. 23, which concluded that the genome of the new virus was 96% identical to that of another coronavirus previously found in bats from southwest China.

Among the paper's authors was Shi Zhengli, an expert on coronaviruses in bats at the Wuhan Institute of Virology—one of the places that U.S. officials have suggested was the source of the virus. She didn't respond to requests for comment.

A week later, China CDC researchers published a paper also concluding that bats could be the original hosts, but suggesting the virus spread to humans via another wild animal at the Huanan market, because most bats hibernated in December and none were sold or found at the market.

The conclusion that the virus likely came from an animal made it an issue not just for the WHO but for a lesser-known international body of which China is also a member, the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health, or OIE. It brought together experts from around the world to form an informal advisory group, which held the first of several teleconferences on Jan. 31.

The meeting's minutes say that samples were taken from several animal species at the market, and none tested positive, but "information about the number of samples and species sampled was not available."

The group recommended a thorough investigation of the wildlife trade in China, including any criminal involvement, as well as management of wet markets in Wuhan, among others. It is unclear how many of its recommendations China has adopted.

The OIE said in an emailed statement that it was liaising with Chinese veterinary authorities and had offered to help investigate the origins of the virus but no arrangements had been made yet.

It said Chinese experts were involved in several of its technical groups. The agency's minutes in recent months say the experts shared that Chinese scientists had tested domestic animals as well as animals on fur farms and found no trace of the virus. There has been no mention of the Huanan market in the minutes since the first teleconference in January. Some researchers believe the opportunity to investigate the market has long since passed.

"The problem is that this should have been done in late December or early January," said Dirk U. Pfeiffer, a professor of veterinary medicine and epidemiology at the City University of Hong Kong who is a member of the OIE's advisory group.

"It is now too late, which means we will have to rely on other indirect evidence, and therefore proof of cause will be close to impossible."

—Qianwei Zhang in Wuhan and Phred Dvorak in Tokyo contributed to this article.

Write to Jeremy Page at (b)(6) and Natasha Khan at (b)(6)

Sender:	(b)(6) (S) (b)(6)
Recipient:	St (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)