

From: "Stilwell, David R"
To: Chris Watanabe (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Wired: Inside the Early Days of China's Coronavirus Coverup
Date: Mon, 11 May 2020 23:42:03 +0000

I'll raise this tomorrow ("Do you sense there's institutional bias against this administration?"). Thanks for flagging.

From: Chris Watanabe (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 5:05 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Wired: Inside the Early Days of China's Coronavirus Coverup

This is another example of media bias. The headline grabs you as a definitive bash against the President. But when you read into the article, you'll see that this "study" has as much compelling evidence as the President's original assertion.

Essentially, they conducted an observational study which is widely known in the research industry as a study that simply suggests a correlation to cause and effect. But all scientists know that correlation does not equal causation. You don't see this disclaimer until the very end of the article. Of course, the headline gives you a more definitive perspective on the study and therefore concludes (without a doubt) the president is wrong and this study proves it.

This paragraph is contained in the article.

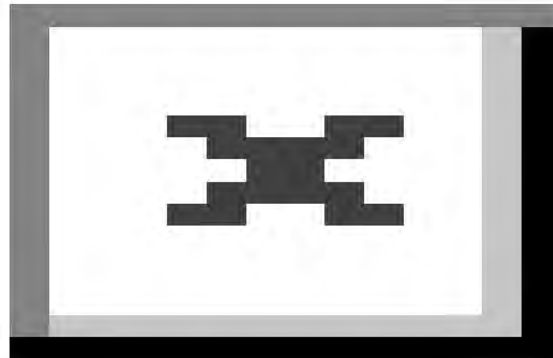
Observational studies aren't considered as conclusive as randomized controlled trials because doctors can prescribe a variety of other drugs to treat an infection. The less formal process, however, can yield faster results and help with the approval process of some treatments.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/11/coronavirus-tump-touted-drug-doesnt-help-patients-but-raises-heart-attack-risk-study-says.html>

Another study shows drug touted by Trump doesn't help coronavirus patients, but it can raise heart attack risk

PUBLISHED MON, MAY 11 2020 4:49 PM EDT

Berkeley Lovelace Jr. @BERKELEYJR



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to reporters during a meeting with Texas Governor Greg Abbott about coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, May 7, 2020.

Tom Brenner | Reuters

Another study shows that hydroxychloroquine — a drug President Donald Trump said showed promise in treating the coronavirus — doesn't help Covid-19 patients and, instead, places them at increased risk of heart attack.

Hydroxychloroquine taken in conjunction with azithromycin was associated with “significantly elevated levels of cardiac arrest” even after adjusting for factors such as sex, age, underlying health conditions and more severe illness, according to a new study in the JAMA Network published Monday.

Researchers at the University of Albany's School of Public Health analyzed more than 1,400 medical records of hospitalized patients with Covid-19 across 25 hospitals in New York.

“This observational study has given us an important early look at some key questions related to prescribing patterns of hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin and chloroquine,” David Holtgrave, dean at the University of Albany's School of Public Health and a researcher working with the state, said in a statement

to CNBC. "Unfortunately, we did not observe benefits of the most used drug (hydroxychloroquine with or without azithromycin) in this group of seriously ill, hospitalized patients."

Observational studies aren't considered as conclusive as randomized controlled trials because doctors can prescribe a variety of other drugs to treat an infection. The less formal process, however, can yield faster results and help with the approval process of some treatments.

On Mon, May 11, 2020 at 9:13 AM Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Now that you put it that way I find it hard to disagree--that's really disturbing. You wouldn't have seen that approach during the Cold War—Pro-D or Pro-R, neither was crazy about the Soviets.

I did a podcast with AEI "What the Hell?" last week (very friendly conversation, link below) and will talk with Kylie Atwood (CNN) tomorrow to try to get her to get past the anti-Trump feelings. I'm sure many of these people would prefer having Xi Jinping in the White House. We're doing our best to explain why that's not a good idea. . .kinda obvious.

Who would have thought we'd be here when we were sitting on your steps on a Tuesday night in November 2016? Good thing I listened to your logic on how to vote!

<https://www.aei.org/multimedia/wth-is-going-on-with-chinese-disinformation-assistant-secretary-stilwell-on-beijings-role-in-spreading-coronavirus-propaganda/>

From: Chris Watanabe (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 2:47 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov>

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

Unreal but yet it's the truth. This article is only stating the obvious but both the Chinese Govt and the US media both have separate agendas as to why the truth needs to be suppressed. The Chinese Govt's agenda is obvious but the US media's intent is to ensure that the Republican President take as much heat for this disaster as possible. In fact, they are attempting to suppress this information on their end to ensure this happens.

Ironically, the lies and deceit of the Chinese Govt can be compared to the same lies and deceit of the US media. The Chinese Govt and the US media are one in the same.

On Sat, May 9, 2020 at 1:13 PM Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov> 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.



<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: Chris Watanabe (b)(6)

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

(b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

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

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

(b)(6)

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

Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 20:47:34 +0000

Thanks, (b)(6) (b)(5)

Best regards,

Jamie Fouss

Consul General

U.S. Consulate Wuhan - DC Branch

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

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

To: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (h)(6) Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)

(b)(6) (b)(6) (Phnom Penh) (b)(6) (h)(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](#)

(h)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Wuhan)

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

To: Forden, Robert W (Beijing) (h)(6) >; Fouss, B. Jamison (Wuhan)

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

(b)(6)

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

All,

This one came out (b)(5)

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

(b)(5)

(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.

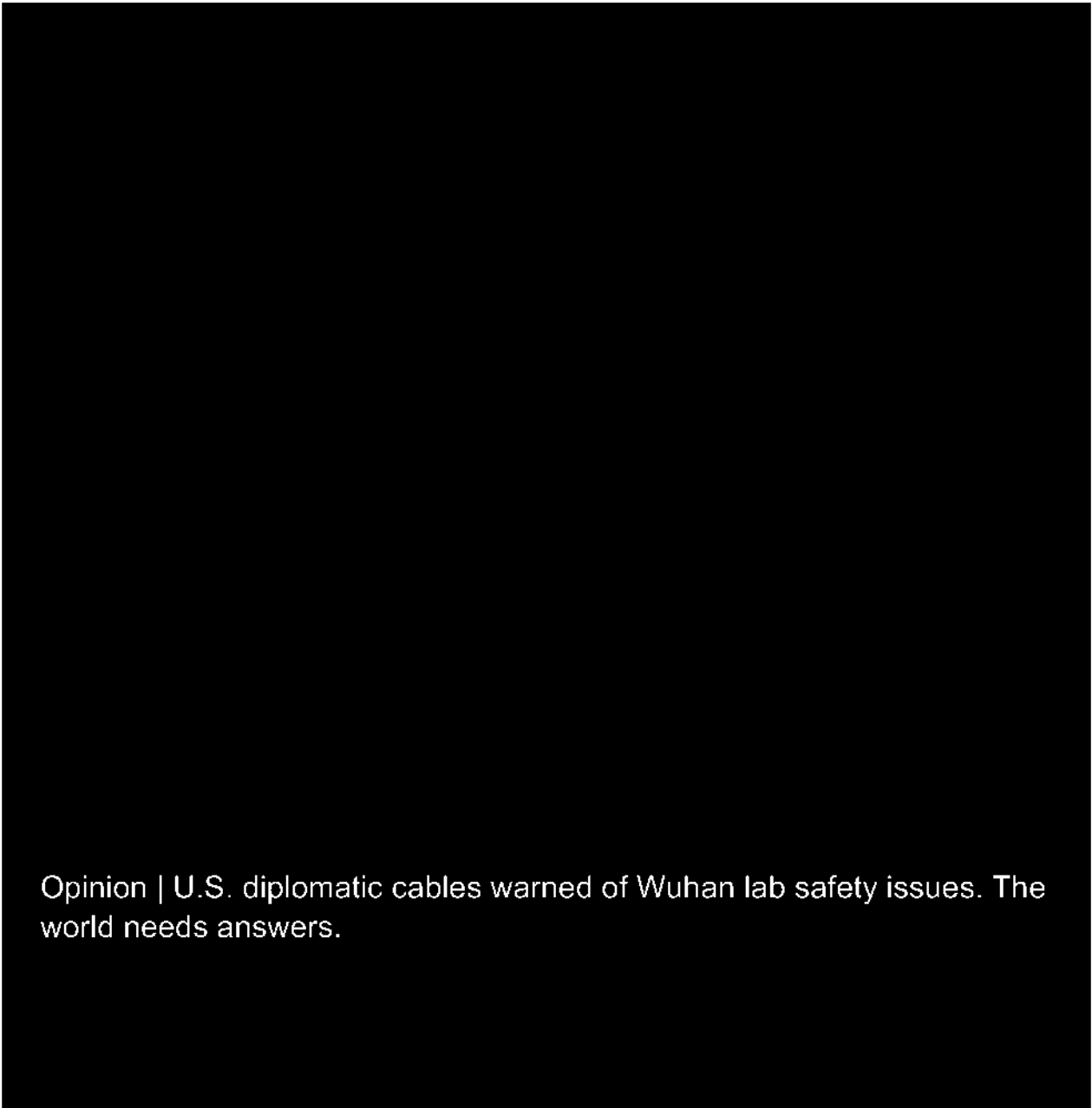
First of all, they want Pompeo to hand over the cables. The House Foreign Affairs Committee minority side has also put in a formal request for the cables. The State Department denied my request for the cables and declined to comment for this article.

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

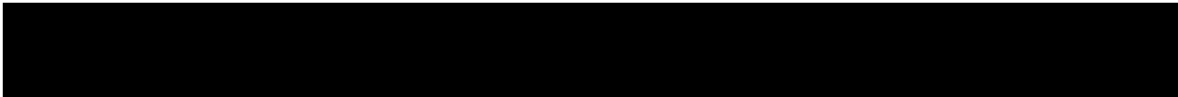
The senators also want to know: What did the State Department do to follow up on the cables? Did the U.S. government investigate its assertions, address its concerns, share the information with other agencies, engage the Chinese government on the matter or offer the WIV lab the help it was clearly asking 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)

(b)(6)

(Wuhan) (b)(6)

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

(b)(6)

(Phnom Penh) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox (b)(6)
EAP-FO-Staffer-DL (b)(6)
(b)(6)
CC: (b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: URGENT: WIV Cable
Date: Sun, 5 Apr 2020 13:36:43 +0000

(b)(6) and I just spoke. Hang tight and I'll find a drafter. —

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Sunday, April 5, 2020 9:00 AM

To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox; EAP-FO-Staffer-DL

Cc: (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: URGENT: WIV Cable

(b)(6) - we understand the story by Mr. Rogin may run in the immediate future. Is there any way the drafter can draft and submit the memo to me and staffers by 3 pm today?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: Moppert, Brooke S <MoppertBS@state.gov>

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 10:02:48 PM

To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox (b)(6)@state.gov; EAP-FO-Staffer-DL (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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

(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L

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

Subject: Fwd: WIV Cable

Staffers, Please task to (b)(6) an AM to S requesting S allow EAP to share two SBU cables with a Washington Post journalist.

Memo must provide policy justification (hence (b)(6) tasking). Must have EAP/P clearance. Due Tuesday at noon. Can be done entirely on the low side.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 9:55 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: S_SpecialAssistants; (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L; EAP-Press
Subject: Re: WIV Cable

ExecSec (b)(6)

Understood, will do. Thank you.

(b)(6)

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 9:16:21 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) S_SpecialAssistants (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) (b)(6); EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: WIV Cable

EAP to S via the line pls. Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 3, 2020, at 8:57 PM, (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:

Think this is best coming from EAP because of the policy implications. But defer to (b)(6)

(b)(6)

U.S. Department of State
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 3, 2020, at 6:56 PM, (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:

S Special Colleagues/(b)(6)

A/S Stilwell would like to release the attached SBU cables to Josh Rogin of the Washington Post to respond to a query. We understand S would need to determine whether or not to release.

Could you please let us know if ExecSec (b)(6) would prefer the request come to S via a SPOX public affairs decision memo or via a traditional AM through the Line?

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 6:46 PM

To: (b)(6) (b)(6) EAP-P-Office-DL (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

Subject: Fwd: WIV Cable

(b)(6) can someone on your team do a an action memo asking S permission to release these cables to Washington Post for the purposes of responding to Josh Rogin's query?

This might have to go through the Line as an AM instead of treating it like a public decision memo but defer to (b)(6) I can also ask my old team on S staff how it should be handled.

Richard L. Buangan
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)
U.S. Department of State
Email: (b)(6)@state.gov

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
Date: April 3, 2020 at 18:26:16 EDT
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6), "Buangan, Richard L" (b)(6), (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: WIV Cable

For the Rogin story. Actual cables attached.

Hopefully we can get them released and have (b)(6) sit down with Josh to discuss.

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:15 PM
To: (b)(6), Stilwell, David R (b)(6), (b)(6)
(b)(6), (b)(6), (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6), Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
Subject: Re: WIV Cable

Here are the most relevant elements:

From 2018 Cables:

1. ~~(SBU)~~ **Summary with Comment:** 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 (Ref A). Given the legacy of SARS and the likelihood that the next global pandemic will originate in China, (b)(5)

(b)(5)
(b)(5) **End Summary with Comment.**

5. ~~(SBU)~~ During interactions with scientists at the WIV laboratory, they noted that the new lab has a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory.

6. ~~(SBU)~~ The ability of WIV scientists to undertake productive research despite limitations on the use of the new BSL-4 facility is demonstrated by a recent publication on the origins of SARS. Over a five-year study, Drs. Shi and Cui Jie (and their research team) widely sampled bats in Yunnan province with funding support from NIAID/NIH, USAID, and several Chinese funding agencies. The study results were published in PLoS Pathogens online on Nov. 30, 2017 (1), and it demonstrated that a SARS-like coronaviruses isolated from horseshoe bats in a single cave contain all the building blocks of the pandemic SARS-coronavirus genome that caused the human outbreak. These results strongly suggest that the highly pathogenic SARS-coronavirus originated in this bat population. Most importantly, 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 disease. From a public health perspective, (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) It is interesting that WIV scientists are allowed to study the SARS-like coronaviruses isolated from bats while they are precluded from studying human-disease causing SARS coronavirus in their new BSL-4 lab until permission for such work is granted by the NHFCP.

Get Outlook for iOS

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

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:14:18 PM

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

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

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

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

Attached. They're also on an email from a few days ago with (b)(6)

--

(b)(6)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov

On April 3, 2020 at 5:11:51 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:
First one to get me a soft copy of Rick's Wuhan cables gets a Samoa Cookie.
drs

David R. Stilwell
Ass't Secretary East Asia Pacific

(b)(6)

<18-WUHAN-38.eml.pdf>

<18-BEIJING-138.eml.pdf>

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

Recipient:

(b)(6) (b)(6)
EAP-Staffers Mailbox (b)(6) (b)(6)
EAP-FO-Staffer-DL (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)

Buangan, Richard L	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
(b)(6)		

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Updated timeline of PRC coverup (April 17)
Date: Sat, 18 Apr 2020 00:21:09 +0000

Thank you. Really helpful chronology

(b)(6) (E/STAS)

The Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

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

Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 7:19:05 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (h)(6); EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>;

(b)(6) Matthew Pottinger (b)(6) (b)(6)

(h)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

(b)(6) (Geneva)

(h)(6) Bray, Leah (h)(6) Buangan, Richard L

(h)(6)

(b)(6) Snyder, Nicholas (b)(6)

(b)(6) Storch, Thomas (b)(6)

(AID/A) (h)(6) (AID/A)

(h)(6)

(b)(6) Ford, Christopher A (h)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6) Kritenbrink, Daniel J (Hanoi)

(b)(6) Harris, Harry B (Seoul) (h)(6)

(h)(6)

(b)(6)

(Canberra) (h)(6)

(b)(6) C_Policy <C_Policy@state.gov>;

(h)(6)

Zadrozny, John A. EOP/WHO (b)(6)

Subject: Updated timeline of PRC coverup (April 17)

Updated timeline attached, through April 17. New elements include:

— 2015 —

November 9: Researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology (including Shi Zhengli) and several U.S. labs (including the FDA's National Center for Toxicological Research) publish a study in *Nature Medicine* entitled "A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence." It stated: "To examine the emergence potential (that is, the potential to infect humans) of circulating bat CoVs, we built a chimeric virus encoding a novel, zoonotic CoV spike protein—from the RsSHC014-CoV sequence that was isolated from Chinese horseshoe bats—in the context of the SARS-CoV mouse-adapted backbone."

— 2019 —

March 2: Researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology publish a study in the medical journal *Viruses* noting that “it is highly likely that future SARS- or MERS-like coronavirus outbreaks will originate from bats, and there is an increased probability that this will occur in China.”

March 5: Gao Fu, director of the PRC’s CDC, says in a speech: “Viruses like SARS could emerge anytime, but there’ll never be another SARS incident. That’s thanks to how well our national contagious disease surveillance system works.”

— 2020 —

January 3: The Wuhan Health Commission sets narrow criteria for confirming that a case is officially part of the outbreak, saying patients can be counted only if they had ties to the Huanan seafood market, excluding the growing number of cases with no such ties. An official from a district disease control center in Wuhan also tells a hospital doctor handling infection reports that “this was a special contagious disease and we should report only after superiors had notified us.”

January 6: The head of an expert team sent to Wuhan from Beijing, Xu Jianguo, reports that “China has many years of disease control, there’s absolutely no chance that this will spread widely because of Spring Festival travel,” and there is “no evidence of human-to-human transmission.”

January 10: After leading a second expert team from Beijing to Wuhan, prominent PRC government expert Wang Guangfa tells state broadcaster CCTV that the Wuhan pneumonia was “under control” and mostly a “mild condition.” His team reported no clear signs of human-to-human transmission, though more than half a dozen doctors already were ill. [On March 15, Wang wrote on social media that he “always suspected it was human-to-human transmissible.”]

January 14: In a confidential teleconference with provincial health officials, PRC National Health Commission chief Ma Xiaowei reportedly warns that the novel virus is “the most severe challenge since SARS in 2003, and is likely to develop into a major public health event,” adding that “clustered cases suggest that human-to-human transmission is possible.” Citing the case reported in Thailand the day prior, Ma warns of spread overseas and during China’s coming Lunar New Year festivities. It would be another six days before any of these official concerns are made public.

January 15: A day after the confidential teleconference, China’s CDC initiates the highest-level emergency response internally and the National Health Commission distributes 63 pages of instructions to provinces on identifying cases and equipping doctors with protective gear. These instructions are marked “internal,” “not to be spread on the internet,” and “not to be publicly disclosed.”

February 15: Finance magazine *Barron’s* finds that China’s official coronavirus data fit a near-perfect model that is almost impossible to naturally occur, as the number of cumulative deaths reported could be predicted by a simple mathematical formula to a 99.99% accuracy.

March 3: WHO chief Tedros plays down the risk of asymptomatic silent carriers, citing official PRC data: “COVID-19 does not transmit as efficiently as influenza, from the data we have so far. With influenza, people who are infected but not yet sick are major drivers of transmission, which does not appear to be the case for COVID-19. Evidence from China is that only 1% of

reported cases do not have symptoms, and most of those cases develop symptoms within two days." Later reports cited classified PRC data showing up to 33% of cases were asymptomatic (see March 22).

April 17: Wuhan raises its official tally of Covid-19 fatalities by 1,290, to nearly 3,900, blaming the initial undercount on cases unrecognized, untreated, or underreported by overstressed hospitals.

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(o)

(c)

(b)(6)

On April 13, 2020 at 9:51:31 AM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:

Updated timeline attached. This version notes at the top that major themes include:

--The silenced and the disappeared: E.g. Wuhan doctors Li Wenliang, Ai Fen and others; journalists Fang Bin, Chen Quishi, and Li Zehua; activist Xu Zhiyong; professor Xu Zhangrun; billionaire CCP member and Xi Jinping critic Ren Zhiqiang...

--The suppression and destruction of evidence: E.g. virus samples ordered destroyed at genomics labs, wildlife market stalls bleached, genome sequence not shared publicly, Shanghai lab closed for "rectification" after sharing genome on its own, academic articles subjected to prior review by the Ministry of Science and Technology...

--The deadly denial of human-to-human transmission: Despite evidence of human-human transmission from early December, PRC authorities deny it until Jan. 20. The World Health Organization does the same. Yet officials in Taiwan raised concerns about human-human transmission as early as Dec. 31, as did experts in Hong Kong on Jan. 4...

--The endangerment of other countries: Millions of people leave Wuhan after the outbreak and before Beijing locks down the city on Jan. 23. Thousands fly overseas. When Beijing cuts off travel from Hubei Province to the rest of China, it doesn't stop travel from Hubei to the rest of the world. Throughout February, Beijing presses the U.S., Italy, India, Australia, Southeast Asian neighbors and others not to protect themselves via travel restrictions...

New timeline elements in the attached:

--2013--

Researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology collect a sample of horseshoe bat feces from a cave in Yunnan Province, China. The sample, labeled RaTG13, is later found to contain a virus 96.2% identical to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19.

--2019--

February 20: Researchers at Hong Kong University publish a study of bat coronaviruses, warning: "bat-animal and bat-human interactions, such as the presence of live bats in wildlife wet markets and restaurants in Southern China, are important for interspecies transmission of [coronaviruses] and may lead to devastating global outbreaks."

December 30: Wuhan Institute of Virology researcher Shi Zhengli (known as "bat-woman" for her research) is called by the Institute's director and summoned back to Wuhan from a conference in Shanghai to study samples of the novel coronavirus. "Could they have come from our lab?" Shi feared.

--2020--

January 7: Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Institute of Virology recalled in a March 11 interview with Scientific American that by January 7 her team found that the novel coronavirus's sequence did not match any of the viruses her team had sampled from bat caves. "That really took a load off my mind," she said. But the novel sequence was 96% identical to one her team had sampled previously in Yunnan.

January 13: The first coronavirus case outside of China is reported in Bangkok when a 61-year-old woman from Wuhan tests positive four days after arriving from China with a fever at the airport. The patient had begun exhibiting symptoms (fever, chills, sore throat, headache) three days before leaving Wuhan.

January 15: The patient who becomes the first confirmed U.S. case leaves Wuhan and arrives in the U.S., carrying the coronavirus.

January 22: WHO holds emergency committee meeting, decides not to declare the novel coronavirus a "public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)." WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says afterward that declaring a PHEIC is a decision he takes "extremely seriously" and is "only prepared to make with appropriate consideration of all the evidence." The emergency committee meeting excluded Taiwan from its deliberations.

January 23: Despite locking down Wuhan and cutting off travel from the surrounding Hubei Province to the rest of China, PRC officials did not cut off travel from Hubei Province to the rest of the world.

January 24: Officials in Beijing prevent the Wuhan Institute of Virology from sharing samples of the novel coronavirus with the University of Texas biocontainment lab, overruling an initial agreement by the Wuhan lab to share these samples.

January 30: WHO declares a public-health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), after nearly 10,000 cases of the virus are confirmed, including in at least 18 countries outside of China.

February 6: Researchers from South China University of Technology publish a study concluding that “the killer coronavirus probably originated from a laboratory in Wuhan. Safety level may need to be reinforced in high risk biohazardous laboratories.” The paper is soon withdrawn because it “was not supported by direct proofs,” according to author Botao Xiao. “No scientists have confirmed or refuted the paper’s findings,” scholar Yanzhong Huang wrote on March 5.

February 16: The Wuhan Institute of Virology issues a public denial that its former researcher Huang Yanling is “patient zero,” as speculated on Chinese social media based on changes to the Institute’s website and Huang’s unknown whereabouts. Institute researcher Shi Zhengli writes on social media that she “guaranteed with her own life” that the outbreak was unrelated to the lab. [In 2004, China suffered a SARS outbreak due to a lab leak that killed one person and infected nine. PRC authorities blamed negligence and punished five senior officials at the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.]

February 23: Xi Jinping delivers speech to PRC officials calling virus “a crisis for us and also a major test.” He stresses “social stability” and states that “the effectiveness of the prevention and control work has once again demonstrated the significant advantages of the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the socialist system with Chinese characteristics.”

March 11: WHO declares the novel coronavirus a “pandemic,” after the official worldwide case count is 118,000 people in 114 countries.

March 26: China bars entry of all foreigners in attempt to limit virus spread. This measure is harsher than the travel restrictions of other countries that Beijing had criticized just weeks before.

April 3: While lifting lockdown restrictions in Wuhan, officials limit funerals of those who died from the coronavirus, suppress online discussions of fatalities, scrub images of funeral homes from social media, assign minders to families in mourning, and face questions from families such as why it took the government weeks to inform the public that the virus could spread among humans.

April 3: China’s Ministry of Science and Technology announces that ongoing clinical research on the coronavirus must be reported to authorities within three days or be halted.

April 7: Human rights activists report, citing public records alone, that Chinese police punished nearly 900 people for online speech or information-sharing about the virus over three months.

April 11: Chinese universities publish online—and then apparently delete—new guidelines

stating that academic papers on the origin of the novel coronavirus can be published only with the approval of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)

(c)

(b)(6)

On April 2, 2020 at 4:58:00 PM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:

Updated here to include more on the WHO, and some other tweaks. Please use this document (stamped 5pm).

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)

(c)

(b)(6)

On April 2, 2020 at 3:07:15 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

Would like to include the timeline of WHO requesting access to the site (mid-January, I believe), WHO ADVON getting permission to travel to Beijing (10 Feb), and the investigative team actually heading out to investigate (around 20 Feb).

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 11:16 AM

To: EAP-FO-Principals-DL <EAP-FO-Principals-DL@state.gov>; NSC Asia

(b)(6) Matthew Pottinger (b)(6) (b)(6)

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

(b)(6) (Geneva)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

(b)(6) Snyder, Nicholas

(b)(6) Storch,

Thomas (b)(6)

(b)(6) (PPL/AA) (b)(6)

(b)(6); Ford,
Christopher A (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Harris,
Harry B (Seoul) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Canberra)
(b)(6)

Subject: Updated timeline of PRC coverup (April 2)

Some of the new items in the attached:

January 4: Amid PRC denials, another expert outside mainland China begins to sound alarms over human-to-human transmission. The head of the University of Hong Kong's Centre for Infection, Ho Pak-leung, warns that Hong Kong "should implement the strictest possible monitoring system for a mystery new viral pneumonia that has infected dozens of people on the mainland, as it is highly possible that the illness is spreading from human to human."

January 23: Chinese authorities lock down Wuhan, after letting some five million people leave the city without screening in the weeks prior, amid the growing outbreak. NYT estimates seven million people left between Jan. 1 and Jan 23. Before the lockdown, some 900 people flew from Wuhan to New York City per month on average, while some 2,200 flew to Sydney and 15,000 to Bangkok (site of the first overseas case of the novel coronavirus in mid-January). Some 85% of infected travelers went undetected.

January 30: WHO special committee on the novel coronavirus states that it "does not recommend any travel or trade restriction based on the current information available."

January 31: U.S. shuts down entry from China for non-Americans. By this time, outbreaks were already growing in 30 cities across 26 countries. PRC state media criticize the U.S. travel advisory urging citizens not to travel to China due to health concerns. PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims the U.S. action is "certainly not a gesture of goodwill."

February 1: Referring to travel restrictions, PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi tells his Indian counterpart that China "opposes certain countries' actions that are creating tension and causing panic."

February 3: WHO chief Tedros calls on countries not to take measures that "unnecessarily interfere with international travel and trade." He adds, "The chances of getting this going to anywhere outside China is very low, and even in China, when you go to other provinces, it's very low." This statement was amplified in PRC state media.

February 6: Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Qin Gang meets with Italy's ambassador to China and "requires" Italy to suspend its decision cancelling direct flights between Italy and China. PRC press release states that Beijing "is strongly dissatisfied with the overreaction and restrictions of the Italian side" and claims that Italy agreed to resume some flights.

February 20: At a meeting with ASEAN foreign ministers, PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi pressures countries to ease travel restrictions, saying: "In light³¹ of the conditions on the ground, countries need to resume people-to-people ties and cooperation."

February 29: WHO announces that it "continues to advise against the application of travel or trade restrictions to countries experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks."

March 31: Chinese National Health Commission announces for the first time that it excluded from its national tally people who were infected with the virus but without symptoms, and that as of April 1 it would begin including these in the tally "in order to respond to society's concern in a timely manner."

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(o)

(c)

(b)(6)

On March 22, 2020 at 4:58:25 PM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:
Attached updates thru today, March 22. Thanks for suggestions.

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(o)

(c)

(b)(6)

On March 18, 2020 at 7:53:15 PM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:
Updated coverup timeline attached, including publication of this study March 11.

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

(b)(6) (c)

(b)(6)

On March 18, 2020 at 3:52:25 PM EDT, (b)(6) wrote:

Shocking detail here from March 11 University of Southampton study. Estimates that if Beijing had owned up to the Wuhan virus and responded with significant measures just a week before it did, 66% of cases could have been avoided. And had Beijing responded three weeks sooner, 95% could have been avoided.

From <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/2020/03/covid-19-china.page>: "The research also found that if interventions in the country could have been conducted one week, two weeks, or three weeks earlier, cases could have been reduced by 66 percent, 86 percent and 95 percent respectively – significantly limiting the geographical spread of the disease."

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)

(c)

(b)(6)

<Wuhan virus coverup timeline 2020 03 18.docx>

<Wuhan virus coverup timeline 2020 03 22.docx>

<Coronavirus coverup timeline 2020 04 02.docx>

<Coronavirus coverup timeline 2020 04 13.pdf>

Sender: (b)(6)

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

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Peter Daszak (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Some information for your cable write-up
Date: Thu, 7 Sep 2017 18:40:51 +0800

All, we greatly appreciated the opportunity to discuss GVP and the opportunity to forge a stronger US-China partnership. We look forward to seeing the cable and including OES in the discussion.

(b)(6) a double thanks for hosting the reception at your home.
Greatly appreciated

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

U.S. Agency for International Development

Office: (b)(6)

Mobile: (b)(6)

> On Sep 7, 2017, at 12:03 PM, (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) wrote:

>

> Hi Peter,

>

> This is very helpful. We will do our best to get the message back to Washington that this is a critically important program worthy of higher level policy attention. Let's keep in close contact in the lead up to your launch at PMAC.

>

> As always it was a pleasure meeting with you and (b)(6)

>

> All the best,

>

(b)(6)

>

> Official

> UNCLASSIFIED

> From: Peter Daszak (b)(6) (b)(6)

> Sent: Wednesday, September 06, 2017 7:05 PM

> To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
> Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP); (b)(6)
(Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/HIDN) (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
(Beijing); (b)(6) (b)(6)

> Subject: Some information for your cable write-up

> Importance: High

>

> Hi (b)(6)

>

> I'm just sending a couple of background docs that might be of interest for you and the group from the smaller meeting yesterday, as well as a summary below that you may want to pick out some information from for your cable write-up.

>

>

> 1) Attached summary of the meetings we had at CAS-Institute of Microbiology just prior to meeting at the embassy: Who was present and what the key take homes are.

>

>

>

> 2) Attached GVP manuscript currently in review at Science as a Policy Forum. The paper outlines the scientific rationale for the GVP, the basis for our estimates of global viral diversity in mammals and water birds, and the basis for cost estimates. It also lays out information on the goals of the GVP, and details of the proposed approach to governance and financing. I'll let you know when we get final word on its likely publication date, but please feel free to lift sections from this word doc and communicate these internally

>

>

> 3) Attached manuscript on the new coronavirus causing mass die-offs in pig farms in Guangdong Province, led by (b)(6) in collaboration with a group of Chinese institutions, Duke NUS Singapore and EcoHealth Alliance

(b)(5)

>

> I hope this information is useful and I want to thank you, (b)(6) and the rest of the team again for hosting us and for your advice and support as we begin launching this program.

>
>
>
>
> Cheers,
>
> Peter
>
>
>
> Peter Daszak
> President
>
> EcoHealth Alliance
> 460 West 34th Street - 17th Floor
> New York, NY 10001
>
> Tel. +1 212-380-4473
> www.ecohealthalliance.org<<http://www.ecohealthalliance.org>>
>
> EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge 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.
>
>
> -----Original Appointment-----
> From: Beijing USAID (Beijing) [mailto:BeijingUSAID@state.gov]
> Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 12:07 AM
> To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/HIDN);
Peter Daszak; (b)(6) (Beijing)
> Subject: Small Working Lunch on global health security in honor of USAID/GVP-Global Virome Project team visit to Beijing
> When: Tuesday, September 5, 2017 12:00 PM-1:00 PM (UTC+08:00) Beijing, Chongqing, Hong Kong, Urumqi.
> Where: Mammoth Cave Conference Room, 5th Floor, NOX
>
>
> Hi all,
>
> We would like to host a small working lunch to focus on the global health security portion of our development assistance to discuss how we might wrap Global Virome Project (GVP) and our USAID PREDICT 2 Project into the portfolio with MOFCOM.
>
> See you there!
>

> Visitors:

> (b)(6) Global Health Security and Development, Bureau for Global Health,
USAID/Washington

> Peter Daszak, President, EcoHealth Alliance

> For more information about GVP, please look at: <http://www.globalviromeproject.org/about/>.

>

>

> (b)(6)

> Development Counselor

> USAID/Beijing

> Tel: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) E-mail:

(b)(6)

>

> <winmail.dat>

Sender:

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(Beijing) (b)(6)

Peter Daszak (b)(6)

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

Recipient:

(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6)

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

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

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

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)" (b)(6)
To: Peter Daszak (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) CDC/CGH/DGHP (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
CC: (b)(6) GH/HIDN (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Some information for your cable write-up
Date: Thu, 7 Sep 2017 00:02:44 -0400

Hi Peter,

This is very helpful. We will do our best (b)(5)
(b)(5) Let's keep in close contact in the lead up to
your launch at PMAC.

As always it was a pleasure meeting with you and (b)(6)

All the best,

(b)(6)

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Peter Daszak [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, September 06, 2017 7:05 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
(b)(6) GH/HIDN (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (b)(6)
Subject: Some information for your cable write-up
Importance: High

Hi (b)(6)

I'm just sending a couple of background docs that might be of interest for you and the group from the smaller meeting yesterday, as well as a summary below that you may want to pick out some information from for your cable write-up.

- 1) Attached summary of the meetings we had at CAS-Institute of Microbiology just prior to meeting at the embassy: Who was present and what the key take homes are.
- 2) Attached GVP manuscript currently in review at *Science* as a *Policy Forum*. The paper outlines the scientific rationale for the GVP, the basis for our estimates of global viral diversity in

mammals and water birds, and the basis for cost estimates. It also lays out information on the goals of the GVP, and details of the proposed approach to governance and financing. I'll let you know when we get final word on its likely publication date, but please feel free to lift sections from this word doc and communicate these internally

- 3) Attached manuscript on the new coronavirus causing mass die-offs in pig farms in Guangdong Province, led by (b)(6) in collaboration with a group of Chinese institutions, Duke NUS Singapore and EcoHealth Alliance (b)(5)

(b)(5)

I hope this information is useful and I want to thank you, (b)(6) and the rest of the team again for hosting us and for your advice and support as we begin launching this program.

Cheers,

Peter

Peter Daszak

President

EcoHealth Alliance

460 West 34th Street – 17th Floor

New York, NY 10001

Tel. (b)(6)

www.ecohealthalliance.org

EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge 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.

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Beijing USAID (Beijing) [<mailto:BeijingUSAID@state.gov>]

Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 12:07 AM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/HIDN); Peter Daszak; (b)(6) (b)(6) (Beijing)

Subject: Small Working Lunch on global health security in honor of USAID/GVP-Global Virome Project team visit to Beijing

When: Tuesday, September 5, 2017 12:00 PM-1:00 PM (UTC+08:00) Beijing, Chongqing, Hong Kong, Urumqi.

Where: Mammoth Cave Conference Room, 5th Floor, NOX

Hi all,

We would like to host a small working lunch to focus on the global health security portion of our development assistance to discuss how we might wrap Global Virome Project (GVP) and our USAID PREDICT 2 Project into the portfolio with MOFCOM.

See you there!

Visitors:

(b)(6) Global Health Security and Development, Bureau for Global Health,
USAID/Washington

Peter Daszak, President, EcoHealth Alliance

For more information about GVP, please look at: <http://www.globalviromeproject.org/about/>.

(b)(6)

Development Counselor

USAID/Beijing

Tel: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) E-mail: (b)(6)

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

Peter Daszak (b)(6) @ (b)(6)

(h)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)

(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6) (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (GH/HIDN) (b)(6)

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

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

b)(6) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) @state.gov>;
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday
Date: Tue, 24 Apr 2018 03:10:15 -0400

H (b)(6)

After confirming again with Hongying LI, they have to flight back to NYC on May 6th leaving only available on May 4th. Sorry.

(b)(6) USAID/Beijing

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:34 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
(Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

I am here next week from Wed – Friday May 2-4 then out of the office May 8-11.

(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: Switzer, Bryan R (Rick) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:29 PM
To: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing); Yang, Hua (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Sorry I had it confused with this Friday. I will be out of town next week. Are they in after next week.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:17
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

1:30 OK for me. Thanks!

(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: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:16 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

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)

Administrative and Program Assistant

USAID/Beijing

US Embassy Beijing

Phone: (b)(6) Fax: (b)(6)

E-mail: (b)(6)

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

From: Hongying Li (b)(6)@ecohealthalliance.org]
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) Li (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)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6);
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday
Date: Tue, 24 Apr 2018 03:18:41 -0400

Thanks. Sure.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 3:18 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Ok thanks. Can you please invite (b)(6) to attend in my place.

Best,

(b)(6)

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 15:10
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Hi (b)(6)

After confirming again with (b)(6) they have to flight back to NYC on May 6th leaving only available on May 4th. Sorry.

(b)(6) USAID/Beijing

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:34 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

I am here next week from Wed – Friday May 2-4 then out of the office May 8-11.

(b)(6)

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: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:29 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

Sorry I had it confused with this Friday. I will be out of town next week. Are they in after next week.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:17
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

1:30 OK for me. Thanks!

(b)(6)

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: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 12:16 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: Meeting on May 4th, Friday

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) and (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)
Administrative and Program Assistant
USAID/Beijing
US Embassy Beijing
Phone: (b)(6) **Fax:** (b)(6)
E-mail: (b)(6)
<http://www.usaid.gov> <http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/usaid.html>

From: (b)(6) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 4:43 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: Peter Daszak; (b)(6)
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)
(b)(6) Chinese ID: (b)(6)

Look forward to seeing you soon!

Best,
(b)(6)

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) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: "Ortagus, Morgan D" (b)(6)
To: Shedd, Leslie (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Seid, Sophica (b)(6)
(b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Geneva) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) @state.gov>;
Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction
Date: Mon, 6 Jul 2020 18:05:18 +0000

Thanks for the heads up, (b)(6)! This is great and important stuff.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Shedd, Leslie (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 1:25:48 PM
To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); Seid, Sophica (b)(6)
Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

Sorry for all the emails but just a head's up on one more thing on this topic... the very first question (obviously planted) in the [CCP's weekly press conference](#) today was on this story. The CCP once again threw some shade at my boss and lied about the facts, but interestingly, they are now repeating this claim by the WHO on their new timeline that the Wuhan Health Commission posted something about the outbreak on their website. First – I still haven't seen any proof they actually posted this thing on December 31st. And second – even if they did post it on that date, that is still not reporting to the WHO as required by the IHRs.

In other words, it seems to me like the CCP is now admitting they violated the International Health Regulations that were set up in 2005 after the CCP bungled the SARS outbreak in 2003/2004. Just wanted to get you a head's up on this. I'm sending this around to reporters as well!



Leslie Shedd

Communications Director, Foreign Affairs Committee Republicans

p: (b)(6) w: republicans-foreignaffairs.house.gov

e: (b)(6) @HouseForeignGOP

From: "Ortagus, Morgan D" (b)(6)
Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 at 12:20 PM
To: "Shedd, Leslie" (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) "Seid, Sophica"

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

Gracias!!

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Shedd, Leslie (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 12:15:35 PM

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

Cc: (b)(6); Seid, Sophica (b)(6)

Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

Sure! Here is the CNN report: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/23/health/wuhan-coronavirus-cdc-advisers/index.html>.

This says it was "reported" to the WHO and cites the WHO website. But obviously it wasn't reported to the WHO – their staff found out on their own.

And here is the Axios report: <https://www.axios.com/timeline-the-early-days-of-chinas-coronavirus-outbreak-and-cover-up-ee65211a-afb6-4641-97b8-353718a5faab.html>

Also, National Review pointed out that Washington Post also said the Chinese government reported it: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/02/01/early-missteps-state-secrecy-china-likely-allowed-coronavirus-spread-farther-faster/>

But I haven't flagged this story for their reporters.

If y'all flag it, I would appreciate it if you don't mention that I told you about this. Only because I don't want them to feel like I'm tattling on them.



Leslie Shedd

Communications Director, Foreign Affairs Committee Republicans

(b)(6)

W: republicans-foreignaffairs.house.gov

(b)(6)

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

Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 at 11:59 AM

To: "Shedd, Leslie" (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6) "Seid, Sophica"

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

Super interesting. We are also happy to pressure CNN and Axios to correct if you don't mind providing the details

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Shedd, Leslie (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 11:16:50 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6); Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) Seid, Sophia (b)(6)
Subject: Re: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

Hey guys! I love that y'all picked this up! This was something our staffer Chris Farrar found out last week just by stalking the Who website. We were pushing it around late last week and got some great stories on it. But it is amazing to have the Secretary's voice behind it! Let us know if we can be helpful to y'all on this in any way.

I wanted to flag something for you that we discovered over the weekend as well after the first round of stories were published. One of the outlets we pitched was Voice of America and they found out the [timeline on the WHO website in Chinese](#) (Mandarin) was NOT updated. In other words, the WHO has not alerted the Chinese audience of the fact that the outbreak was not reported by China but rather discovered by WHO staff who read media reports.

Here is their story (it's in Mandarin): <https://www.voachinese.com/a/who-updated-timeline-china-covid-outbreak-20200703/5488539.html>

Here is their tweet in

Mandarin: <https://twitter.com/VOAChinese/status/127923788222309377?s=20>. (The reporter is @voayihua).

We are flagging this update for reporters today as well.

Also, just a side note and not to be linked back to me, we spoke to at least two of the outlets who posted inaccurate information based on the WHO's lie that it was reported by the CCP to the WHO – CNN and Axios. But both have so far chosen not to cover this updated timeline or the fact that the WHO lied to them about how they found out about the virus. Just thought y'all might find that interesting.



Leslie Shedd

Communications Director, Foreign Affairs Committee Republicans

(b)(6) w/ republicans-foreignaffairs.house.gov

(b)(6) t/ @HouseForeignGOP

From: (b)(6)
Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 at 11:09 AM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6), "Ortagus, Morgan D"
(b)(6)
Subject: ICYMI: WHO Admits to CCP's Obstruction

All,

Over the weekend more concerning news arrived out of the World Health Organization (WHO). As the world started to grapple with the alarming reports out of Wuhan at the end of 2019, the WHO stated that they were working closely with the Chinese Communist Party, which included sharing life-saving information with the organization. We now know this wasn't true as the WHO has admitted that China never reported the existence of the outbreak to the WHO, and instead learned of its existence from U.S. doctors posting information online from Wuhan.

As the world is still recovering from the coronavirus, we are now seeing that President Trump's decision to halt funding to the WHO was the right one. We cannot continue to provide funding for organizations that chooses to hide the truth to protect their authoritarian friends and will search for new avenues to provide funding to protect public health.

Secretary Pompeo on WHO's Shortcomings in April

SECRETARY POMPEO: WHO? So with the WHO, we're going to get this right. We're the biggest contributor to the World Health Organization. It failed in its mission here, and so we're conducting a review to figure out how best to use American taxpayer money to deliver real outcomes... We shouldn't pretend that because some organization has "health" in its title that it's actually capable of delivering the outcomes that we need... When you see the influence that the Chinese Communist Party had as they were debating how to handle this virus in January of this year, when you think about those things and the risks that those pose to the world, it is an obligation to reconsider whether that vehicle is the right one to deliver pandemic response systems for the world.

China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

By The Associated Press

July 2, 2020

Throughout January, the World Health Organization publicly praised China for what it called a speedy response to the new coronavirus. It repeatedly thanked the Chinese government for sharing the genetic map of the virus "immediately," and said its work and commitment to transparency were "very impressive, and beyond words."

But behind the scenes, it was a much different story, one of significant delays by China and considerable frustration among WHO officials over not getting the information they needed to fight the spread of the deadly virus, The Associated Press has found.

Despite the plaudits, China in fact sat on releasing the genetic map, or genome, of the virus for more than a week after three different government labs had fully decoded the information. Tight controls on information and competition within the Chinese public health system were to blame, according to dozens of interviews and internal documents.

Chinese government labs only released the genome after another lab published it ahead of authorities on a virologist website on Jan. 11. Even then, China stalled for at least two weeks more on providing WHO with detailed data on patients and cases, according to recordings of internal meetings held by the U.N. health agency through January — all at a time when the outbreak arguably might have been dramatically slowed.

WHO officials were lauding China in public because they wanted to coax more information out of the government, the recordings obtained by the AP suggest. Privately, they complained in meetings the week of Jan. 6 that China was not sharing enough data to assess how effectively the virus spread between people or what risk it posed to the rest of the world, costing valuable time.

"We're going on very minimal information," said American epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove, now WHO's technical lead for COVID-19, in one internal meeting. "It's clearly not enough for you to do proper planning."

"We're currently at the stage where yes, they're giving it to us 15 minutes before it appears on CCTV," said WHO's top official in China, Dr. Gauden Galea, referring to the state-owned China Central Television, in another meeting.

The story behind the early response to the virus comes at a time when the U.N. health agency is under siege, and has agreed to an independent probe of how the pandemic was handled globally. After repeatedly praising the Chinese response early on, U.S. President Donald Trump has blasted WHO in recent weeks for allegedly colluding with China to hide the extent of the coronavirus crisis. He cut ties with the organization on Friday, jeopardizing the approximately \$450 million the U.S. gives every year as WHO's biggest single donor.

In the meantime, Chinese President Xi Jinping has vowed to pitch in \$2 billion over the next two years to fight the coronavirus, saying China has always provided information to WHO and the world "in a most timely fashion."

The new information does not support the narrative of either the U.S. or China, but instead portrays an agency now stuck in the middle that was urgently trying to solicit more data despite limits to its own authority. Although international law obliges countries to report information to WHO that could have an impact on public health, the U.N. agency has no enforcement powers and cannot independently investigate epidemics within countries. Instead, it must rely on the cooperation of member states.

The recordings suggest that rather than colluding with China, as Trump declared, WHO was kept in the dark as China gave it the minimal information required by law. However, the agency did try to portray China in the best light, likely as a means to secure more information. And WHO experts genuinely thought Chinese scientists had done "a very good job" in detecting and decoding the virus, despite the lack of transparency from Chinese officials.

WHO staffers debated how to press China for gene sequences and detailed patient data without angering authorities, worried about losing access and getting Chinese scientists into trouble. Under international law, WHO is required to quickly share information and alerts with member countries about an evolving crisis. Galea noted WHO could not indulge China's wish to sign off on information before telling other countries because "that is not respectful of our responsibilities."

In the second week of January, WHO's chief of emergencies, Dr. Michael Ryan, told colleagues it was time to "shift gears" and apply more pressure on China, fearing a repeat of the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome that started in China in 2002 and killed nearly 800 people worldwide.

"This is exactly the same scenario, endlessly trying to get updates from China about what was going on," he said.

"WHO barely got out of that one with its neck intact given the issues that arose around transparency in southern China."

Ryan said the best way to "protect China" was for WHO to do its own independent analysis with data from the Chinese government, because otherwise the spread of the virus between people would be in question and "other countries will take action accordingly." Ryan also noted that China was not cooperating in the same way some other countries had in the past.

"This would not happen in Congo and did not happen in Congo and other places," he said, probably referring to the Ebola outbreak that began there in 2018. "We need to see the data.....It's absolutely important at this point."

The delay in the release of the genome stalled the recognition of its spread to other countries, along with the global development of tests, drugs and vaccines. The lack of detailed patient data also made it harder to determine how quickly the virus was spreading — a critical question in stopping it.

Between the day the full genome was first decoded by a government lab on Jan. 2 and the day WHO declared a global emergency on Jan. 30, the outbreak spread by a factor of 100 to 200 times, according to retrospective infection data from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The virus has now infected over 6 million people worldwide and killed more than 375,000.

"It's obvious that we could have saved more lives and avoided many, many deaths if China and the WHO had acted faster," said Ali Mokdad, a professor at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington.

However, Mokdad and other experts also noted that if WHO had been more confrontational with China, it could have triggered a far worse situation of not getting any information at all.

If WHO had pushed too hard, it could even have been kicked out of China, said Adam Kamradt-Scott, a global health professor at the University of Sydney. But he added that a delay of just a few days in releasing genetic sequences can be critical in an outbreak. And he noted that as Beijing's lack of transparency becomes even clearer, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus's continued defense of China is problematic.

"It's definitely damaged WHO's credibility," said Kamradt-Scott. "Did he go too far? I think the evidence on that is clear....it has led to so many questions about the relationship between China and WHO. It is perhaps a cautionary tale."

WHO and its officials named in this story declined to answer questions asked by The Associated Press without audio or written transcripts of the recorded meetings, which the AP was unable to supply to protect its sources.

"Our leadership and staff have worked night and day in compliance with the organization's rules and regulations to support and share information with all Member States equally, and engage in frank and forthright conversations with governments at all levels," a WHO statement said.

China's National Health Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no comment. But in the past few months, China has repeatedly defended its actions, and many other countries — including the U.S. — have responded to the virus with even longer delays of weeks and even months.

"Since the beginning of the outbreak, we have been continuously sharing information on the epidemic with the WHO and the international community in an open, transparent and responsible manner," said Liu Mingzhu, an official with the National Health Commission's International Department, at a press conference on May 15.

The race to find the genetic map of the virus started in late December, according to the story that unfolds in interviews, documents and the WHO recordings. That's when doctors in Wuhan noticed mysterious clusters of patients with fevers and breathing problems who weren't improving with standard flu treatment. Seeking answers, they sent test samples from patients to commercial labs.

By Dec. 27, one lab, Vision Medicals, had pieced together most of the genome of a new coronavirus with striking similarities to SARS. Vision Medicals shared its data with Wuhan officials and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, as reported first by Chinese finance publication Caixin and independently confirmed by the AP.

On Dec. 30, Wuhan health officials issued internal notices warning of the unusual pneumonia, which leaked on social media. That evening, Shi Zhengli, a coronavirus expert at the Wuhan Institute of Virology who is famous for having traced the SARS virus to a bat cave, was alerted to the new disease, according to an interview with Scientific American. Shi took the first train from a conference in Shanghai back to Wuhan.

The next day, Chinese CDC director Gao Fu dispatched a team of experts to Wuhan. Also on Dec. 31, WHO first learned about the cases from an open-source platform that scouts for intelligence on outbreaks, emergencies chief Ryan has said.

WHO officially requested more information on Jan. 1. Under international law, members have 24 to 48 hours to respond, and China reported two days later that there were 44 cases and no deaths.

By Jan. 2, Shi had decoded the entire genome of the virus, according to a notice later posted on her institute's website.

Scientists agree that Chinese scientists detected and sequenced the then-unknown pathogen with astonishing speed, in a testimony to China's vastly improved technical capabilities since SARS, during which a WHO-led group of scientists took months to identify the virus. This time, Chinese virologists proved within days that it was a never-before-seen coronavirus. Tedros would later say Beijing set "a new standard for outbreak response."

But when it came to sharing the information with the world, things began to go awry.

On Jan. 3, the National Health Commission issued a confidential notice ordering labs with the virus to either destroy their samples or send them to designated institutes for safekeeping. The notice, first reported by Caixin and seen by the AP, forbade labs from publishing about the virus without government authorization. The order barred Shi's lab from publishing the genetic sequence or warning of the potential danger.

Chinese law states that research institutes cannot conduct experiments on potentially dangerous new viruses without approval from top health authorities. Although the law is intended to keep experiments safe, it gives top health officials wide-ranging powers over what lower-level labs can or cannot do.

"If the virologist community had operated with more autonomy....the public would have been informed of the lethal risk of the new virus much earlier," said Edward Gu, a professor at Zhejiang University, and Li Lantian, a PhD student at Northwestern University, in a paper published in March analyzing the outbreak.

Commission officials later repeated that they were trying to ensure lab safety, and had tasked four separate government labs with identifying the genome at the same time to get accurate, consistent results.

By Jan. 3, the Chinese CDC had independently sequenced the virus, according to internal data seen by the Associated Press. And by just after midnight on Jan. 5, a third designated government lab, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, had decoded the sequence and submitted a report — pulling all-nighters to get results in record

time, according to a state media interview. Yet even with full sequences decoded by three state labs independently, Chinese health officials remained silent. The WHO reported on Twitter that investigations were under way into an unusual cluster of pneumonia cases with no deaths in Wuhan, and said it would share "more details as we have them."

Meanwhile, at the Chinese CDC, gaps in coronavirus expertise proved a problem.

For nearly two weeks, Wuhan reported no new infections, as officials censored doctors who warned of suspicious cases. Meanwhile, researchers found the new coronavirus used a distinct spike protein to bind itself to human cells. The unusual protein and the lack of new cases lulled some Chinese CDC researchers into thinking the virus didn't easily spread between humans — like the coronavirus that causes Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, according to an employee who declined to be identified out of fear of retribution.

Li, the coronavirus expert, said he immediately suspected the pathogen was infectious when he spotted a leaked copy of a sequencing report in a group chat on a SARS-like coronavirus. But the Chinese CDC team that sequenced the virus lacked specialists in the molecular structure of coronaviruses and failed to consult with outside scientists, Li said. Chinese health authorities rebuffed offers of assistance from foreign experts, including Hong Kong scientists barred from a fact-finding mission to Wuhan and an American professor at a university in China.

On Jan. 5, the Shanghai Public Clinical Health Center, led by famed virologist Zhang Yongzhen, was the latest to sequence the virus. He submitted it to the GenBank database, where it sat awaiting review, and notified the National Health Commission. He warned them that the new virus was similar to SARS and likely infectious.

"It should be contagious through respiratory passages," the center said in an internal notice seen by the AP. "We recommend taking preventative measures in public areas."

On the same day, WHO said that based on preliminary information from China, there was no evidence of significant transmission between humans, and did not recommend any specific measures for travelers.

The next day, the Chinese CDC raised its emergency level to the second highest. Staffers proceeded to isolate the virus, draft lab testing guidelines, and design test kits. But the agency did not have the authority to issue public warnings, and the heightened emergency level was kept secret even from many of its own staff.

By Jan. 7, another team at Wuhan University had sequenced the pathogen and found it matched Shi's, making Shi certain they had identified a novel coronavirus. But Chinese CDC experts said they didn't trust Shi's findings and needed to verify her data before she could publish, according to three people familiar with the matter. Both the National Health Commission and the Ministry of Science and Technology, which oversees Shi's lab, declined to make Shi available for an interview.

A major factor behind the gag order, some say, was that Chinese CDC researchers wanted to publish their papers first. "They wanted to take all the credit," said Li Yize, a coronavirus researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

Internally, the leadership of the Chinese CDC is plagued with fierce competition, six people familiar with the system explained. They said the agency has long promoted staff based on how many papers they can publish in prestigious journals, making scientists reluctant to share data.

As the days went by, even some of the Chinese CDC's own staff began to wonder why it was taking so long for authorities to identify the pathogen.

"We were getting suspicious, since within one or two days you would get a sequencing result," a lab technician said, declining to be identified for fear of retribution.

On Jan. 8, the Wall Street Journal reported that scientists had identified a new coronavirus in samples from pneumonia patients in Wuhan, pre-empting and embarrassing Chinese officials. The lab technician told the AP they first learned about the discovery of the virus from the Journal.

The article also embarrassed WHO officials. Dr. Tom Grein, chief of WHO's acute events management team, said the agency looked "doubly, incredibly stupid." Van Kerkhove, the American expert, acknowledged WHO was "already late" in announcing the new virus and told colleagues that it was critical to push China.

Ryan, WHO's chief of emergencies, was also upset at the dearth of information.

"The fact is, we're two to three weeks into an event, we don't have a laboratory diagnosis, we don't have an age, sex or geographic distribution, we don't have an epi curve," he complained, referring to the standard graphic of outbreaks scientists use to show how an epidemic is progressing.

After the article, state media officially announced the discovery of the new coronavirus. But even then, Chinese health authorities did not release the genome, diagnostic tests, or detailed patient data that could hint at how infectious the disease was.

By that time, suspicious cases were already appearing across the region.

On Jan. 8, Thai airport officers pulled aside a woman from Wuhan with a runny nose, sore throat, and high temperature. Chulalongkorn University professor Supaporn Wacharapluesadee's team found the woman was infected with a new coronavirus, much like what Chinese officials had described. Supaporn partially figured out the genetic sequence by Jan. 9, reported it to the Thai government and spent the next day searching for matching sequences.

But because Chinese authorities hadn't published any sequences, she found nothing. She could not prove the Thai virus was the same pathogen sickening people in Wuhan.

"It was kind of wait and see, when China will release the data, then we can compare," said Supaporn.

On Jan. 9, a 61-year-old man with the virus passed away in Wuhan — the first known death. The death wasn't made public until Jan. 11.

WHO officials complained in internal meetings that they were making repeated requests for more data, especially to find out if the virus could spread efficiently between humans, but to no avail.

"We have informally and formally been requesting more epidemiological information," WHO's China representative Galea said. "But when asked for specifics, we could get nothing."

Emergencies chief Ryan grumbled that since China was providing the minimal information required by international law, there was little WHO could do. But he also noted that last September, WHO had issued an unusual public rebuke of Tanzania for not providing enough details about a worrisome Ebola outbreak.

"We have to be consistent," Ryan said. "The danger now is that despite our good intent...especially if something does happen, there will be a lot of finger-pointing at WHO."

Ryan noted that China could make a "huge contribution" to the world by sharing the genetic material immediately, because otherwise "other countries will have to reinvent the wheel over the coming days."

On Jan. 11, a team led by Zhang, from the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center, finally published a sequence on virological.org, used by researchers to swap tips on pathogens. The move angered Chinese CDC officials, three people familiar with the matter said, and the next day, his laboratory was temporarily shuttered by health authorities.

Zhang referred a request for comment to the Chinese CDC. The National Health Commission, which oversees the Chinese CDC, declined multiple times to make its officials available for interviews and did not answer questions about Zhang.

Supaporn compared her sequence with Zhang's and found it was a 100% match, confirming that the Thai patient was ill with the same virus detected in Wuhan. Another Thai lab got the same results. That day, Thailand informed the WHO, said Tanarak Plipat, deputy director-general of the Department of Disease Control at Thailand's Ministry of Public Health.

After Zhang released the genome, the Chinese CDC, the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences raced to publish their sequences, working overnight to review them, gather patient data, and send them to the National Health Commission for approval, according to documentation obtained by the AP. On Jan. 12, the three labs together finally published the sequences on GISAID, a platform for scientists to share genomic data.

By then, more than two weeks had passed since Vision Medicals decoded a partial sequence, and more than a week since the three government labs had all obtained full sequences. Around 600 people were infected in that week, a roughly three-fold increase.

Some scientists say the wait was not unreasonable considering the difficulties in sequencing unknown pathogens, given accuracy is as important as speed. They point to the SARS outbreak in 2003 when some Chinese scientists initially — and wrongly — believed the source of the epidemic was chlamydia.

“The pressure is intense in an outbreak to make sure you’re right,” said Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealthAlliance in New York. “It’s actually worse to go out to the public with a story that’s wrong because the public completely lose confidence in the public health response.”

Still, others quietly question what happened behind the scenes.

Infectious diseases expert John Mackenzie, who served on a WHO emergency committee during the outbreak, praised the speed of Chinese researchers in sequencing the virus. But he said once central authorities got involved, detailed data trickled to a crawl.

“There certainly was a kind of blank period,” Mackenzie said. “There had to be human to human transmission. You know, it’s staring at you in the face... I would have thought they would have been much more open at that stage.”

On Jan. 13, WHO announced that Thailand had a confirmed case of the virus, jolting Chinese officials.

The next day, in a confidential teleconference, China’s top health official ordered the country to prepare for a pandemic, calling the outbreak the “most severe challenge since SARS in 2003”, as the AP previously reported. Chinese CDC staff across the country began screening, isolating, and testing for cases, turning up hundreds across the country.

Yet even as the Chinese CDC internally declared a level one emergency, the highest level possible, Chinese officials still said the chance of sustained transmission between humans was low.

WHO went back and forth. Van Kerkhove said in a press briefing that “it is certainly possible there is limited human-to-human transmission.” But hours later, WHO seemed to backtrack, and tweeted that “preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission” — a statement that later became fodder for critics.

A high-ranking official in WHO's Asia office, Dr. Liu Yunguo, who attended medical school in Wuhan, flew to Beijing to make direct, informal contacts with Chinese officials, recordings show. Liu's former classmate, a Wuhan doctor, had alerted him that pneumonia patients were flooding the city's hospitals, and Liu pushed for more experts to visit Wuhan, according to a public health expert familiar with the matter.

On Jan. 20, the leader of an expert team returning from Wuhan, renowned government infectious diseases doctor Zhong Nanshan, declared publicly for the first time that the new virus was spreading between people. Chinese President Xi Jinping called for the "timely publication of epidemic information and deepening of international cooperation."

Despite that directive, WHO staff still struggled to obtain enough detailed patient data from China about the rapidly evolving outbreak. That same day, the U.N. health agency dispatched a small team to Wuhan for two days, including Galea, the WHO representative in China.

They were told about a worrying cluster of cases among more than a dozen doctors and nurses. But they did not have "transmission trees" detailing how the cases were connected, nor a full understanding of how widely the virus was spreading and who was at risk.

In an internal meeting, Galea said their Chinese counterparts were "talking openly and consistently" about human-to-human transmission, and that there was a debate about whether or not this was sustained. Galea reported to colleagues in Geneva and Manila that China's key request to WHO was for help "in communicating this to the public, without causing panic."

On Jan. 22, WHO convened an independent committee to determine whether to declare a global health emergency. After two inconclusive meetings where experts were split, they decided against it — even as Chinese officials ordered Wuhan sealed in the biggest quarantine in history. The next day, WHO chief Tedros publicly described the spread of the new coronavirus in China as "limited."

For days, China didn't release much detailed data, even as its case count exploded. Beijing city officials were alarmed enough to consider locking down the capital, according to a medical expert with direct knowledge of the matter.

On Jan. 28, Tedros and top experts, including Ryan, made an extraordinary trip to Beijing to meet President Xi and other senior Chinese officials. It is highly unusual for WHO's director-general to directly intervene in the practicalities of outbreak investigations. Tedros' staffers had prepared a list of requests for information.

"It could all happen and the floodgates open, or there's no communication," Grein said in an internal meeting while his boss was in Beijing. "We'll see."

At the end of Tedros' trip, WHO announced China had agreed to accept an international team of experts. In a press briefing on Jan. 29, Tedros heaped praise on China, calling its level of commitment "incredible."

The next day, WHO finally declared an international health emergency. Once again, Tedros thanked China, saying nothing about the earlier lack of cooperation.

"We should have actually expressed our respect and gratitude to China for what it's doing," Tedros said. "It has already done incredible things to limit the transmission of the virus to other countries."

(b)(6)

Bureau of Global Public Affairs
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

Sender: "Ortagus, Morgan D" <(b)(6)>

Shedd, Leslie <(b)(6)>

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Seid, Sophica <(b)(6)>

Recipient:

(b)(6)

(b)(6) (Geneva) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Stilwell, David R <(b)(6)>

Buangan, Richard L <(b)(6)>

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

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

Subject: RE: GVP mini pitch slides in Mandarin

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 2017 03:07:20 -0500

Thanks (b)(6)!

I'll keep this handy.

(b)(6)

~~SBU~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)

Sent: Friday, November 17, 2017 7:46 AM

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

Subject: FW: GVP mini pitch slides in Mandarin

(b)(5) For now, we will be using these slides in Mandarin with our MOFCOM, Min of Agriculture and university partners.

Official

UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) [mailto:(b)(6)@ecohealthalliance.org]

Sent: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:51 AM

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

Cc: (b)(6) (GH/HIDN/AIS); (b)(6); George Gao; (b)(6)

Subject: GVP mini pitch slides in Mandarin

Dear (b)(6),

As discussed in Beijing, I have the mini pitch slides translated into Mandarin for your use to communicate with Chinese officials. Please find the attached document. I also attached a the original English version in case you find anything that needs to be further modified.

(b)(5)
(b)(5) Please feel free to let me know if there is any questions.

Thank you very much!

Best Regards,

(b)(6)

China Programs 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.

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

Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: FW: WIV Cable
Date: Tue, 7 Apr 2020 23:00:19 +0000

Bummer but not tragedy. Obv will disappoint some though, so need to make sure instruction is understood.

On April 7, 2020 at 6:58:05 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
You can. I talked to S about it today: (b)(5)

(b)(5)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 6:54 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: Fwd: FW: WIV Cable

Suggest we inform (b)(6) You/me/otherwise?

--

(b)(6)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(b)(6) (c)
(b)(6)@state.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Date: April 7, 2020 at 6:45:59 PM EDT
Subject: FW: WIV Cable
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6); (b)(6), Keshap, Atul
(b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
Cc: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov>

FYSA.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)>
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 6:45 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)

(b)(6)

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

Buangan, Richard L (b)(6); EAP-Press (b)(6)

Subject: RE: WIV Cable

All,

S reviewed these cable and declined to release them.

(b)(6)

Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

NOTE: Please
always

include the S_SpecialAssistants@state.gov distro to ensure your message is received.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 9:55 PM

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

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

Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) EAP-Press (b)(6)

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

ExecSec (b)(6)

Understood, will do. Thank you.

(b)(6)

Special Assistant

Office of the Assistant Secretary

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 9:16:21 PM

To: (b)(6)

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

<S_SpecialAssistants@state.gov>; (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L

(b)(6); EAP-Press (b)(6)

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

EAP to S via the line pls. Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 3, 2020, at 8:57 PM, (b)(6) wrote:

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

U.S. Department of State

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 3, 2020, at 6:56 PM, (b)(6) wrote:

S Special Colleagues (b)(6)

A/S Stilwell

(b)(5)

Could you please let us know if ExecSec Kenna would prefer the request come to S via a SPOX public affairs decision memo or via a traditional AM through the Line?

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Special Assistant
Office of the Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L. (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 6:46 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov; EAP-P-Office-DL <EAP-P-Office-DL@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: Fwd: WIV Cable

(b)(6)

(b)(5)

This might have to go through the Line as an AM instead of treating it like a public decision memo but defer to (b)(6) I can also ask my old team on S staff how it should be handled.

Richard L. Buangan
Deputy Assistant Secretary

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) U.S. Department of State

Email: (b)(6)

Begin forwarded message:

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

Date: April 3, 2020 at 18:26:16 EDT

To: "Ortagus, Morgan D" (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) "Buangan, Richard L" (b)(6) @state.gov, (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>

Subject: FW: WIV Cable

For the Rogin story. Actual cables attached.

Hopefully we can get them released and have (b)(6) it down with Josh to discuss.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:15 PM

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

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

Cc: (b)(6); Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

Here are the most relevant elements:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:14:18 PM

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

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6); Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: Rc: WIV Cable

Attached. They're also on an email from a few days ago with (b)(6) others.

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) U.S. Department of State

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

(b)(6)@state.gov

On April 3, 2020 at 5:11:51 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

First one to get me a soft copy of (b)(6) Wuhan cables gets a Samoa Cookie.
drs

David R. Stilwell

Ass't Secretary East Asia Pacific

(b)(6)

<18-WUHAN-38.eml.pdf>

<18-BEIJING-138.eml.pdf>

Sender: (b)(6)

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

From: "Stilwell, David R"

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Re: FOIA and WIV Cable

Date: Wed, 10 Jun 2020 04:09:36 +0000

Many thanks!

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 10:06:29 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) Taylor, Mary Elizabeth (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Cc: Brechbuhl, Thomas U (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

Subject: Re: FOIA and WIV Cable

Sir,

I made some edits to the below to add clarity on the visits and agency funding lab training safety at the WIV. The NIAD funded grants to EcoHealth Alliance were used to support cooperative research on bat coronaviruses that was solely focused on academic research and not related to lab safety.

Text:

The cables describing safety and training shortfalls at the Wuhan Institute of Virology highlight USG's prescient use of cooperative engagement and sponsored training to prevent similar failures all over the globe. In this case, despite NIAID and CDC efforts, the WIV staff continued to take shortcuts in handling some very virulent biological agents (now known to the world as COVID-19). This, combined with a cover-up of at least 6 weeks, led to a global pandemic.

Although the cables were written by the State Department, they reflect the observations of the Embassy health team's significant engagement with leading Chinese virologist including staff at the WIV. Embassy staff visited the WIV on two occasions once in November of 2017 when the NIAD attache visited the lab and in March of 2018 when the ESTH Counselor and Wuhan CG met with Dr. Shi at the WIV's campus, the latter was the last time embassy personnel were allowed to visit the facilities. The safety issues and training failures identified in the cables were being addressed by a cooperative DOD program (The Department of Defense (DoD) Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program's Cooperative Biological Engagement Program (CBEP) Defense Threat Reduction Activity (DTRA)) designed to prevent these leaks; however funding for the program ceased at the end of FY2017.

Best,

(b)(6)

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

Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 9:27 PM

To: Taylor, Mary Elizabeth (b)(6) (b)(6)

Cc: Brechbuhl, Thomas U (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: FOIA and WIV Cable

(b)(5)

(b)(5) The virus leak is a direct result of top-down pressure for China to be seen as leading the world in vaccines and virus science. They're in a hurry so they take shortcuts; that's why this keeps happening. (b)(5)

(b)(6)

Need you and (b)(6) to check the language as we put this out with the FOIA'ed cable.

Text:

(b)(5)

How's that?
Dave

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:15 PM

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

(b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6); Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

Here are the most relevant elements:

From 2018 Cables:

1. **(SBU) Summary with Comment:** 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 (Ref A). Given the legacy of SARS and the likelihood that the next global pandemic will originate in China, (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

End Summary with

Comment.

5. (SBU) During interactions with scientists at the WIV laboratory, they noted that the new lab has a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory.

6. (SBU) The ability of WIV scientists to undertake productive research despite limitations on the use of the new BSL-4 facility is demonstrated by a recent publication on the origins of SARS. Over a five-year study, Drs. Shi and Cui Jie (and their research team) widely sampled bats in Yunnan province with funding support from NIAID/NIH, USAID, and several Chinese funding agencies. The study results were published in PLoS Pathogens online on Nov. 30, 2017 (1), and it demonstrated that a SARS-like coronavirus isolated from horseshoe bats in a single cave contain all the building blocks of the pandemic SARS-coronavirus genome that caused the human outbreak. These results strongly suggest that the highly pathogenic SARS-coronavirus originated in this bat population. Most importantly, 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 disease. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

It is interesting that WIV scientists are allowed to study the SARS-like coronaviruses isolated from bats while they are precluded from studying human-disease causing SARS coronavirus in their new BSL-4 lab until permission for such work is granted by the NHFCP.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 5:14:18 PM

To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6); Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6) (b)(6)

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

Cc: (b)(6); Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: Re: WIV Cable

Attached. They're also on an email from a few days ago with (b)(6) others.

--

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)

(c)

(b)(6) @state.gov

On April 3, 2020 at 5:11:51 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:
First one to get me a soft copy of (b)(6)'s Wuhan cables gets a Samoa Cookie.
drs

David R. Stilwell
Ass't Secretary East Asia Pacific

(b)(6)

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

Recipient: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP
Date: Tue, 3 Mar 2020 16:58:11 +0000

Yes -- let me see if I can find it.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 11:55 AM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Thanks much. Was there a response to the letter, including this?

The GVP is envisioned to operate under governance structures similar to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) If you would like more details, our colleagues based in Washington or my team in Beijing can brief you and your team further. I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 11:25 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Here it is. This went through the clearance process (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Dear Mr. Bossert,

I would like to draw your attention to the U.S.-initiated effort known as the Global Virome Project (GVP). The GVP provides a platform that may reduce significantly the risk of pandemics caused by zoonotic disease. It could well achieve the scale and profile of the game-changing

Human Genome Project. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

The GVP is formally launching on January 30 as an international NGO with a mission to systematically and comprehensively catalogue the viral load worldwide of pathogens that pose a threat to mankind. The program is a direct spin-off of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) PREDICT Initiative, which served as a proof of concept. Stakeholders include U.S. federal, state, and local government officials, universities, and the private sector, as well as the China Academy of Sciences' Virology Institutes and China CDC. This initiative utilizes existing science to sample viral families found in hotspots around the world, particularly where diverse mammalian wildlife populations and migratory waterfowl are prominent. Once these viral families are identified, GVP will sequence their genomes, estimate the likelihood of human transmission and risks, and develop a range of countermeasures to mitigate or possibly even avoid the next pandemic.

GVP's first phase will focus on pilot countries that are prepared to establish their own national virome collection and sequencing activities and share the resulting information. An upcoming Nature article, *Fatal Swine Disease Outbreak Caused by a Novel Coronavirus of Bat Origin*, describes a recent joint GVP collaboration between U.S. and Chinese researchers.

The GVP is envisioned to operate under governance structures similar to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) If you would like more details, our colleagues based in Washington or my team in Beijing can brief you and your team further. I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Terry Branstad

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 12:30 AM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Long overdue reply here, sorry.

What about the 2018 letter from Beijing?

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2020 1:32 PM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Coronavirus and GVP

Per our talk yesterday:

The Global Virome Project (GVP) follows in the footsteps of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) work to preemptively mitigate pandemic threats. While the USAID Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) PREDICT project has already found 1,000 viruses from viral families that contain zoonotic diseases, the Global Virome Project aims to do so at a larger scale.

This article only gets part of the story right:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/opinion/coronavirus-china.html> -- We Made the Coronavirus Epidemic

It may have started with a bat in a cave, but human activity set it loose.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29190287-discovery-of-a-rich-gene-pool-of-bat-sars-related-coronaviruses-provides-new-insights-into-the-origin-of-sars-coronavirus/> -- GVP assisted study to track the zoonotic origins of SARS and other coronaviruses.

<https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Nature-SADS-CoV.pdf>

http://english.whiov.cas.cn/Exchange2016/Foreign_Visits/201804/t20180403_191334.html -- My visit to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to visit lead scientist who helped conduct the Yunnan coronavirus bat study.

<https://www.contagionlive.com/news/global-virome-project-will-spend-next-10-years-identifying-unknown-viruses-in-the-wild>

Following recent outbreaks of viruses such as Zika and Ebola, public health researchers are increasingly working to discover new viruses before they emerge and cause human outbreaks. To meet that goal, this year will mark the launch of the Global Virome Project.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently published its priority list of diseases and pathogens in need of research and development in 2018. Along with viruses such as Lassa fever, Rift Valley fever, and Zika, last on that list is Disease X, which the WHO says represents the understanding that a currently unknown pathogen may emerge to cause a serious global epidemic in the human population. While the inclusion of Disease X has been somewhat controversial, it reflects the growing belief that rather than waiting for the emergence of a new pathogen to react, the public health community needs to find the next viral threats and prepare for them before they cause human pandemics.

In a study published in 2017, researchers suggested that the most likely place to discover emerging pathogens would be along the fault lines of human-animal interaction. To that end, a new paper

published in the journal *Science* has announced the impending launch of the Global Virome Project in 2018 to find unknown diseases in the wild, an effort expected to take 10 years and cost \$1.2 billion. The project was first announced in 2016 as a proposed cooperative scientific initiative to identify and characterize 99% of the world's zoonotic viruses with the potential to cause human epidemics.

"Nearly all recent pandemics have a viral etiology with animal origins, and with their intrinsic capacity for interspecies transmission, viral zoonoses are prime candidates for causing the next great pandemic," write the paper's authors. "However, if these viruses are our enemy, we do not yet know our enemy very well."

The Global Virome Project follows in the footsteps of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) work to preemptively mitigate pandemic threats. While the USAID Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) PREDICT project has already found 1,000 viruses from viral families that contain zoonotic diseases, the Global Virome Project aims to do so at a larger scale. The authors note that about 263 viruses from 25 viral families are known to infect humans but estimate that there are 1.67 million viral species yet to be discovered in mammal and bird hosts, which are key reservoirs in viral zoonoses. About 631,000 to 827,000 of these unknown viruses have the potential to be transmitted from animals to infect humans.

"Furthermore, the rate of zoonotic viral spillover into people is accelerating, mirroring the expansion of our global footprint and travel networks, leading to a nonlinear rise in pandemic risk and an exponential growth in their economic impacts," the authors write.

This underscores the need for better preparation; to better prepare, more knowledge is needed.

"By developing an exhaustive catalog of viruses that exist in wildlife and knowing in what animals and where they exist will enable us to move forward to be proactive and prepare before an outbreak occurs. To achieve this, we must fill the knowledge gap for unknown viruses, including their ecology and drivers," said Edward Rubin, MD, PhD, chief scientific officer of Metabiota, in an interview with Contagion®. "Having a better understanding of the vast majority of the genomes of viruses that exist in nature will enable us to approach viral diseases and the development of countermeasures in new and powerful ways," he added.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(19\)30335-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(19)30335-3/fulltext)

Major global actors are starting to engage. "China will help lead a project to identify unknown viruses from wildlife to better prepare humans for major epidemics—if not global pandemics...The Global Virome Project will start in China and Thailand with field work to collect samples from wild animals and analyze the viruses detected", said Gao Fu, the head of the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Cost estimates for the Global Virome Project range from an initial \$1.2 billion to \$3.4 billion over a 10-year period.⁹ The projected cost is modest when it is put in perspective, in at least four regards.

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP
Date: Tue, 3 Mar 2020 17:18:23 +0000

Here it is. To the best of my knowledge this email is all that ever came of this -- Bossert was out just a few months after this email so there was no follow up. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Dear Ambassador Branstad,

Thank you very much for reaching out – I appreciate the work Embassy Beijing is doing in support of Global Health Security Agenda. You have likely seen that strengthening global health security is a priority for the President.

Thanks as well for sharing your perspectives on the Global Virome Project (GVP) (b)(5)

(b)(5) We are aware of this project (b)(6)
(b)(6) was briefed on it early on in his tenure and his team is in regular contact with USAID. It is my understanding that (b)(5)

(b)(5)

I want to raise another issue with you. We are keeping a close eye on (b)(5)

(b)(5) (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) I would appreciate your help with this and welcome your thoughts on the matter.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

-Tom

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 11:55 AM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Thanks much. Was there a response to the letter, including this?

The GVP is envisioned to operate under governance structures similar to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) If you would like more details, our colleagues based in Washington or my team in Beijing can brief you and your team further. I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 11:25 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Here it is. This went through the clearance process (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Dear Mr. Bossert,

I would like to draw your attention to the U.S.-initiated effort known as the Global Virome Project (GVP). The GVP provides a platform that may reduce significantly the risk of pandemics caused by zoonotic disease. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

The GVP is formally launching on January 30 as an international NGO with a mission to systematically and comprehensively catalogue the viral load worldwide of pathogens that pose a threat to mankind. The program is a direct spin-off of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) PREDICT Initiative, which served as a proof of concept. Stakeholders

include U.S. federal, state, and local government officials, universities, and the private sector, as well as the China Academy of Sciences' Virology Institutes and China CDC. This initiative utilizes existing science to sample viral families found in hotspots around the world, particularly where diverse mammalian wildlife populations and migratory waterfowl are prominent. Once these viral families are identified, GVP will sequence their genomes, estimate the likelihood of human transmission and risks, and develop a range of countermeasures to mitigate or possibly even avoid the next pandemic.

GVP's first phase will focus on pilot countries that are prepared to establish their own national virome collection and sequencing activities and share the resulting information. An upcoming Nature article, *Fatal Swine Disease Outbreak Caused by a Novel Coronavirus of Bat Origin*, describes a recent joint GVP collaboration between U.S. and Chinese researchers.

The GVP is envisioned to operate under governance structures similar to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) If you would like more details, our colleagues based in Washington or my team in Beijing can brief you and your team further. I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Terry Branstad

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 12:30 AM

To: (b)(5)

Subject: RE: Coronavirus and GVP

Long overdue reply here, sorry.

What about (b)(5)?

From: (b)(5)

Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2020 1:32 PM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Coronavirus and GVP

Per our talk yesterday:

The Global Virome Project (GVP) follows in the footsteps of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) work to preemptively mitigate pandemic threats. While the USAID Emerging

Pandemic Threats (EPT) PREDICT project has already found 1,000 viruses from viral families that contain zoonotic diseases, the Global Virome Project aims to do so at a larger scale.

This article only gets part of the story right:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/opinion/coronavirus-china.html> -- We Made the Coronavirus Epidemic

It may have started with a bat in a cave, but human activity set it loose.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29190287-discovery-of-a-rich-gene-pool-of-bat-sars-related-coronaviruses-provides-new-insights-into-the-origin-of-sars-coronavirus/> -- GPV assisted study to track the zoonotic origins of SARS and other coronaviruses.

<https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Nature-SADS-CoV.pdf>

http://english.whiov.cas.cn/Exchange2016/Foreign_Visits/201804/t20180403_191334.html -- My visit to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to visit lead scientist who helped conduct the Yunnan coronavirus bat study.

<https://www.contagionlive.com/news/global-virome-project-will-spend-next-10-years-identifying-unknown-viruses-in-the-wild>

Following recent outbreaks of viruses such as Zika and Ebola, public health researchers are increasingly working to discover new viruses before they emerge and cause human outbreaks. To meet that goal, this year will mark the launch of the Global Virome Project.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently published its priority list of diseases and pathogens in need of research and development in 2018. Along with viruses such as Lassa fever, Rift Valley fever, and Zika, last on that list is Disease X, which the WHO says represents the understanding that a currently unknown pathogen may emerge to cause a serious global epidemic in the human population. While the inclusion of Disease X has been somewhat controversial, it reflects the growing belief that rather than waiting for the emergence of a new pathogen to react, the public health community needs to find the next viral threats and prepare for them before they cause human pandemics.

In a study published in 2017, researchers suggested that the most likely place to discover emerging pathogens would be along the fault lines of human-animal interaction. To that end, a new paper published in the journal Science has announced the impending launch of the Global Virome Project in 2018 to find unknown diseases in the wild, an effort expected to take 10 years and cost \$1.2 billion. The project was first announced in 2016 as a proposed cooperative scientific initiative to identify and characterize 99% of the world's zoonotic viruses with the potential to cause human epidemics.

"Nearly all recent pandemics have a viral etiology with animal origins, and with their intrinsic capacity for interspecies transmission, viral zoonoses are prime candidates for causing the next great pandemic," write the paper's authors. "However, if these viruses are our enemy, we do not yet know our enemy very well."

The Global Virome Project follows in the footsteps of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) work to preemptively mitigate pandemic threats. While the USAID Emerging Pandemic Threats

(EPT) PREDICT project has already found 1,000 viruses from viral families that contain zoonotic diseases, the Global Virome Project aims to do so at a larger scale. The authors note that about 263 viruses from 25 viral families are known to infect humans but estimate that there are 1.67 million viral species yet to be discovered in mammal and bird hosts, which are key reservoirs in viral zoonoses. About 631,000 to 827,000 of these unknown viruses have the potential to be transmitted from animals to infect humans.

"Furthermore, the rate of zoonotic viral spillover into people is accelerating, mirroring the expansion of our global footprint and travel networks, leading to a nonlinear rise in pandemic risk and an exponential growth in their economic impacts," the authors write.

This underscores the need for better preparation; to better prepare, more knowledge is needed.

"By developing an exhaustive catalog of viruses that exist in wildlife and knowing in what animals and where they exist will enable us to move forward to be proactive and prepare before an outbreak occurs. To achieve this, we must fill the knowledge gap for unknown viruses, including their ecology and drivers," said Edward Rubin, MD, PhD, chief scientific officer of Metabiota, in an interview with Contagion®. "Having a better understanding of the vast majority of the genomes of viruses that exist in nature will enable us to approach viral diseases and the development of countermeasures in new and powerful ways," he added.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(19\)30335-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(19)30335-3/fulltext)

Major global actors are starting to engage. "China will help lead a project to identify unknown viruses from wildlife to better prepare humans for major epidemics—if not global pandemics...The Global Virome Project will start in China and Thailand with field work to collect samples from wild animals and analyze the viruses detected", said Gao Fu, the head of the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Cost estimates for the Global Virome Project range from an initial \$1.2 billion to \$3.4 billion over a 10-year period.⁹ The projected cost is modest when it is put in perspective, in at least four regards.

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>;
(b)(6)
CC: EAP-J-ECON-DL <EAP-J-ECON-DL@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article
Date: Wed, 11 Mar 2020 12:03:12 +0000

Thanks (b)(6) this is very helpful.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 7:47 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) TOKYO ECON
Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>; (b)(6)
Cc: EAP-J-ECON-DL <EAP-J-ECON-DL@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

(b)(6)

This just in from (b)(6)

Disinformation spreading on COVID-19

Mainichi reported on the growing spread of misinformation and disinformation on COVID-19 in cyberspace, saying that some people are apparently being led to believe false information, such as that the virus can be killed by drinking water of a certain temperature. Conspiracy theories are also being widely circulated, including claims that the virus is a Chinese biological weapon that was produced at a lab in Wuhan. The daily noted that some social media users circulated a rumor that the Chinese government was trying to describe the virus as the "Japanese coronavirus" by citing a message posted on the website of the Tokyo-based Chinese Embassy in late February. The wording of a phrase in Chinese was taken by some Japanese to mean that Beijing was labeling the virus as if it were of Japanese origin. However, the Chinese Embassy dismissed the allegation, explaining that the phrase means that "the coronavirus situation is changing in Japan." A Chinese Embassy spokesperson told the daily: "We have no intention to describe the pathogen as a Japanese virus. This is a completely false narrative. Our ambassador has voiced appreciation for Japan's support on various occasions. The daily added that the WHO has said the world needs to combat not only the epidemic but also an 'infodemic.'"

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 1:20 AM
To: (b)(6) TOKYO ECON Americans DL
<TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>; (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)

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

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

+ Tokyo PAS colleagues.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:17 PM

To: TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>

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

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)

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) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D

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

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

(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, (b)(6)

wrote:

Is there anyway we can find this message from the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo?

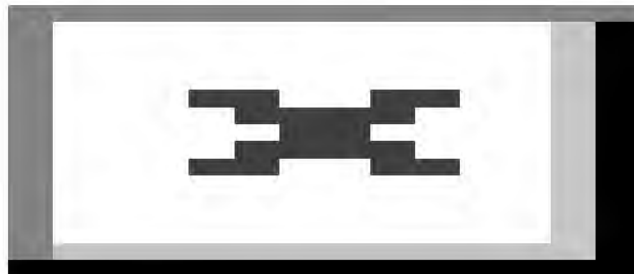
Chinese virus becomes "Japanese virus"

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); (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Received.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
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; (b)(6)@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)@state.gov
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; (b)(6)@state.gov
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

That's correct.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 5:36 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:08 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov
(b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

(b)(6) do you have a link to the speech below?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:03 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

GOLD.

GPA we should spray this out, IMHO.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:02 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Rick 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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:57 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:33 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

+ (b)(6) in case they have a view?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:32 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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: Hewitt, James O <HewittJO@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:27 PM
To: Buangan, Richard L <BuanganRL@state.gov>; Ortagus, Morgan D <OrtagusMD@state.gov>; Kissel, Mary E (S) <KisselME2@state.gov>; Abboud, Michael C <AbboudMC@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can I use that exact language to pass along OTR?

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

From: Buangan, Richard L <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:24 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
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: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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)@state.gov>

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)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:11 PM

To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov>

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

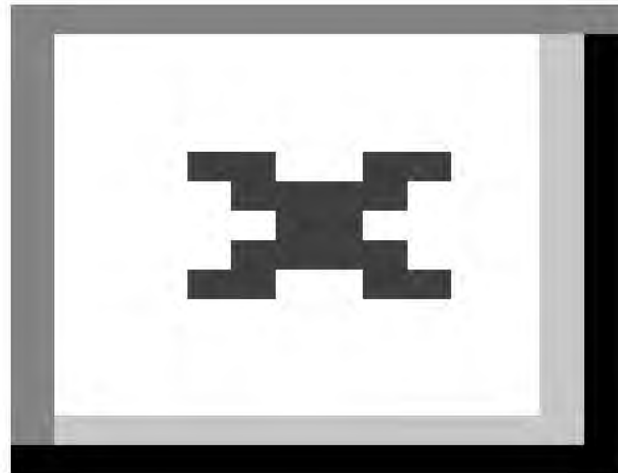
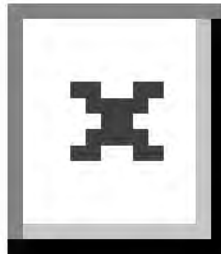


Photo: Pixabay



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.

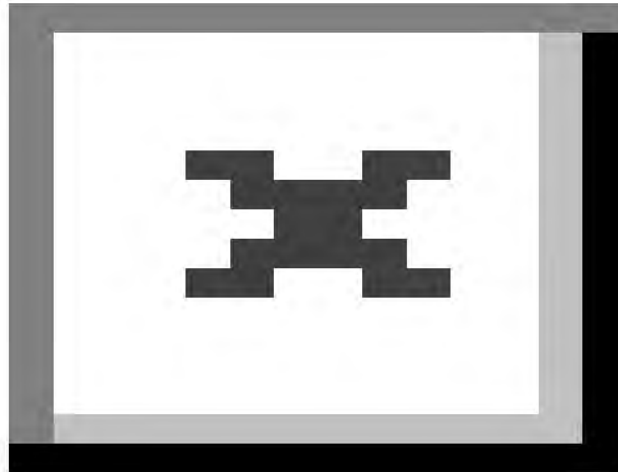
That was days before China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 31 about the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease, two weeks before it shared the virus's genome sequence with the world, and

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.

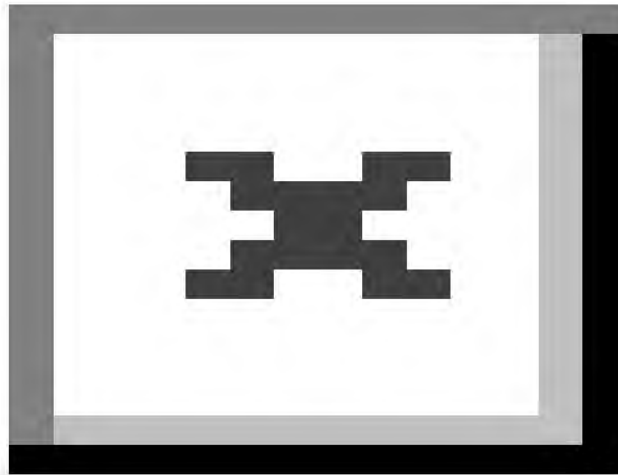
The patient was admitted to the Central Hospital of Wuhan on Dec. 18 with pneumonia and his condition quickly deteriorated. On Dec. 24, the doctors took fluid samples from his lungs and sent them to Vision Medicals for testing, according to Zhao Su, head of respiratory medicine at the hospital. In an 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. ([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov))
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:10 PM
To: ([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov))
Subject: Caixin Article

Send me the Caixin article when you have it.

Thanks

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

Sender: ([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov))
([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov));
([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov));
Recipient: TOKYO ECON Americans DL <TOKYOECONAmericansDL@state.gov>;
([\(b\)\(6\)@state.gov](mailto:(b)(6)@state.gov));
EAP-J-ECON-DL <EAP-J-ECON-DL@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)
To: EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>
CC: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article
Date: Wed, 11 Mar 2020 12:26:31 +0000

(b)(6) thanks to you and post. That's extremely helpful!

(b)(6)
Office of Chinese & Mongolian Affairs
(b)(6)
HST Room 4318 | U.S. Department of State

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 8:05 AM
To: (b)(6) EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Hi (b)(6)

Here is what we got back from Tokyo overnight:

Disinformation spreading on COVID-19

Mainichi reported on the growing spread of misinformation and disinformation on COVID-19 in cyberspace, saying that some people are apparently being led to believe false information, such as that the virus can be killed by drinking water of a certain temperature. Conspiracy theories are also being widely circulated, including claims that the virus is a Chinese biological weapon that was produced at a lab in Wuhan. The daily noted that some social media users circulated a rumor that the Chinese government was trying to describe the virus as the "Japanese coronavirus" by citing a message posted on the website of the Tokyo-based Chinese Embassy in late February. The wording of a phrase in Chinese was taken by some Japanese to mean that Beijing was labeling the virus as if it were of Japanese origin. However, the Chinese Embassy dismissed the allegation, explaining that the phrase means that "the coronavirus situation is changing in Japan." A Chinese Embassy spokesperson told the daily: "We have no intention to describe the pathogen as a Japanese virus. This is a completely false narrative. Our ambassador has voiced appreciation for Japan's support on various occasions. The daily added that the WHO has said the world needs to combat not only the epidemic but also an 'infodemic.'"

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 12:16 PM

To: (b)(6) EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>

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

(b)(6) @state.gov>

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

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)

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) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)

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

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

(b)(6)

wrote:

Is there anyway we can find this message from the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo?

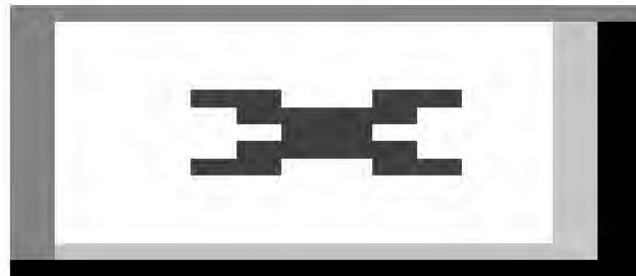
Chinese virus becomes "Japanese virus"

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) (b)(6) (b)(6) : Buangan, Richard L

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

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

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Received.

~~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) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) : Buangan, Richard L

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

Cc: (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) (b)(6) (b)(6) @state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) @state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) @state.gov>; (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) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (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) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (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) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:03 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (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) (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) (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (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) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
; (b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6) ; (b)(6) (b)(6) : (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Rick 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) (b)(6) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) ; (b)(6) (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) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:33 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6); Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
Cc: (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) (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) (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) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (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) (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:24 PM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) (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: (b)(6) (b)(6) (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) (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) (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

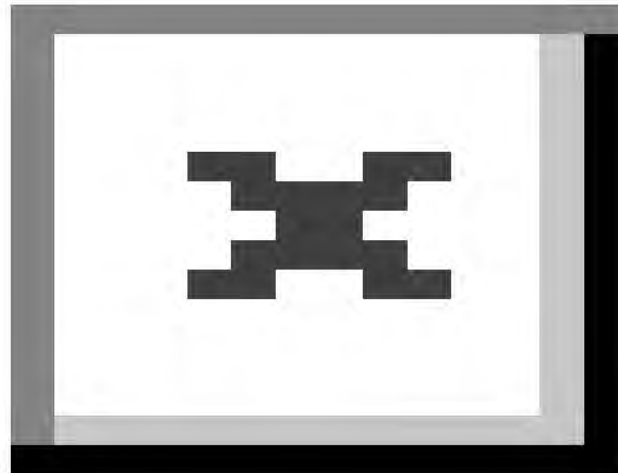
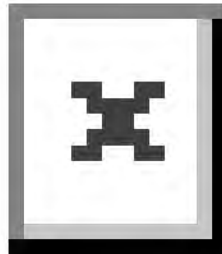


Photo: Pixabay



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.

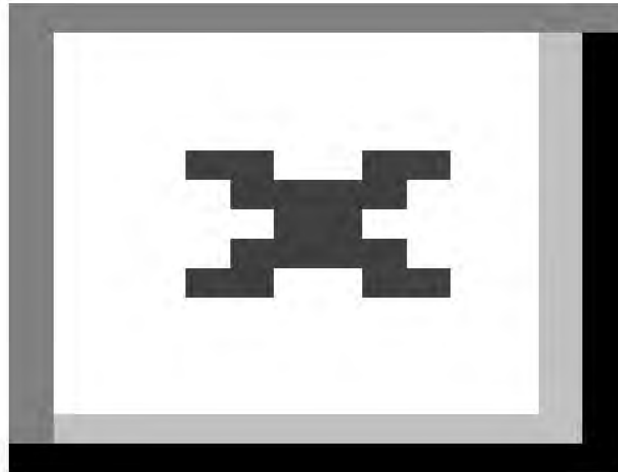
That was days before China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 31 about the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease, two weeks before it shared the virus's genome sequence with the world, and

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.

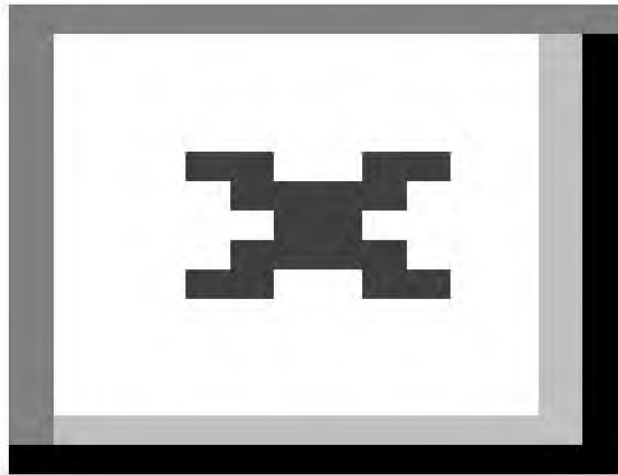
The patient was admitted to the Central Hospital of Wuhan on Dec. 18 with pneumonia and his condition quickly deteriorated. On Dec. 24, the doctors took fluid samples from his lungs and sent them to Vision Medicals for testing, according to Zhao Su, head of respiratory medicine at the hospital. In an 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 [article](#) 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)
EAP-J-Office-DL <EAP-J-Office-DL@state.gov>;
Recipient: (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
To: (h)(6)@state.gov>;
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Fritz, Jonathan D <FritzJD@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article
Date: Mon, 9 Mar 2020 20:07:57 +0000

Btw, to answer (b)(6)'s other question, Xi delivered the speech below on February 3 to the Politburo Standing Committee. The text of the speech appeared in public a few weeks later in the CCP's main theoretical journal Qiushi ("Seeking Truth").

From: (h)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:04 PM
To: (h)(6)@state.gov; (h)(6)@state.gov; (h)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov; (h)(6)@state.gov; Stilwell, David R (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Glorious. + A/S.

(b)(6)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6) (o)
(b)(6) (c)
(b)(6)@state.gov

On March 9, 2020 at 4:03:01 PM EDT, (b)(6)@state.gov>
wrote:
GOLD.

GPA we should spray this out, IMHO.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:02 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:57 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:33 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Caixin Article

+ (b)(6) in case they have a view?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:32 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:27 PM

To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Caixin Article

Can I use that exact language to pass along OTR?

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:24 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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)@state.gov>

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)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:11 PM
To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)@state.gov>
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

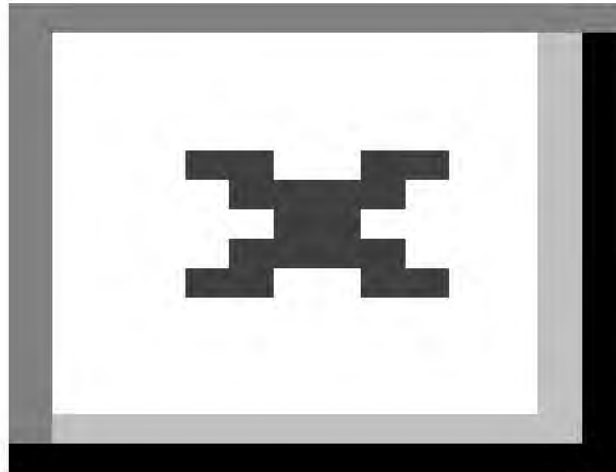
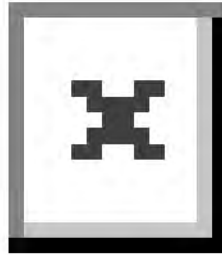


Photo: Pixabay



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.

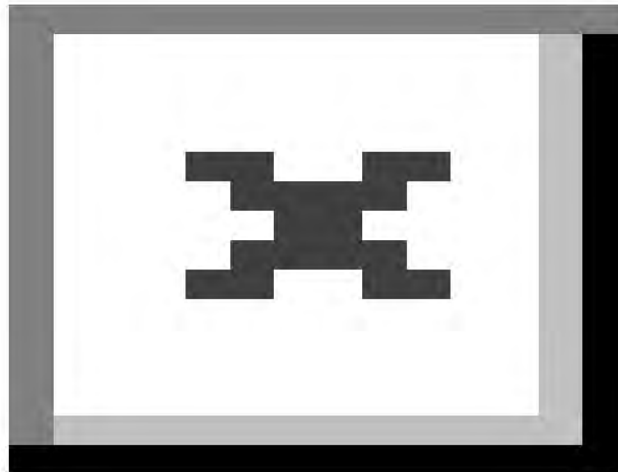
That was days before China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 31 about the emergence of an unidentified infectious disease, two weeks before it shared the virus's genome sequence with the world, and crucially, more than three weeks before Chinese authorities confirmed publicly that 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.

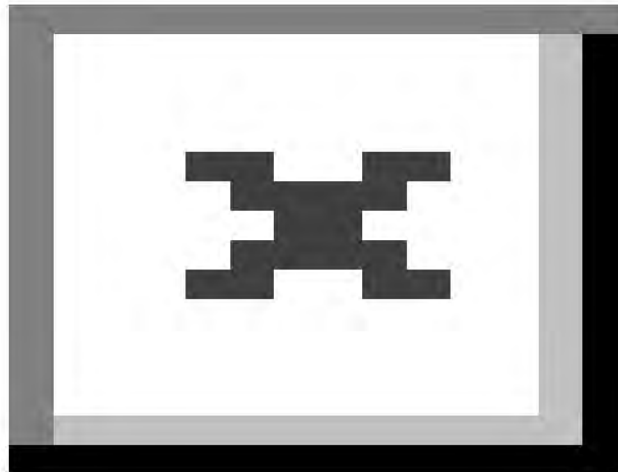
A different social media post, believed to have been made by a Vision Medicals employee, sheds more light on the company's early work. The author of the post, made on Jan. 28, said only that they worked at a private company based in Huangpu, Guangzhou, where Vision Medicals is located. The post's author 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) [REDACTED]@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2020 3:10 PM
To: (b)(6) [REDACTED]@state.gov>
Subject: Caixin Article

Send me the Caixin article when you have it.

Thanks

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

From: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
CC: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Subject: Re: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO
Date: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 13:59:19 +0000

(b)(5)

(b)(6) (E/STAS)

The Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State

U.S. Department of State

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 9:26:50 AM

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

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

(b)(5)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 8:46 AM

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

Cc: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

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

Subject: Re: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

Policy Planning Staff
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State

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

On Jun 2, 2020, at 7:40 AM, Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) wrote:

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: PA Press Clips <PAPressMediaMonitors@state.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:06:01 AM

To: PA Monitoring Group <PAMonitoringGroup@state.gov>

Subject: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

By The Associated Press

2 hours ago

Throughout January, the World Health Organization publicly praised China for what it called a speedy response to the new coronavirus. It repeatedly thanked the Chinese government for sharing the genetic map of the virus "immediately," and said its work and commitment to transparency were "very impressive, and beyond words."

But behind the scenes, it was a much different story, one of significant delays by China and considerable frustration among WHO officials over not getting the information they needed to fight the spread of the deadly virus, The Associated Press has found.

Despite the plaudits, China in fact sat on releasing the genetic map, or genome, of the virus for more than a week after three different government labs had fully decoded the information. Tight controls on information and competition within the Chinese public health system were to blame, according to dozens of interviews and internal documents.

Chinese government labs only released the genome after another lab published it ahead of authorities on a virologist website on Jan. 11. Even then, China stalled for at least two weeks more on providing WHO with detailed data on patients and cases, according to recordings of internal meetings held by the U.N. health agency through January — all at a time when the outbreak arguably might have been dramatically slowed.

WHO officials were lauding China in public because they wanted to coax more information out of the government, the recordings obtained by the AP suggest. Privately, they complained in meetings the week of Jan. 6 that China was not sharing enough data to assess how effectively the virus spread between people or what risk it posed to the rest of the world, costing valuable time.

"We're going on very minimal information," said American epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove, now WHO's technical lead for COVID-19, in one internal meeting. "It's clearly not enough for you to do proper planning."

"We're currently at the stage where yes, they're giving it to us 15 minutes before it appears on CCTV," said WHO's top official in China, Dr. Gauden Galea, referring to the state-owned China Central Television, in another meeting.

The story behind the early response to the virus comes at a time when the U.N. health agency is under siege, and has agreed to an independent probe of how the pandemic was handled globally. After repeatedly praising the Chinese response early on, U.S. President Donald Trump has blasted WHO in recent weeks for allegedly colluding with China to hide the extent of the coronavirus crisis. He cut ties with the organization on Friday, jeopardizing the approximately \$450 million the U.S. gives every year as WHO's biggest single donor.

ADVERTISEMENT

In the meantime, Chinese President Xi Jinping has vowed to pitch in \$2 billion over the next two years to fight the coronavirus, saying China has always provided information to WHO and the world "in a most timely fashion."

The new information does not support the narrative of either the U.S. or China, but instead portrays an agency now stuck in the middle that was urgently trying to solicit more data despite limits to its own authority. Although international law obliges countries to report information to WHO that could have an impact on public health, the U.N. agency has no enforcement powers and cannot independently investigate epidemics within countries. Instead, it must rely on the cooperation of member states.

The recordings suggest that rather than colluding with China, as Trump declared, WHO was kept in the dark as China gave it the minimal information required by law. However, the agency did try to portray China in the best light, likely as a means to secure more information. And WHO experts genuinely thought Chinese scientists had done “a very good job” in detecting and decoding the virus, despite the lack of transparency from Chinese officials.

WHO staffers debated how to press China for gene sequences and detailed patient data without angering authorities, worried about losing access and getting Chinese scientists into trouble. Under international law, WHO is required to quickly share information and alerts with member countries about an evolving crisis. Galea noted WHO could not indulge China’s wish to sign off on information before telling other countries because “that is not respectful of our responsibilities.”

In the second week of January, WHO’s chief of emergencies, Dr. Michael Ryan, told colleagues it was time to “shift gears” and apply more pressure on China, fearing a repeat of the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome that started in China in 2002 and killed nearly 800 people worldwide.

“This is exactly the same scenario, endlessly trying to get updates from China about what was going on,” he said. “WHO barely got out of that one with its neck intact given the issues that arose around transparency in southern China.”

Ryan said the best way to “protect China” was for WHO to do its own independent analysis with data from the Chinese government, because otherwise the spread of the virus between people would be in question and “other countries will take action accordingly.” Ryan also noted that China was not cooperating in the same way some other countries had in the past.

“This would not happen in Congo and did not happen in Congo and other places,” he said, probably referring to the Ebola outbreak that began there in 2018. “We need to see the data.....It’s absolutely important at this point.”

The delay in the release of the genome stalled the recognition of its spread to other countries, along with the global development of tests, drugs and vaccines. The lack of detailed patient data also made it harder to determine how quickly the virus was spreading — a critical question in stopping it.

Between the day the full genome was first decoded by a government lab on Jan. 2 and the day WHO declared a global emergency on Jan. 30, the outbreak spread by a factor of 100 to 200 times, according to retrospective infection data from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The virus has now infected over 6 million people worldwide and killed more than 375,000.

“It’s obvious that we could have saved more lives and avoided many, many deaths if China and the WHO had acted faster,” said Ali Mokdad, a professor at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington.

However, Mokdad and other experts also noted that if WHO had been more confrontational with China, it could have triggered a far worse situation of not getting any information at all.

If WHO had pushed too hard, it could even have been kicked out of China, said Adam Kamradt-Scott, a global health professor at the University of Sydney. But he added that a delay of just a few days in releasing genetic sequences can be critical in an outbreak. And he noted that as Beijing’s lack of

transparency becomes even clearer, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus's continued defense of China is problematic.

"It's definitely damaged WHO's credibility," said Kamradt-Scott. "Did he go too far? I think the evidence on that is clear....it has led to so many questions about the relationship between China and WHO. It is perhaps a cautionary tale."

WHO and its officials named in this story declined to answer questions asked by The Associated Press without audio or written transcripts of the recorded meetings, which the AP was unable to supply to protect its sources.

"Our leadership and staff have worked night and day in compliance with the organization's rules and regulations to support and share information with all Member States equally, and engage in frank and forthright conversations with governments at all levels," a WHO statement said.

China's National Health Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no comment. But in the past few months, China has repeatedly defended its actions, and many other countries — including the U.S. — have responded to the virus with even longer delays of weeks and even months.

"Since the beginning of the outbreak, we have been continuously sharing information on the epidemic with the WHO and the international community in an open, transparent and responsible manner," said Liu Mingzhu, an official with the National Health Commission's International Department, at a press conference on May 15.

The race to find the genetic map of the virus started in late December, according to the story that unfolds in interviews, documents and the WHO recordings. That's when doctors in Wuhan noticed mysterious clusters of patients with fevers and breathing problems who weren't improving with standard flu treatment. Seeking answers, they sent test samples from patients to commercial labs.

By Dec. 27, one lab, Vision Medicals, had pieced together most of the genome of a new coronavirus with striking similarities to SARS. Vision Medicals shared its data with Wuhan officials and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, as reported first by Chinese finance publication Caixin and independently confirmed by the AP.

On Dec. 30, Wuhan health officials issued internal notices warning of the unusual pneumonia, which leaked on social media. That evening, Shi Zhengli, a coronavirus expert at the Wuhan Institute of Virology who is famous for having traced the SARS virus to a bat cave, was alerted to the new disease, according to an interview with Scientific American. Shi took the first train from a conference in Shanghai back to Wuhan.

The next day, Chinese CDC director Gao Fu dispatched a team of experts to Wuhan. Also on Dec. 31, WHO first learned about the cases from an open-source platform that scouts for intelligence on outbreaks, emergencies chief Ryan has said.

WHO officially requested more information on Jan. 1. Under international law, members have 24 to 48 hours to respond, and China reported two days later that there were 44 cases and no deaths.

By Jan. 2, Shi had decoded the entire genome of the virus, according to a notice later posted on her institute's website.

Scientists agree that Chinese scientists detected and sequenced the then-unknown pathogen with astonishing speed, in a testimony to China's vastly improved technical capabilities since SARS, during which a WHO-led group of scientists took months to identify the virus. This time, Chinese virologists proved within days that it was a never-before-seen coronavirus. Tedros would later say Beijing set "a new standard for outbreak response."

But when it came to sharing the information with the world, things began to go awry.

On Jan. 3, the National Health Commission issued a confidential notice ordering labs with the virus to either destroy their samples or send them to designated institutes for safekeeping. The notice, first reported by Caixin and seen by the AP, forbade labs from publishing about the virus without government authorization. The order barred Shi's lab from publishing the genetic sequence or warning of the potential danger.

Chinese law states that research institutes cannot conduct experiments on potentially dangerous new viruses without approval from top health authorities. Although the law is intended to keep experiments safe, it gives top health officials wide-ranging powers over what lower-level labs can or cannot do.

"If the virologist community had operated with more autonomy....the public would have been informed of the lethal risk of the new virus much earlier," said Edward Gu, a professor at Zhejiang University, and Li Lantian, a PhD student at Northwestern University, in a paper published in March analyzing the outbreak.

Commission officials later repeated that they were trying to ensure lab safety, and had tasked four separate government labs with identifying the genome at the same time to get accurate, consistent results.

By Jan. 3, the Chinese CDC had independently sequenced the virus, according to internal data seen by the Associated Press. And by just after midnight on Jan. 5, a third designated government lab, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, had decoded the sequence and submitted a report — pulling all-nighters to get results in record time, according to a state media interview. Yet even with full sequences decoded by three state labs independently, Chinese health officials remained silent. The WHO reported on Twitter that investigations were under way into an unusual cluster of pneumonia cases with no deaths in Wuhan, and said it would share "more details as we have them."

Meanwhile, at the Chinese CDC, gaps in coronavirus expertise proved a problem.

For nearly two weeks, Wuhan reported no new infections, as officials censored doctors who warned of suspicious cases. Meanwhile, researchers found the new coronavirus used a distinct spike protein to bind itself to human cells. The unusual protein and the lack of new cases lulled some Chinese CDC researchers into thinking the virus didn't easily spread between humans — like the coronavirus that causes Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, according to an employee who declined to be identified out of fear of retribution.

Li, the coronavirus expert, said he immediately suspected the pathogen was infectious when he spotted a leaked copy of a sequencing report in a group chat on a SARS-like coronavirus. But the Chinese CDC team that sequenced the virus lacked specialists in the molecular structure of coronaviruses and failed to consult with outside scientists, Li said. Chinese health authorities rebuffed offers of assistance from foreign experts, including Hong Kong scientists barred from a fact-finding mission to Wuhan and an American professor at a university in China.

On Jan. 5, the Shanghai Public Clinical Health Center, led by famed virologist Zhang Yongzhen, was the latest to sequence the virus. He submitted it to the GenBank database, where it sat awaiting review, and notified the National Health Commission. He warned them that the new virus was similar to SARS and likely infectious.

"It should be contagious through respiratory passages," the center said in an internal notice seen by the AP. "We recommend taking preventative measures in public areas."

On the same day, WHO said that based on preliminary information from China, there was no evidence of significant transmission between humans, and did not recommend any specific measures for travelers.

The next day, the Chinese CDC raised its emergency level to the second highest. Staffers proceeded to isolate the virus, draft lab testing guidelines, and design test kits. But the agency did not have the authority to issue public warnings, and the heightened emergency level was kept secret even from many of its own staff.

By Jan. 7, another team at Wuhan University had sequenced the pathogen and found it matched Shi's, making Shi certain they had identified a novel coronavirus. But Chinese CDC experts said they didn't trust Shi's findings and needed to verify her data before she could publish, according to three people familiar with the matter. Both the National Health Commission and the Ministry of Science and Technology, which oversees Shi's lab, declined to make Shi available for an interview.

A major factor behind the gag order, some say, was that Chinese CDC researchers wanted to publish their papers first. "They wanted to take all the credit," said Li Yize, a coronavirus researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

Internally, the leadership of the Chinese CDC is plagued with fierce competition, six people familiar with the system explained. They said the agency has long promoted staff based on how many papers they can publish in prestigious journals, making scientists reluctant to share data.

As the days went by, even some of the Chinese CDC's own staff began to wonder why it was taking so long for authorities to identify the pathogen.

"We were getting suspicious, since within one or two days you would get a sequencing result," a lab technician said, declining to be identified for fear of retribution.

On Jan. 8, the Wall Street Journal reported that scientists had identified a new coronavirus in samples from pneumonia patients in Wuhan, pre-empting and embarrassing Chinese officials. The lab technician told the AP they first learned about the discovery of the virus from the Journal.

The article also embarrassed WHO officials. Dr. Tom Grein, chief of WHO's acute events management team, said the agency looked "doubly, incredibly stupid." Van Kerkhove, the American expert, acknowledged WHO was "already late" in announcing the new virus and told colleagues that it was critical to push China.

Ryan, WHO's chief of emergencies, was also upset at the dearth of information.

"The fact is, we're two to three weeks into an event, we don't have a laboratory diagnosis, we don't have an age, sex or geographic distribution, we don't have an epi curve," he complained, referring to the standard graphic of outbreaks scientists use to show how an epidemic is progressing.

After the article, state media officially announced the discovery of the new coronavirus. But even then, Chinese health authorities did not release the genome, diagnostic tests, or detailed patient data that could hint at how infectious the disease was.

By that time, suspicious cases were already appearing across the region.

On Jan. 8, Thai airport officers pulled aside a woman from Wuhan with a runny nose, sore throat, and high temperature. Chulalongkorn University professor Supaporn Wacharapluesadee's team found the woman was infected with a new coronavirus, much like what Chinese officials had described. Supaporn partially figured out the genetic sequence by Jan. 9, reported it to the Thai government and spent the next day searching for matching sequences.

But because Chinese authorities hadn't published any sequences, she found nothing. She could not prove the Thai virus was the same pathogen sickening people in Wuhan.

"It was kind of wait and see, when China will release the data, then we can compare," said Supaporn.

On Jan. 9, a 61-year-old man with the virus passed away in Wuhan — the first known death. The death wasn't made public until Jan. 11.

WHO officials complained in internal meetings that they were making repeated requests for more data, especially to find out if the virus could spread efficiently between humans, but to no avail.

"We have informally and formally been requesting more epidemiological information," WHO's China representative Galea said. "But when asked for specifics, we could get nothing."

Emergencies chief Ryan grumbled that since China was providing the minimal information required by international law, there was little WHO could do. But he also noted that last September, WHO had issued an unusual public rebuke of Tanzania for not providing enough details about a worrisome Ebola outbreak.

"We have to be consistent," Ryan said. "The danger now is that despite our good intent...especially if something does happen, there will be a lot of finger-pointing at WHO."

Ryan noted that China could make a “huge contribution” to the world by sharing the genetic material immediately, because otherwise “other countries will have to reinvent the wheel over the coming days.”

On Jan. 11, a team led by Zhang, from the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center, finally published a sequence on virological.org, used by researchers to swap tips on pathogens. The move angered Chinese CDC officials, three people familiar with the matter said, and the next day, his laboratory was temporarily shuttered by health authorities.

Zhang referred a request for comment to the Chinese CDC. The National Health Commission, which oversees the Chinese CDC, declined multiple times to make its officials available for interviews and did not answer questions about Zhang.

Supaporn compared her sequence with Zhang’s and found it was a 100% match, confirming that the Thai patient was ill with the same virus detected in Wuhan. Another Thai lab got the same results. That day, Thailand informed the WHO, said Tanarak Plipat, deputy director-general of the Department of Disease Control at Thailand’s Ministry of Public Health.

After Zhang released the genome, the Chinese CDC, the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences raced to publish their sequences, working overnight to review them, gather patient data, and send them to the National Health Commission for approval, according to documentation obtained by the AP. On Jan. 12, the three labs together finally published the sequences on GISAID, a platform for scientists to share genomic data.

By then, more than two weeks had passed since Vision Medicals decoded a partial sequence, and more than a week since the three government labs had all obtained full sequences. Around 600 people were infected in that week, a roughly three-fold increase.

Some scientists say the wait was not unreasonable considering the difficulties in sequencing unknown pathogens, given accuracy is as important as speed. They point to the SARS outbreak in 2003 when some Chinese scientists initially — and wrongly — believed the source of the epidemic was chlamydia.

“The pressure is intense in an outbreak to make sure you’re right,” said Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealthAlliance in New York. “It’s actually worse to go out to go to the public with a story that’s wrong because the public completely lose confidence in the public health response.”

Still, others quietly question what happened behind the scenes.

Infectious diseases expert John Mackenzie, who served on a WHO emergency committee during the outbreak, praised the speed of Chinese researchers in sequencing the virus. But he said once central authorities got involved, detailed data trickled to a crawl.

“There certainly was a kind of blank period,” Mackenzie said. “There had to be human to human transmission. You know, it’s staring at you in the face... I would have thought they would have been much more open at that stage.”

On Jan. 13, WHO announced that Thailand had a confirmed case of the virus, jolting Chinese officials.

The next day, in a confidential teleconference, China's top health official ordered the country to prepare for a pandemic, calling the outbreak the "most severe challenge since SARS in 2003", as the AP previously reported. Chinese CDC staff across the country began screening, isolating, and testing for cases, turning up hundreds across the country.

Yet even as the Chinese CDC internally declared a level one emergency, the highest level possible, Chinese officials still said the chance of sustained transmission between humans was low.

WHO went back and forth. Van Kerkhove said in a press briefing that "it is certainly possible there is limited human-to-human transmission." But hours later, WHO seemed to backtrack, and tweeted that "preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission" – a statement that later became fodder for critics.

A high-ranking official in WHO's Asia office, Dr. Liu Yunguo, who attended medical school in Wuhan, flew to Beijing to make direct, informal contacts with Chinese officials, recordings show. Liu's former classmate, a Wuhan doctor, had alerted him that pneumonia patients were flooding the city's hospitals, and Liu pushed for more experts to visit Wuhan, according to a public health expert familiar with the matter.

On Jan. 20, the leader of an expert team returning from Wuhan, renowned government infectious diseases doctor Zhong Nanshan, declared publicly for the first time that the new virus was spreading between people. Chinese President Xi Jinping called for the "timely publication of epidemic information and deepening of international cooperation."

Despite that directive, WHO staff still struggled to obtain enough detailed patient data from China about the rapidly evolving outbreak. That same day, the U.N. health agency dispatched a small team to Wuhan for two days, including Galea, the WHO representative in China.

They were told about a worrying cluster of cases among more than a dozen doctors and nurses. But they did not have "transmission trees" detailing how the cases were connected, nor a full understanding of how widely the virus was spreading and who was at risk.

In an internal meeting, Galea said their Chinese counterparts were "talking openly and consistently" about human-to-human transmission, and that there was a debate about whether or not this was sustained. Galea reported to colleagues in Geneva and Manila that China's key request to WHO was for help "in communicating this to the public, without causing panic."

On Jan. 22, WHO convened an independent committee to determine whether to declare a global health emergency. After two inconclusive meetings where experts were split, they decided against it — even as Chinese officials ordered Wuhan sealed in the biggest quarantine in history. The next day, WHO chief Tedros publicly described the spread of the new coronavirus in China as "limited."

For days, China didn't release much detailed data, even as its case count exploded. Beijing city officials were alarmed enough to consider locking down the capital, according to a medical expert with direct knowledge of the matter.

On Jan. 28, Tedros and top experts, including Ryan, made an extraordinary trip to Beijing to meet President Xi and other senior Chinese officials. It is highly unusual for WHO's director-general to directly intervene in the practicalities of outbreak investigations. Tedros' staffers had prepared a list of requests for information.

"It could all happen and the floodgates open, or there's no communication," Grein said in an internal meeting while his boss was in Beijing. "We'll see."

At the end of Tedros' trip, WHO announced China had agreed to accept an international team of experts. In a press briefing on Jan. 29, Tedros heaped praise on China, calling its level of commitment "incredible."

The next day, WHO finally declared an international health emergency. Once again, Tedros thanked China, saying nothing about the earlier lack of cooperation.

"We should have actually expressed our respect and gratitude to China for what it's doing," Tedros said. "It has already done incredible things to limit the transmission of the virus to other countries."

Sender: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

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

Stilwell, David R (b)(6)

Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
Subject: Re: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO
Date: Tue, 2 Jun 2020 13:56:23 +0000

(b)(5)

Get Outlook for iOS

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 9:52:25 AM

To: (b)(6)

Subject: Re: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

Thanks, (b)(6)

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

Policy Planning Staff
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State

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

On Jun 2, 2020, at 9:33 AM, (b)(6) wrote:

FYI, AP story on China and WHO notification.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 6:47 AM

To: SPOX <SPOX@state.gov>; IO-PG <IO-PG@state.gov>; EAP-Press <EAP-Press@state.gov>; OES-PA-DG <OES-PA-DG@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Wuhan) (b)(6)

Subject: Fw: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

good morning!

flagging the below.

From: PA Press Clips <PAPressMediaMonitors@state.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:06 AM

To: PA Monitoring Group <PAMonitoringGroup@state.gov>

Subject: AP Exclusive: China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

China delayed releasing coronavirus info, frustrating WHO

By The Associated Press

2 hours ago

Throughout January, the World Health Organization publicly praised China for what it called a speedy response to the new coronavirus. It repeatedly thanked the Chinese government for sharing the genetic map of the virus "immediately," and said its work and commitment to transparency were "very impressive, and beyond words."

But behind the scenes, it was a much different story, one of significant delays by China and considerable frustration among WHO officials over not getting the information they needed to fight the spread of the deadly virus, The Associated Press has found.

Despite the plaudits, China in fact sat on releasing the genetic map, or genome, of the virus for more than a week after three different government labs had fully decoded the information. Tight controls on information and competition within the Chinese public health system were to blame, according to dozens of interviews and internal documents.

Chinese government labs only released the genome after another lab published it ahead of authorities on a virologist website on Jan. 11. Even then, China stalled for at least two weeks more on providing WHO with detailed data on patients and cases, according to recordings of internal meetings held by the U.N. health agency through January — all at a time when the outbreak arguably might have been dramatically slowed.

WHO officials were lauding China in public because they wanted to coax more information out of the government, the recordings obtained by the AP suggest. Privately, they complained in meetings the week of Jan. 6 that China was not sharing enough data to assess how effectively the virus spread between people or what risk it posed to the rest of the world, costing valuable time.

"We're going on very minimal information," said American epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove, now WHO's technical lead for COVID-19, in one internal meeting. "It's clearly not enough for you to do proper planning."

"We're currently at the stage where yes, they're giving it to us 15 minutes before it appears on CCTV," said WHO's top official in China, Dr. Gauden Galea, referring to the state-owned China Central Television, in another meeting.

The story behind the early response to the virus comes at a time when the U.N. health agency is under siege, and has agreed to an independent probe of how the pandemic was handled globally. After repeatedly praising the Chinese response early on, U.S. President Donald Trump has blasted WHO in recent weeks for allegedly colluding with China to hide the extent of the coronavirus crisis. He cut ties with the organization on Friday, jeopardizing the approximately \$450 million the U.S. gives every year as WHO's biggest single donor.

ADVERTISEMENT

In the meantime, Chinese President Xi Jinping has vowed to pitch in \$2 billion over the next two years to fight the coronavirus, saying China has always provided information to WHO and the world "in a most timely fashion."

The new information does not support the narrative of either the U.S. or China, but instead portrays an agency now stuck in the middle that was urgently trying to solicit more data despite limits to its own authority. Although international law obliges countries to report information to WHO that could have an impact on public health, the U.N. agency has no enforcement powers and cannot independently investigate epidemics within countries. Instead, it must rely on the cooperation of member states.

The recordings suggest that rather than colluding with China, as Trump declared, WHO was kept in the dark as China gave it the minimal information required by law. However, the agency did try to portray China in the best light, likely as a means to secure more information. And WHO experts genuinely thought Chinese scientists had done "a very good job" in detecting and decoding the virus, despite the lack of transparency from Chinese officials.

WHO staffers debated how to press China for gene sequences and detailed patient data without angering authorities, worried about losing access and getting Chinese scientists into trouble. Under international law, WHO is required to quickly share information and alerts with member countries about an evolving crisis. Galea noted WHO could not indulge China's wish to sign off on information before telling other countries because "that is not respectful of our responsibilities."

In the second week of January, WHO's chief of emergencies, Dr. Michael Ryan, told colleagues it was time to "shift gears" and apply more pressure on China, fearing a repeat of the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome that started in China in 2002 and killed nearly 800 people worldwide.

"This is exactly the same scenario, endlessly trying to get updates from China about what was going on," he said. "WHO barely got out of that one with its neck intact given the issues that arose around transparency in southern China."

Ryan said the best way to "protect China" was for WHO to do its own independent analysis with data from the Chinese government, because otherwise the spread of the virus between people would be in question and "other countries will take action accordingly." Ryan also noted that China was not cooperating in the same way some other countries had in the past.

"This would not happen in Congo and did not happen in Congo and other places," he said, probably referring to the Ebola outbreak that began there in 2018. "We need to see the data.....It's absolutely important at this point."

The delay in the release of the genome stalled the recognition of its spread to other countries, along with the global development of tests, drugs and vaccines. The lack of detailed patient data also made it harder to determine how quickly the virus was spreading — a critical question in stopping it.

Between the day the full genome was first decoded by a government lab on Jan. 2 and the day WHO declared a global emergency on Jan. 30, the outbreak spread by a factor of 100 to 200 times, according to retrospective infection data from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The virus has now infected over 6 million people worldwide and killed more than 375,000.

"It's obvious that we could have saved more lives and avoided many, many deaths if China and the WHO had acted faster," said Ali Mokdad, a professor at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington.

However, Mokdad and other experts also noted that if WHO had been more confrontational with China, it could have triggered a far worse situation of not getting any information at all.

If WHO had pushed too hard, it could even have been kicked out of China, said Adam Kamradt-Scott, a global health professor at the University of Sydney. But he added that a delay of just a few days in releasing genetic sequences can be critical in an outbreak. And he noted that as Beijing's lack of transparency becomes even clearer, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus's continued defense of China is problematic.

"It's definitely damaged WHO's credibility," said Kamradt-Scott. "Did he go too far? I think the evidence on that is clear....it has led to so many questions about the relationship between China and WHO. It is perhaps a cautionary tale."

WHO and its officials named in this story declined to answer questions asked by The Associated Press without audio or written transcripts of the recorded meetings, which the AP was unable to supply to protect its sources.

"Our leadership and staff have worked night and day in compliance with the organization's rules and regulations to support and share information with all Member States equally, and engage in frank and forthright conversations with governments at all levels," a WHO statement said.

China's National Health Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no comment. But in the past few months, China has repeatedly defended its actions, and many other countries — including the U.S. — have responded to the virus with even longer delays of weeks and even months.

"Since the beginning of the outbreak, we have been continuously sharing information on the epidemic with the WHO and the international community in an open, transparent and responsible manner," said Liu Mingzhu, an official with the National Health Commission's International Department, at a press conference on May 15.

The race to find the genetic map of the virus started in late December, according to the story that unfolds in interviews, documents and the WHO recordings. That's when doctors in Wuhan noticed mysterious clusters of patients with fevers and breathing problems who weren't improving with standard flu treatment. Seeking answers, they sent test samples from patients to commercial labs.

By Dec. 27, one lab, Vision Medicals, had pieced together most of the genome of a new coronavirus with striking similarities to SARS. Vision Medicals shared its data with Wuhan officials and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, as reported first by Chinese finance publication Caixin and independently confirmed by the AP.

On Dec. 30, Wuhan health officials issued internal notices warning of the unusual pneumonia, which leaked on social media. That evening, Shi Zhengli, a coronavirus expert at the Wuhan Institute of Virology who is famous for having traced the SARS virus to a bat cave, was alerted to the new disease, according to an interview with Scientific American. Shi took the first train from a conference in Shanghai back to Wuhan.

The next day, Chinese CDC director Gao Fu dispatched a team of experts to Wuhan. Also on Dec. 31, WHO first learned about the cases from an open-source platform that scouts for intelligence on outbreaks, emergencies chief Ryan has said.

WHO officially requested more information on Jan. 1. Under international law, members have 24 to 48 hours to respond, and China reported two days later that there were 44 cases and no deaths.

By Jan. 2, Shi had decoded the entire genome of the virus, according to a notice later posted on her institute's website.

Scientists agree that Chinese scientists detected and sequenced the then-unknown pathogen with astonishing speed, in a testimony to China's vastly improved technical capabilities since SARS, during which a WHO-led group of scientists took months to identify the virus. This time, Chinese virologists proved within days that it was a never-before-seen coronavirus. Tedros would later say Beijing set "a new standard for outbreak response."

But when it came to sharing the information with the world, things began to go awry.

On Jan. 3, the National Health Commission issued a confidential notice ordering labs with the virus to either destroy their samples or send them to designated institutes for safekeeping. The notice, first reported by Caixin and seen by the AP, forbade labs from publishing about the virus without government authorization. The order barred Shi's lab from publishing the genetic sequence or warning of the potential danger.

Chinese law states that research institutes cannot conduct experiments on potentially dangerous new viruses without approval from top health authorities. Although the law is intended to keep experiments safe, it gives top health officials wide-ranging powers over what lower-level labs can or cannot do.

"If the virologist community had operated with more autonomy....the public would have been informed of the lethal risk of the new virus much earlier," said Edward Gu, a professor at Zhejiang University, and

Li Lantian, a PhD student at Northwestern University, in a paper published in March analyzing the outbreak.

Commission officials later repeated that they were trying to ensure lab safety, and had tasked four separate government labs with identifying the genome at the same time to get accurate, consistent results.

By Jan. 3, the Chinese CDC had independently sequenced the virus, according to internal data seen by the Associated Press. And by just after midnight on Jan. 5, a third designated government lab, the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, had decoded the sequence and submitted a report — pulling all-nighters to get results in record time, according to a state media interview. Yet even with full sequences decoded by three state labs independently, Chinese health officials remained silent. The WHO reported on Twitter that investigations were under way into an unusual cluster of pneumonia cases with no deaths in Wuhan, and said it would share “more details as we have them.”

Meanwhile, at the Chinese CDC, gaps in coronavirus expertise proved a problem.

For nearly two weeks, Wuhan reported no new infections, as officials censored doctors who warned of suspicious cases. Meanwhile, researchers found the new coronavirus used a distinct spike protein to bind itself to human cells. The unusual protein and the lack of new cases lulled some Chinese CDC researchers into thinking the virus didn’t easily spread between humans — like the coronavirus that causes Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, according to an employee who declined to be identified out of fear of retribution.

Li, the coronavirus expert, said he immediately suspected the pathogen was infectious when he spotted a leaked copy of a sequencing report in a group chat on a SARS-like coronavirus. But the Chinese CDC team that sequenced the virus lacked specialists in the molecular structure of coronaviruses and failed to consult with outside scientists, Li said. Chinese health authorities rebuffed offers of assistance from foreign experts, including Hong Kong scientists barred from a fact-finding mission to Wuhan and an American professor at a university in China.

On Jan. 5, the Shanghai Public Clinical Health Center, led by famed virologist Zhang Yongzhen, was the latest to sequence the virus. He submitted it to the GenBank database, where it sat awaiting review, and notified the National Health Commission. He warned them that the new virus was similar to SARS and likely infectious.

“It should be contagious through respiratory passages,” the center said in an internal notice seen by the AP. “We recommend taking preventative measures in public areas.”

On the same day, WHO said that based on preliminary information from China, there was no evidence of significant transmission between humans, and did not recommend any specific measures for travelers.

The next day, the Chinese CDC raised its emergency level to the second highest. Staffers proceeded to isolate the virus, draft lab testing guidelines, and design test kits. But the agency did not have the authority to issue public warnings, and the heightened emergency level was kept secret even from many of its own staff.

By Jan. 7, another team at Wuhan University had sequenced the pathogen and found it matched Shi's, making Shi certain they had identified a novel coronavirus. But Chinese CDC experts said they didn't trust Shi's findings and needed to verify her data before she could publish, according to three people familiar with the matter. Both the National Health Commission and the Ministry of Science and Technology, which oversees Shi's lab, declined to make Shi available for an interview.

A major factor behind the gag order, some say, was that Chinese CDC researchers wanted to publish their papers first. "They wanted to take all the credit," said Li Yize, a coronavirus researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

Internally, the leadership of the Chinese CDC is plagued with fierce competition, six people familiar with the system explained. They said the agency has long promoted staff based on how many papers they can publish in prestigious journals, making scientists reluctant to share data.

As the days went by, even some of the Chinese CDC's own staff began to wonder why it was taking so long for authorities to identify the pathogen.

"We were getting suspicious, since within one or two days you would get a sequencing result," a lab technician said, declining to be identified for fear of retribution.

On Jan. 8, the Wall Street Journal reported that scientists had identified a new coronavirus in samples from pneumonia patients in Wuhan, pre-empting and embarrassing Chinese officials. The lab technician told the AP they first learned about the discovery of the virus from the Journal.

The article also embarrassed WHO officials. Dr. Tom Grein, chief of WHO's acute events management team, said the agency looked "doubly, incredibly stupid." Van Kerkhove, the American expert, acknowledged WHO was "already late" in announcing the new virus and told colleagues that it was critical to push China.

Ryan, WHO's chief of emergencies, was also upset at the dearth of information.

"The fact is, we're two to three weeks into an event, we don't have a laboratory diagnosis, we don't have an age, sex or geographic distribution, we don't have an epi curve," he complained, referring to the standard graphic of outbreaks scientists use to show how an epidemic is progressing.

After the article, state media officially announced the discovery of the new coronavirus. But even then, Chinese health authorities did not release the genome, diagnostic tests, or detailed patient data that could hint at how infectious the disease was.

By that time, suspicious cases were already appearing across the region.

On Jan. 8, Thai airport officers pulled aside a woman from Wuhan with a runny nose, sore throat, and high temperature. Chulalongkorn University professor Supaporn Wacharapluesadee's team found the woman was infected with a new coronavirus, much like what Chinese officials had described. Supaporn partially figured out the genetic sequence by Jan. 9, reported it to the Thai government and spent the next day searching for matching sequences.

But because Chinese authorities hadn't published any sequences, she found nothing. She could not prove the Thai virus was the same pathogen sickening people in Wuhan.

"It was kind of wait and see, when China will release the data, then we can compare," said Supaporn.

On Jan. 9, a 61-year-old man with the virus passed away in Wuhan — the first known death. The death wasn't made public until Jan. 11.

WHO officials complained in internal meetings that they were making repeated requests for more data, especially to find out if the virus could spread efficiently between humans, but to no avail.

"We have informally and formally been requesting more epidemiological information," WHO's China representative Galea said. "But when asked for specifics, we could get nothing."

Emergencies chief Ryan grumbled that since China was providing the minimal information required by international law, there was little WHO could do. But he also noted that last September, WHO had issued an unusual public rebuke of Tanzania for not providing enough details about a worrisome Ebola outbreak.

"We have to be consistent," Ryan said. "The danger now is that despite our good intent...especially if something does happen, there will be a lot of finger-pointing at WHO."

Ryan noted that China could make a "huge contribution" to the world by sharing the genetic material immediately, because otherwise "other countries will have to reinvent the wheel over the coming days."

On Jan. 11, a team led by Zhang, from the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center, finally published a sequence on virological.org, used by researchers to swap tips on pathogens. The move angered Chinese CDC officials, three people familiar with the matter said, and the next day, his laboratory was temporarily shuttered by health authorities.

Zhang referred a request for comment to the Chinese CDC. The National Health Commission, which oversees the Chinese CDC, declined multiple times to make its officials available for interviews and did not answer questions about Zhang.

Supaporn compared her sequence with Zhang's and found it was a 100% match, confirming that the Thai patient was ill with the same virus detected in Wuhan. Another Thai lab got the same results. That day, Thailand informed the WHO, said Tanarak Plipat, deputy director-general of the Department of Disease Control at Thailand's Ministry of Public Health.

After Zhang released the genome, the Chinese CDC, the Wuhan Institute of Virology and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences raced to publish their sequences, working overnight to review them, gather patient data, and send them to the National Health Commission for approval, according to documentation obtained by the AP. On Jan. 12, the three labs together finally published the sequences on GISAID, a platform for scientists to share genomic data.

By then, more than two weeks had passed since Vision Medicals decoded a partial sequence, and more than a week since the three government labs had all obtained full sequences. Around 600 people were infected in that week, a roughly three-fold increase.

Some scientists say the wait was not unreasonable considering the difficulties in sequencing unknown pathogens, given accuracy is as important as speed. They point to the SARS outbreak in 2003 when some Chinese scientists initially — and wrongly — believed the source of the epidemic was chlamydia.

"The pressure is intense in an outbreak to make sure you're right," said Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealthAlliance in New York. "It's actually worse to go out to go to the public with a story that's wrong because the public completely lose confidence in the public health response."

Still, others quietly question what happened behind the scenes.

Infectious diseases expert John Mackenzie, who served on a WHO emergency committee during the outbreak, praised the speed of Chinese researchers in sequencing the virus. But he said once central authorities got involved, detailed data trickled to a crawl.

"There certainly was a kind of blank period," Mackenzie said. "There had to be human to human transmission. You know, it's staring at you in the face... I would have thought they would have been much more open at that stage."

On Jan. 13, WHO announced that Thailand had a confirmed case of the virus, jolting Chinese officials.

The next day, in a confidential teleconference, China's top health official ordered the country to prepare for a pandemic, calling the outbreak the "most severe challenge since SARS in 2003", as the AP previously reported. Chinese CDC staff across the country began screening, isolating, and testing for cases, turning up hundreds across the country.

Yet even as the Chinese CDC internally declared a level one emergency, the highest level possible, Chinese officials still said the chance of sustained transmission between humans was low.

WHO went back and forth. Van Kerkhove said in a press briefing that "it is certainly possible there is limited human-to-human transmission." But hours later, WHO seemed to backtrack, and tweeted that "preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission" — a statement that later became fodder for critics.

A high-ranking official in WHO's Asia office, Dr. Liu Yunguo, who attended medical school in Wuhan, flew to Beijing to make direct, informal contacts with Chinese officials, recordings show. Liu's former classmate, a Wuhan doctor, had alerted him that pneumonia patients were flooding the city's hospitals, and Liu pushed for more experts to visit Wuhan, according to a public health expert familiar with the matter.

On Jan. 20, the leader of an expert team returning from Wuhan, renowned government infectious diseases doctor Zhong Nanshan, declared publicly for the first time that the new virus was spreading

between people. Chinese President Xi Jinping called for the “timely publication of epidemic information and deepening of international cooperation.”

Despite that directive, WHO staff still struggled to obtain enough detailed patient data from China about the rapidly evolving outbreak. That same day, the U.N. health agency dispatched a small team to Wuhan for two days, including Galea, the WHO representative in China.

They were told about a worrying cluster of cases among more than a dozen doctors and nurses. But they did not have “transmission trees” detailing how the cases were connected, nor a full understanding of how widely the virus was spreading and who was at risk.

In an internal meeting, Galea said their Chinese counterparts were “talking openly and consistently” about human-to-human transmission, and that there was a debate about whether or not this was sustained. Galea reported to colleagues in Geneva and Manila that China’s key request to WHO was for help “in communicating this to the public, without causing panic.”

On Jan. 22, WHO convened an independent committee to determine whether to declare a global health emergency. After two inconclusive meetings where experts were split, they decided against it — even as Chinese officials ordered Wuhan sealed in the biggest quarantine in history. The next day, WHO chief Tedros publicly described the spread of the new coronavirus in China as “limited.”

For days, China didn’t release much detailed data, even as its case count exploded. Beijing city officials were alarmed enough to consider locking down the capital, according to a medical expert with direct knowledge of the matter.

On Jan. 28, Tedros and top experts, including Ryan, made an extraordinary trip to Beijing to meet President Xi and other senior Chinese officials. It is highly unusual for WHO’s director-general to directly intervene in the practicalities of outbreak investigations. Tedros’ staffers had prepared a list of requests for information.

“It could all happen and the floodgates open, or there’s no communication,” Grein said in an internal meeting while his boss was in Beijing. “We’ll see.”

At the end of Tedros’ trip, WHO announced China had agreed to accept an international team of experts. In a press briefing on Jan. 29, Tedros heaped praise on China, calling its level of commitment “incredible.”

The next day, WHO finally declared an international health emergency. Once again, Tedros thanked China, saying nothing about the earlier lack of cooperation.

“We should have actually expressed our respect and gratitude to China for what it’s doing,” Tedros said. “It has already done incredible things to limit the transmission of the virus to other countries.”

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6);
(b)(6) (Shenyang) (b)(6);
CC: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Ortagus, Morgan D (h)(6)
Subject: RE: 04/23 - GEC and EAP CCP Twitter, Chinese Media, and MFA Coverage of COVID and U.S.
Date: Thu, 23 Apr 2020 12:58:08 +0000

Re: the first one; (b)(5)

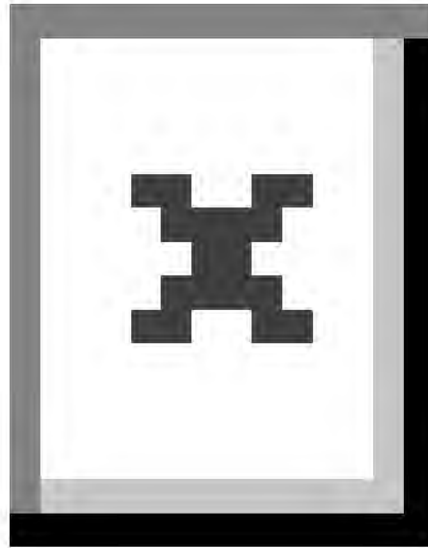
(b)(5)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 8:49 AM
To: (h)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
Cc: Buangan, Richard L (h)(6) (b)(6) (Shenyang) (b)(6)
Subject: 04/23 - GEC and EAP CCP Twitter, Chinese Media, and MFA Coverage of COVID and U.S.

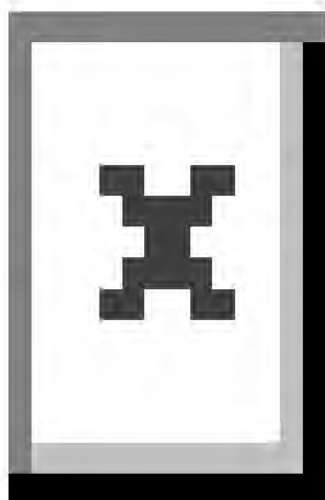
Twitter

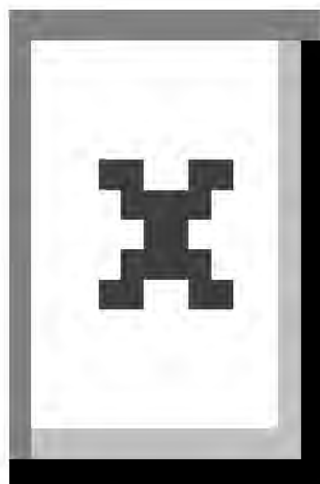
BLUF: GT pushes theory COVID-19 originated in multiple places, multiple platforms push topline that the US is spreading disinformation about China. Battle of lawsuits emerges as Chinese lawyer attempts to sue the US and a second state signs onto the lawsuit against China. Efforts to show the US response as inadequate and frame U.S. criticism of Beijing as an effort to win 2020 elections abound on multiple platforms. PRC state media, foreign missions and ambassadors continue to push positive localized messaging on COVID cooperation and assistance and reinforce Beijing as a global health leader and that its COVID-19 response should be a model for others.

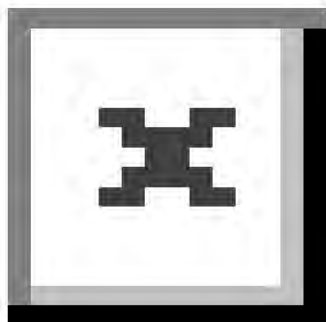
1. Global Times: COVID-19 may have originated in multiple places around the world

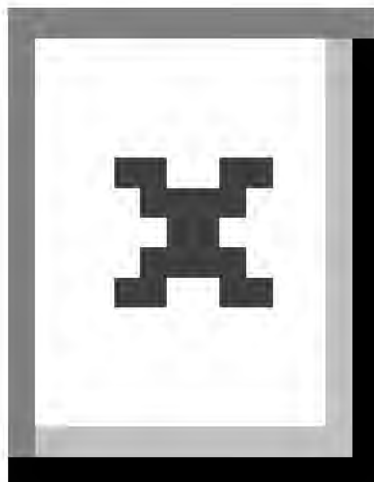


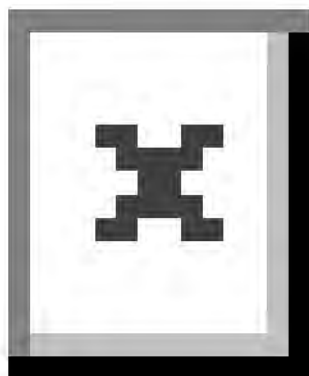
**2. LijianZhao retweets, Global Times, Chinese Embassies in India and Manila, CGTN:
Response to Wuhan lab origin and COVID-19 in US in October 2019**

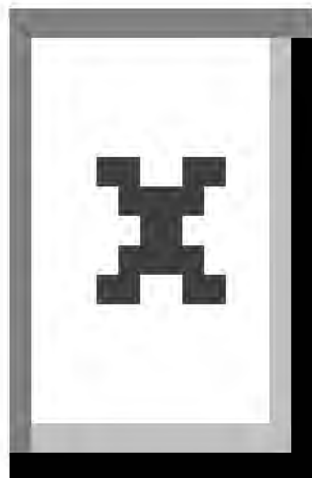


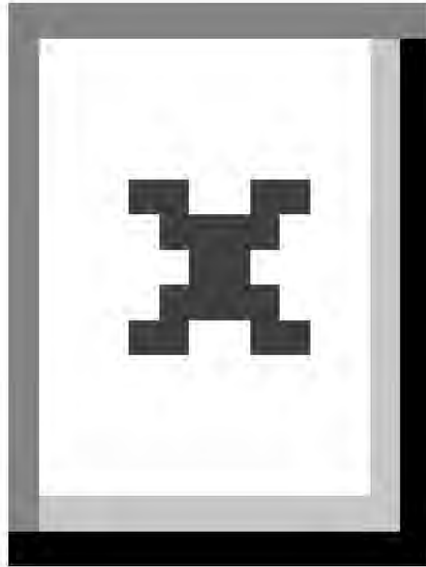




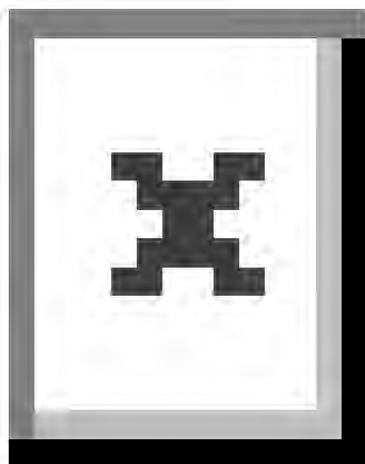


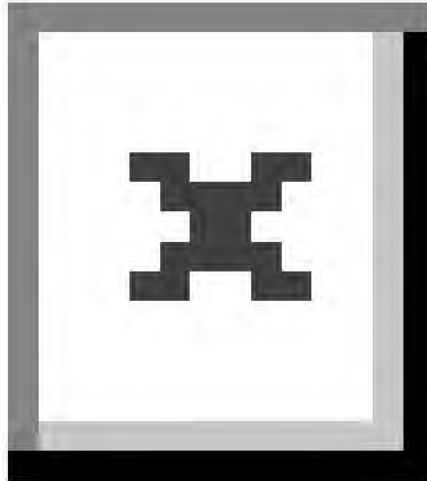




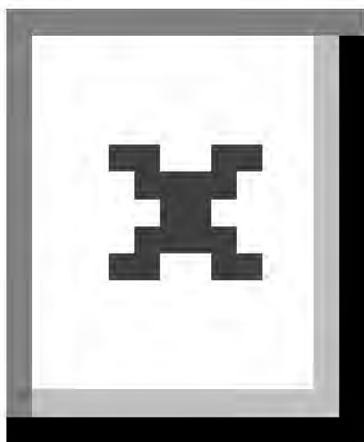


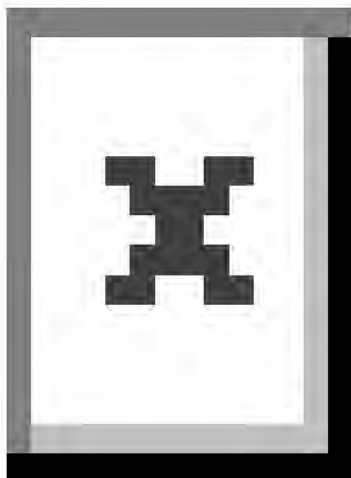
3. CGTN, Global Times, CGTN Arabic: US Spreading Disinformation

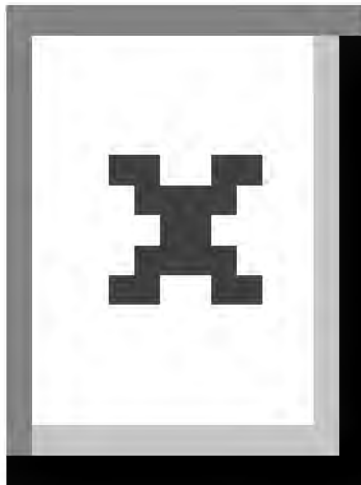




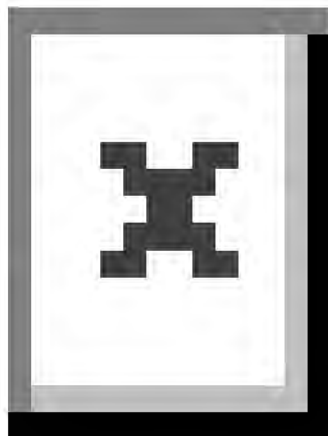
4. Lijian Zhao retweets, Global Times and GT Opinion: Response to claims that China withheld information and US lawsuits against China

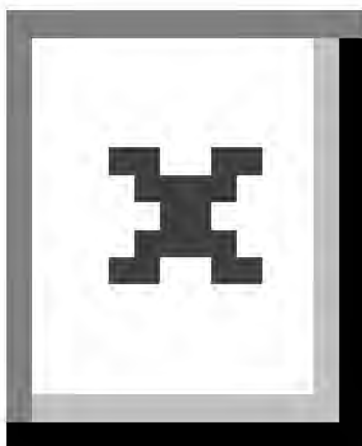


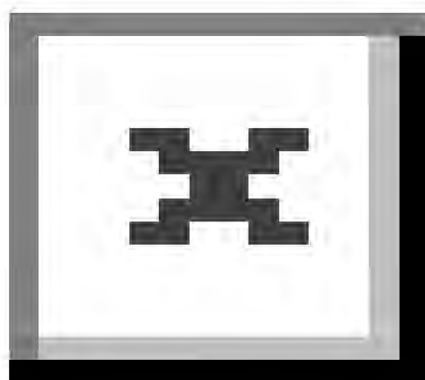
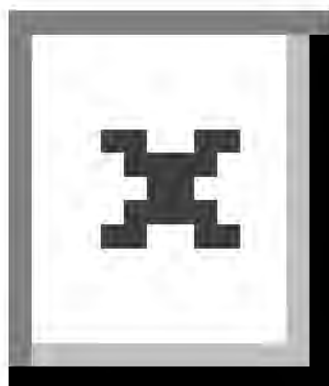


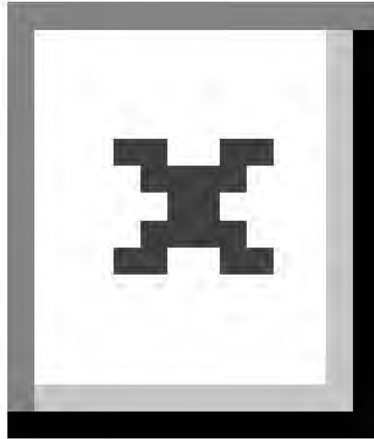


6. CGTN and CGTN retweet, Lijian Zhao retweet, Chen Weihua: US's Inadequate Response to COVID-19 pandemic

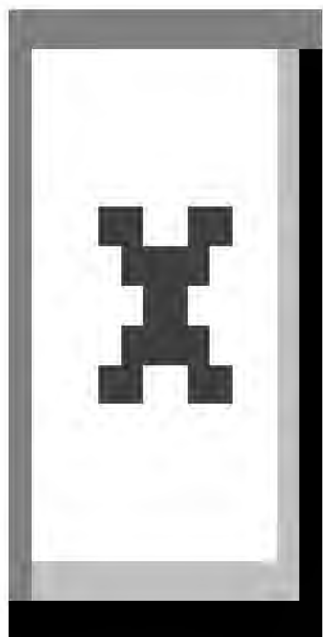


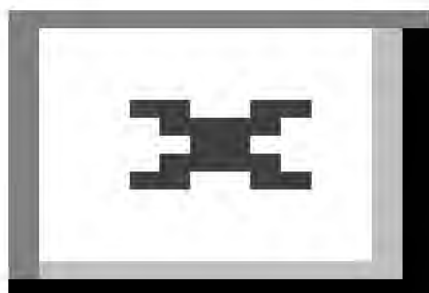


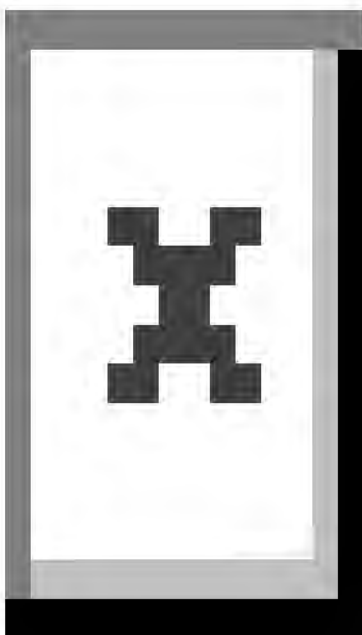


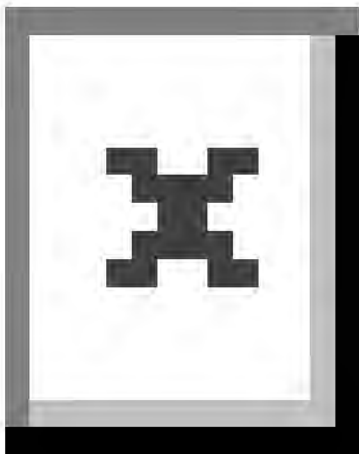


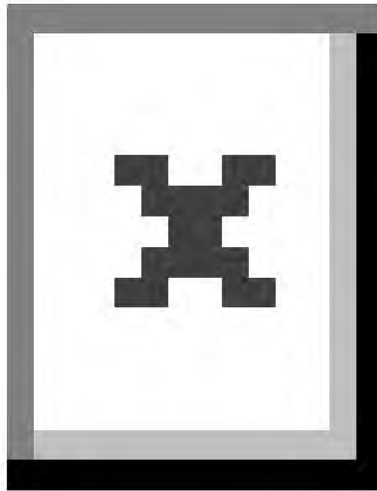
5. HuXijin, GlobalTimes: US politicizing health crisis and blaming China for advantage in 2020 US Presidential Elections











Note: From the 43 accounts monitored, a total of 990 tweets were published between 22 April 8am EST and 23 April 8am EST. Of the 990 total tweets, 207 tweets included mentions of the U.S.

Chinese Media and MFA Coverage of COVID and U.S.

BLUF: Rumor-mongering reveals desperate situation of U.S. U.S. lawsuits designed to smear PRC. Ambassador Cui at Bloomberg event called for need to distinguish those who are narrow-minded and motivated by political goals from the people of the two countries. MFA spokesperson called Secretary Pompeo's remarks false allegations to slander China. WHO rebutted the "conspiracy theory" fallacy that COVID-19 was laboratory-made. To support "global solidarity and multilateralism" China to donate \$30 million to WHO.

In the News: China's top legislature will review a number of bills related to public health at its upcoming regular session, Hubei remains classified low risk, China calling for higher capability

and wider range of COVID-19 testing, WHO evidence that COVID-19 originated from animal, China will announce first Mars mission tomorrow, and China pledges \$30 million more for WHO. MFA said Australia's call for an independent probe into the coronavirus epidemic was political maneuvering.

MFA on Twitter: Cui's remarks at Bloomberg event were featured on both the Embassy account and Cui's account. MFA comments from the briefing on PRC \$30 million donation to WHO, no wildlife wet markets in China, Australia's "political" motives, and retweets of Embassy/Consulates on PRC aid (also from Jack Ma) to Angola, Mali, Nepal, Uganda, Japan and Ghana. Hua amplifies the \$30 million donation to WHO and CGTN story on medical cooperation between the U.S. and China. Zhao retweeted Washington Post on U.S. personnel at WHO sharing real-time data on COVID-19. Zhao also retweeted many posts from Ajit Singh (journalist/grad student) on a wide range of topics - PRC loans, WHO, Wuhan lab, and several on Josh Rogin's article on the Wuhan lab.

4/23 MFA Briefing: Geng Shuang

- **Pompeo - PRC provocations in the region:** China will firmly defend its own sovereignty and security development interests. The affairs of Taiwan and Hong Kong are purely internal affairs of China, and no external forces are allowed to interfere.
- **Pompeo - global emissions and Wuhan lab:** Some U.S. politicians keep spreading false allegation to slander China's epidemic prevention and control. Their purpose is to muddy the water and shirk responsibility of improper handling of the epidemic. Facts speak louder than words.
- **Mississippi lawsuit:** China has already made clear its position on such frivolous litigation. I would like to reiterate here that blaming China and shifting responsibility to China will not solve the problems of the U.S. itself, nor will it succeed in promoting frivolous litigation against China.
- **Pompeo wildlife wet market:** I want to point out that there is no such thing as a "wildlife wet market" in China. In fact, there is no such thing as a "wet market" in China. China has introduced legislation to comprehensively prohibit the illegal hunting, trading, transportation and consumption of wildlife.
- **Australian PM Morrison:** The so-called independent investigation proposed by Australia is virtually political manipulation, which is unpopular and disrupts international cooperation in the epidemic prevention. At this critical moment, it is quite irresponsible to make unfounded suspicious and unwarranted accusations for political purpose.
- **Will China lift travel restrictions:** China has rolled out some restrictions on travel and entry and exit, but these measures will definitely be adjusted according to the development of the epidemic, so for now, I can't give you an clear answer.

Chinese Media

4/23 People's Daily: Virus tracing should be based on Science. It is a serious scientific question to trace the source of the novel coronavirus. Those conducts of spreading conspiracy theories, tricks of making use of the epidemic to smear other countries and ugly performances that

disregard facts and run counter to science are substantially anti-science and politicizing a issue of public health, which must be resolutely resisted and clarified.

4/22 People's Daily App: Chinese ambassador to U.S.: deeply worried about ABC (anything but China) mindset. Cui stressed the need to distinguish those who are narrow-minded and motivated by their own political goals from the people of the two countries. We hope that this outbreak will teach us lessons and enable us to develop China-U.S. relations on a pragmatic and forward-looking basis.

4/23 Guancha: According to a Reuters report on April 22, after his "routine" accusation that China has led to the pandemic, Pompeo immediately switched the topic, "But we welcome the medical supplies provided by China." Besides repeatedly blackening China, he also "strongly opposed China's bullying conduct" and incited that he hoped other countries will investigate.

4/23 Peoples Daily: The WHO powerfully answered the "conspiracy theory" of some by officially rebutting the fallacy that COVID-19 was laboratory-made. Tracking the virus back to its origin is critical to this global pandemic fight. Yet that is a serious question for scientists and medical experts to answer with scientific evidence and methodologies. We need to firmly fight those that defy science, spread disinformation, stigmatize others, and call black white to politicize a public health issue.

4/22 Global Times: The U.S. has shot three poison arrows at China. First, it accused China of covering up the extent of the COVID-19 epidemic and falsifying the number of infections and deaths. Second, it claimed the novel coronavirus was leaked from an institute of virology in Wuhan, demanding China should allow foreign experts to make an investigation there. Third, it has been supporting and inciting lawsuits against the Chinese government to pursue compensation on damages caused by the pandemic. The three poison arrows are created by both the Trump administration and the Republican Party.

4/22 Global Times: From the moves of U.S. senators such as Tom Cotton and Josh Hawley to Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt, we can see the ghosts of Western imperialists and colonialists who raided around the world, burning and looting with guns and cannons. What if these Western countries are treated with their very own pirate-style mentality? If some people still uphold their political hysteria, they had better be prepared for China's counterpunch.

4/23 Global Times: Trump's immigration suspension can be regarded as part of his strategy for re-election by exploiting the novel coronavirus outbreak.

4/24 Global Times: It would be a catastrophic blow to US international ideology and prestige for the truth to be known - that the U.S. had disastrously failed to protect its own population against the coronavirus pandemic and that China had been many more times effective in protecting its population. Therefore, the U.S. has already decided that it is vital that this truth is concealed from its population. Trump's daily lies on the coronavirus at his press conferences are well known.

4/22 Global Times: Coronavirus exposes new gaps in U.S. inequality. The novel coronavirus epidemic in the U.S. has caused serious confrontations between governments and among social groups. The epidemic is doomed to be remembered for the increased division and the huge inequalities it is now causing and exposing.

4/22 Global Times: Suing China as part of a choreographed "Blame China" campaign led by American hawks like Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt is one of the common tactics being used, as long-term anti-China political elites see Beijing's rising status as the biggest obstacle to "making America great again," observers said.

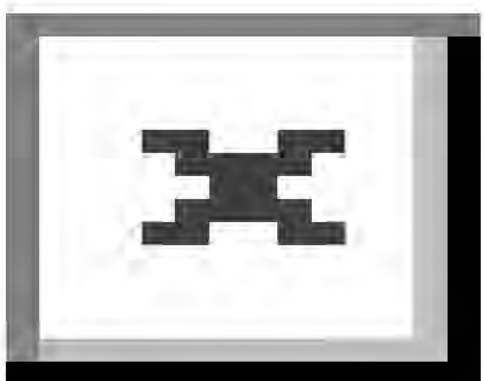
4/23 China Daily: Despite epidemiologists and virologists around the world agreeing that the novel coronavirus has its origin in nature, Fox News is pushing the conspiracy theory that the novel coronavirus originated in the Wuhan Institute of Virology. It is the worsening situation at home that has prompted the administration's default television mouthpiece to engage in the sort of rumormongering usually found in the more far-flung regions of cyberspace.

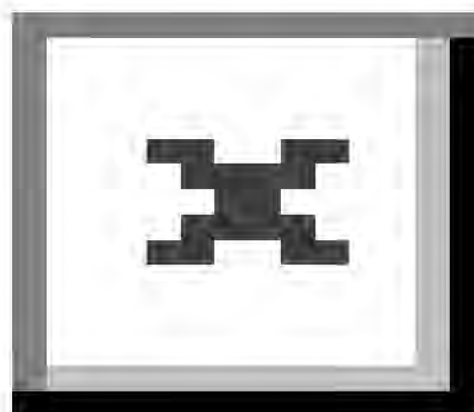
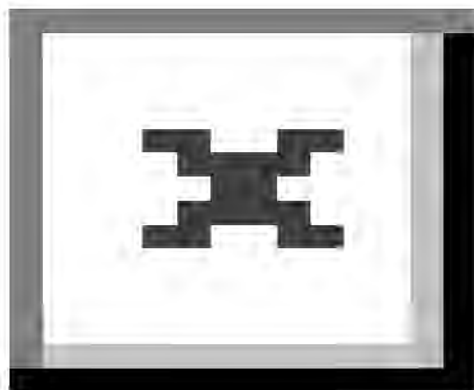
4/23 China Daily: False narratives cannot affect China-Africa tie. Interestingly, what is happening in other parts of the world is not attracting attention as much as events in China, and it is not difficult to discern echoes of a systematic, denigrating narrative orchestrated to create a wedge between China and African countries. This narrative is based on a simplistic story that turns a blind eye to the bigger picture of how China is fighting the virus and protecting both foreign and Chinese nationals.

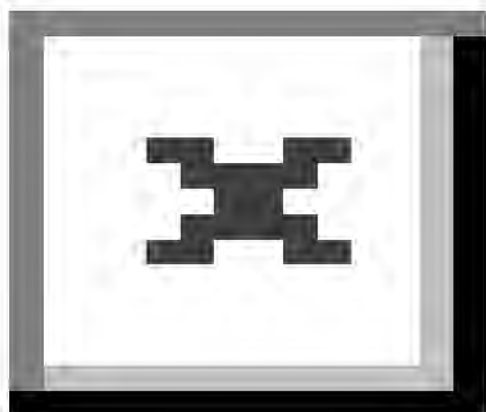
4/22 Xinhua: Chinese authorities on Wednesday called for efforts to enhance the capability and widen the range of COVID-19 infection testing.

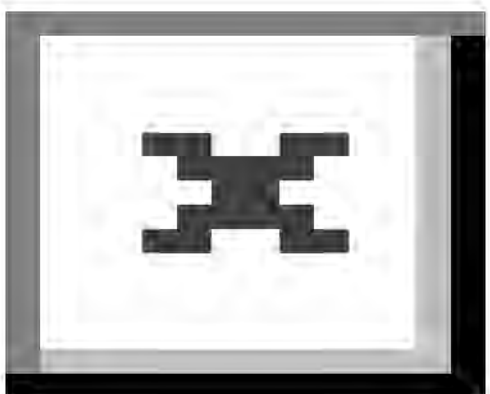
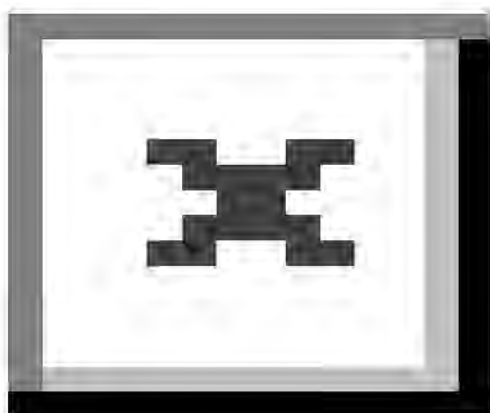
4/22 CGTN: "I never said no human-to-human transmission in the public," Gao Fu, director of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC), said in an interview with CGTN, responding to accusations of him not being honest about the epidemic situation during the beginning of the outbreak. China confirmed human-to-human transmission of the novel coronavirus on January 20.

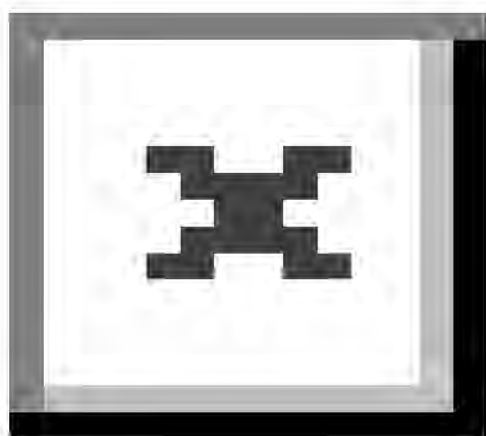
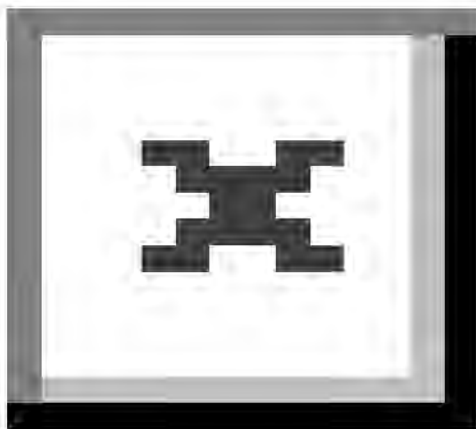
MFA Twitter

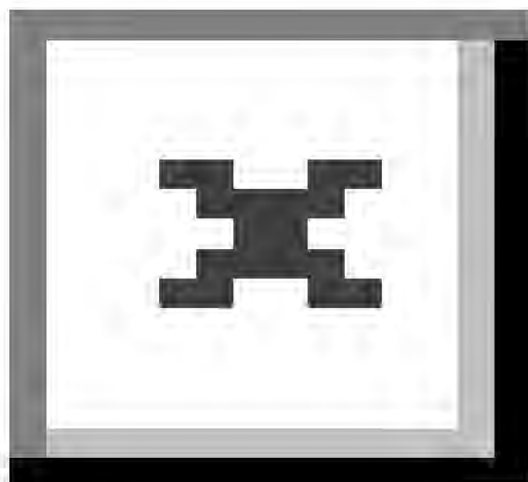
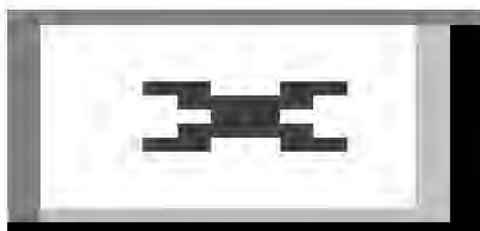


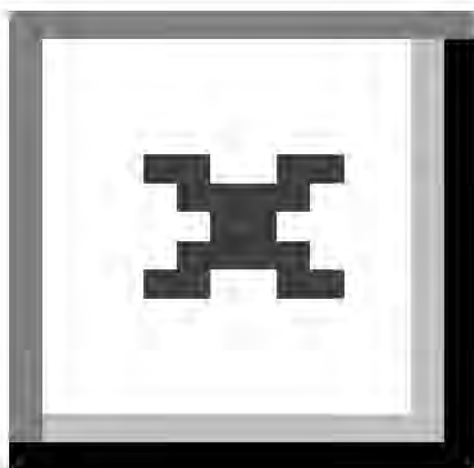


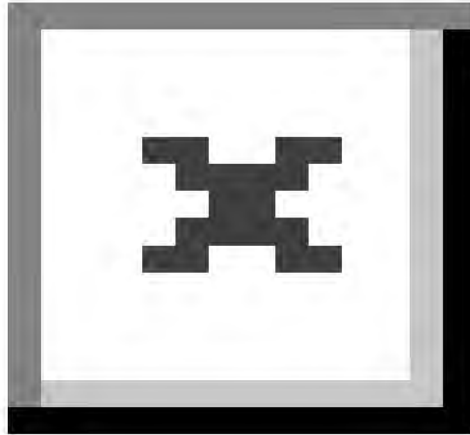












Sender: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)

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

Buangan, Richard L. (b)(6)

Recipient: (b)(6) (Shenyang) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Ortagus, Morgan D. (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E](b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing)(b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing)(b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine
Date: Tue, 12 Jun 2018 05:33:24 +0000

OK. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) NIAID China Office
#55 An Jia Lou Road, Beijing 100600
Office: (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
US Mobile: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)(b)(6)
Date: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 1:15 AM
To: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E](b)(6)
(Beijing)(b)(6) (Beijing)(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing)(b)(6)
Subject: RE: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

Hi (b)(6)

Do you mind if we turn this into a night note? This is very useful information that we should share more broadly.

(b)(6)

~~SBU~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E] [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 11:54 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP); (b)(6) (Beijing | NIH); (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing | NSF)
Cc: (b)(6) (PPL/DC); (b)(6) (RDMA/OPH); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

(b)(5)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) NIAID China Office
#55 An Jia Lou Road, Beijing 100600
Office: (b)(6)
Mobile: (b)(6)
US Mobile: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Date: Monday, June 11, 2018 at 7:34 PM
To: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
(Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing)"
(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (NIH/NCI) [E] (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (PPL/DC) (b)(6) (RDMA/OPH)"
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

Thanks (b)(6) An interesting but not entirely surprising development with possibly profound consequences. I wonder if closer cooperation is called for, or if measures aimed at countering Chinese activities abroad would be more effective?

(b)(6)

Agency for International Development
United States Embassy, Beijing, China

Official - SBU
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Chen, Ping (NIH/NIAID) [E] <chenpi@niaid.nih.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 11, 2018 11:55 PM
To: Parrish Fuentes, Adrienne L (Beijing) <ParrishFuentesAL@state.gov>; Rader, Jessenia (Jesse) (Beijing) <RaderJT2@state.gov>; Toder, Miles F (Beijing) <ToderMF@state.gov>; Chong, Patrick (CDC/CGH/DGHP) <pec8@CDC.GOV>; (U) Brown, Matthew (Beijing | NIH) <matthew.brown5@nih.gov>; rlm8@cn.cdc.gov;
(U) Sung, Nancy S (Beijing | NSF) <nsung@nsf.gov>
Subject: Fwd: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

fyi.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Date: June 11, 2018 at 11:43:49 AM EDT
To: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
Subject: FW: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

FYI

From: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E]

Sent: Friday, June 08, 2018 9:24 AM

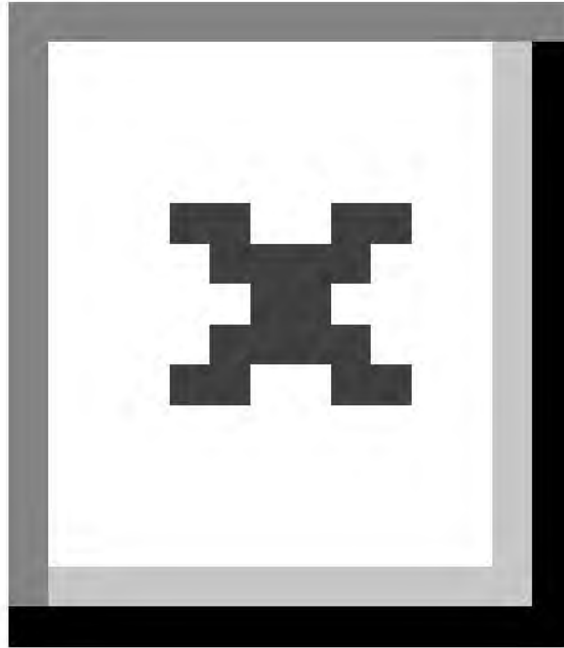
Subject: STAT: China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

Health

China may compete with the West for limited opportunities to test Ebola vaccine

By Helen Branswell (b)(6)

June 8, 2018



Health workers operate within an Ebola safety zone in the health center in lyonda, near Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of the Congo, on June 1. *JUNIOR D. KANNAH/AFP/Getty Images*

China is making a bid to use its Ebola vaccine in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It's a move that could further complicate efforts to test a crowded field of vaccines and therapies in the context of a waning outbreak.

The head of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Gao Fu, is reported to have said that a team of experts will travel to the DRC on Friday, bringing with them an unspecified number of doses of vaccine.

"We will seek to use the Chinese developed vaccine there to help with control and prevention of the disease, but for the present the vaccines will likely only cover Chinese living in Congo," Gao is reported as saying in China Daily.

The DRC health ministry's daily Ebola update on Thursday noted that only one Ebola vaccine has been approved for use in the country at this time, and that is the vaccine being developed by Merck.

Related: Excitement over use of Ebola vaccine in outbreak tempered by real-world challenges

Jessica Ilunga, a spokesperson for Health Minister Dr. Oly Ilunga, said there has not been an official request by the Chinese to use the vaccine. Any decisions on approving additional vaccines would have to be made by two government advisory committees, she said. One committee studies the science behind the products while the other looks at the ethics of using them.

The World Health Organization's vaccines advisory committee has recommended that until there is a fully licensed Ebola vaccine, Merck's experimental vaccine should be used in outbreaks. That vaccine is given in one dose and it triggers a rapid immune response – characteristics that are needed against such a deadly disease.

But the WHO only advises. It is up to individual countries whether they want to follow its recommendations.

Michael Osterholm, director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Diseases Research and Policy, said the move by the Chinese is "a harbinger of things to come."

Related: Ebola outbreak opens way to chaotic jockeying to test experimental drugs

Osterholm said that global health aid and assistance is a form of diplomacy. If the current U.S. administration is looking to cut back on what it spends to help developing countries with their health problems, it should expect to see China step in to gain more influence.

"This is the beginning of what I think is a very consequential change in international public health response, with impact on overall global health security," Osterholm said. "By beginning to turn our back on global health security ... we have not understood that those that provide the emergency response and those that provide the vaccines and those that provide the care and treatment are often those who also have access at the table of the highest levels of government for every other thing, including trade, resources and all aspects of regional security."

The news may also cause concern among American and European companies that have long been working on Ebola vaccines and drugs and have struggled to find opportunities to test them during sporadic outbreaks. Janssen, the vaccines division of Johnson & Johnson, has been developing an Ebola vaccine for years and has also been interested in trying to test the product in this outbreak.

Little is known about the Chinese vaccine, which was licensed without a Phase 3 trial — meaning there is no human efficacy data to prove that it is protective. Its approval was based on animal studies and small trials that showed it was safe and induced antibody production in healthy people who received it.

The Merck vaccine was shown to be effective during the West African outbreak, but has still not made its way through the licensure process.

"What makes it difficult is that if the Chinese license a product and bring it to a low- or middle-income country ... and we're still trying to evaluate those vaccines and drugs that we believe are important, it may actually create a real challenge," Osterholm said. "The country may well be motivated to use the licensed [Chinese] product, even without potentially the same rigor of evaluation that we're putting our vaccines through."

The Merck vaccine is being used in a ring vaccination approach, where contacts of cases, and contacts of the contacts, are offered vaccination in an effort to protect all those who may have been exposed.

Health care workers, too, have been vaccinated. As of Wednesday, 1,826 people have been vaccinated with the Merck vaccine in the current outbreak.

The outbreak, which was declared a month ago, has slowed markedly, although the DRC health ministry reported a new confirmed case on Thursday, the first in about 10 days. The patient, who is in Iboko, was in contact with someone who earlier died of Ebola.

Daily case counts — a combination of confirmed, probable, and suspect cases — have fluctuated up and down over the past week or two. That's because the government has been reporting suspect cases without waiting for confirmatory tests. It is not unusual to see seven suspect cases reported one day and discarded the next.

On Thursday, the government reported 62 cases, 10 of which are suspect cases.

The combination of confirmed and probable cases — people who died before testing began — provides a clearer picture of the trajectory of the outbreak. That number now stands at 52, with 27 deaths.

Sender: (b)(6) (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) @state.gov>;
(b)(6) (OS/OGA) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (CDC/OID/NCIRD) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (CDC/OSELS/EAPO) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)
Date: Wed, 25 Jan 2017 21:28:07 -0500

Hi (b)(6)

I am adding (b)(6) and CDC to this as (b)(6) will likely participate (he is just returning from leave) and if they have others to add.

(b)(6)

Health Coordinator
Department of Health and Human Services
U. S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: (b)(6)
BB: (b)(6)

Official – Transitory
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2017 10:15 AM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

(b)(6) is passing on names to the organizers from the US Mission who plan to participate in the meeting on the afternoon of Feb 7th.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 9:11 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Thanks for sending. No response yet from (b)(6) regarding a meeting or phone call next week.

I get back in town on 2/6 in the afternoon, so could go on 2/7. Do you know how I would register?

Thanks-

(b)(6)

Head, Beijing Office 主任, 北京办公室
U.S. National Science Foundation 美国国家科学基金会

(NOTE NEW ADDRESS STARTING JUNE 2016)
No. 55 Anjialou Rd.
Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600
CHINA

From: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 8:32 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: FW: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Location of the GVP meeting and some clarification on the hosts below.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 1:35 AM
To: (b)(6) (GH/PRH/RTU:AAAS)
Cc: (b)(6) (GH/SDI); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/HIDN); (b)(6)

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

Subject: Re: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Thanks, (b)(6)!

Dear (b)(6),

The GVP Working Group Meeting will take place at the China National Convention Center Grand Hotel (国家会议中心大酒店：北京朝阳区北辰西路8号院1号楼).

And the meeting on Feb. 7 in the afternoon will be held at the Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy Science (中国科学院微生物所：北京朝阳区北辰西路1号院3号E301会议室),

(b)(6) is hosting the meeting on behalf of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and China CDC, he will definitely extend an invitation to you all soon to provide more information.

(b)(6) assistant and I are still working on the agenda and will share it to all participants when it's available.

Hope this helps, let me know if any further information I can provide.

Best Regards,

(b)(6)

On Jan 19, 2017, at 8:39 AM, (b)(6) > wrote:

Hi (b)(6)

To follow up on the additional questions regarding contact and location (b)(6) (cc'ed from EcoHealth Alliance) should be able to help answer some of those questions as she has been directly liaising with our Chinese colleagues to plan the event.

(b)(6) - Some of our colleagues from the Embassy in Beijing may attend the meeting and/or the event, could you provide them with the information requested below?

Best,

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division
Office of Infectious Disease
Bureau for Global Health
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Desk: (b)(6)

Cell: (b)(6)
E-mail: (b)(6)

On Thu, Jan 19, 2017 at 8:34 AM (b)(6) wrote:
Hello All,

Attached is the current version of the Agenda, however we have quite a number of edits and changes to make, including to the portion with the Chinese CDC, etc. Over the next several days, we will be working to add in times and other updated details. Then, we will be meeting on the 26th to finalize with the core group in person. After that, we will have a final (or close to it) version for distribution to attendees.

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) (b)(6)

On Wed, Jan 18, 2017 at 9:14 PM (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) > wrote:
Hi, (b)(6)

If the agenda is not available yet, do you have information of meeting venue? Or could you let us know the contacts of China CDC (working level people lower than (b)(6)) so that we can reach out to them for detailed information?

Many thanks,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Saturday, January 14, 2017 5:15 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (GH/HIDN); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);
(b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/PRH/RTU:AAAS); (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Fw: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Hello (b)(6) (b)(6)

Can you please circulate the agenda for the GVP Beijing meeting. Please see request below.

Best,

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

Emerging Threats Division
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) (b)(6)
<mailto:(b)(6)>

On Thu, Jan 12, 2017 at 11:47 AM (b)(6)
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:
Hello (b)(6) (b)(6)

Can you please circulate the agenda for the GVP Beijing meeting. Please see request below.

Best,

(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Emerging Threats Division
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) <tel:(b)(6)> Cell: (b)(6) <tel:(b)(6)>
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)>

On Tue, Jan 10, 2017 at 7:56 PM, (b)(6) (Beijing)
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:
Hi, (b)(6)

Embassy colleagues are interested in attending the workshop, and is it possible to attend some of the sessions of the GVP meeting as well? Could you please share with us the agenda of the GVP Beijing meeting including the workshop on the afternoon of 7th, if it's available?

Many thanks,

(b)(6)
USAID Beijing

(b)(6)

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 research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that promote conservation and prevent pandemics.

Sender: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (h)(6)
(h)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (OS/OGA) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (CDC/OID/NCIRD) (b)(6)
(h)(6) (CDC/OSELS/EAPO) (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) OS/OGA (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: Re: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)
Date: Tue, 24 Jan 2017 07:10:29 +0000

(b)(6)

As discussed, I hope to attend on Feb 7 if I can get info on agenda/registration etc- would welcome the opportunity to ride with others, so let me know if there's a seat in a vehicle.

Copying Ping who had asked for more info, in case she can share.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Head, Beijing Office

主任, 北京办公室

U.S. National Science Foundation 美国国家科学基金会

(NOTE NEW ADDRESS STARTING JUNE 2016)

No. 55 Anjialou Rd.

Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600

CHINA

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 11:53 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) OS/OGA; (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Hi (b)(6)

(b)(6) most likely will be attending and (b)(6) may/may not (she has a conflict). I will attend if she cannot as this has been a subject of discussion several times in the OGA office. I have a question regarding the meeting/workshop that occurred at Bellagio. Can someone share a synopsis or any information that occurred during that workshop or digital copy of the Agenda ((b)(6) you had one at the Health meeting). Trying to plug in some holes/questions in information.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Health Coordinator
Department of Health and Human Services
U. S. Embassy Beijing

Tel: (b)(6)
BB: (b)(6)

Official - Transitory
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 9:11 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Thanks for sending. No response yet from (b)(6) regarding a meeting or phone call next week.

I get back in town on 2/6 in the afternoon, so could go on 2/7. Do you know how I would register?

Thanks-

(b)(6)

Head, Beijing Office 主任, 北京办公室
U.S. National Science Foundation 美国国家科学基金会

(NOTE NEW ADDRESS STARTING JUNE 2016)

No. 55 Anjialou Rd.
Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600
CHINA

From: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 8:32 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: FW: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Location of the GVP meeting and some clarification on the hosts below.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 1:35 AM
To: (b)(6) (GH/PRH/RTU:AAAS)
Cc: (b)(6) (GH/SDI); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/HIDN); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)
Subject: Re: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Thanks, (b)(6)

Dear (b)(6)

The GVP Working Group Meeting will take place at the China National Convention Center Grand Hotel (国家会议中心大酒店：北京朝阳区北辰西路8号院1号楼).

And the meeting on Feb. 7 in the afternoon will be held at the Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy Science (中国科学院微生物所：北京朝阳区北辰西路1号院3号E301会议室),

(b)(6) is hosting the meeting on behalf of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and China CDC, he will definitely extend an invitation to you all soon to provide more information.

(b)(6) assistant and I are still working on the agenda and will share it to all participants when it's available.

Hope this helps, let me know if any further information I can provide.

Best Regards,

(b)(6)

On Jan 19, 2017, at 8:39 AM, (b)(6) wrote:

Hi (b)(6)

To follow up on the additional questions regarding contact and location, (b)(6) (cc'ed from EcoHealth Alliance) should be able to help answer some of those questions as she has been directly liaising with our Chinese colleagues to plan the event.

(b)(6) - Some of our colleagues from the Embassy in Beijing may attend the meeting and/or the event, could you provide them with the information requested below?

Best,

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division

Office of Infectious Disease
Bureau for Global Health
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Desk: (b)(6)

Cell:

E-mail: (b)(6)

On Thu, Jan 19, 2017 at 8:34 AM, (b)(6) wrote:
Hello All,

Attached is the current version of the Agenda, however we have quite a number of edits and changes to make, including to the portion with the Chinese CDC, etc. Over the next several days, we will be working to add in times and other updated details. Then, we will be meeting on the 26th to finalize with the core group in person. After that, we will have a final (or close to it) version for distribution to attendees.

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) (b)(6)

On Wed, Jan 18, 2017 at 9:14 PM, (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) wrote:
Hi, (b)(6)

If the agenda is not available yet, do you have information of meeting venue? Or could you let us know the contacts of China CDC (working level people lower than (b)(6)) so that we can reach out to them for detailed information?

Many thanks,

(b)(6)

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

Sent: Saturday, January 14, 2017 5:15 AM

To: (b)(6) (Beijing)

Cc: (b)(6) GH/HIDN; (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing);

(b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (GH/PRH/RTU:AAAS); (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Fw: PREDICT International Travel Request (Group ITA request for GVP Beijing meeting)

Hello (b)(6) (b)(6),

Can you please circulate the agenda for the GVP Beijing meeting. Please see request below.

Best,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) Cell: (b)(6) (b)(6)
<mailto:(b)(6)>

On Thu, Jan 12, 2017 at 11:47 AM, (b)(6)
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:
Hello (b)(6) (b)(6)

Can you please circulate the agenda for the GVP Beijing meeting. Please see request below.

Best,

(b)(6)

Emerging Threats Division
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

Telephone: (b)(6) <tel:(b)(6)> Cell: (b)(6) <tel:(b)(6)>
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)>

On Tue, Jan 10, 2017 at 7:56 PM, (b)(6) (Beijing)
(b)(6) <mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:
Hi, (b)(6)

Embassy colleagues are interested in attending the workshop, and is it possible to attend some of the sessions of the GVP meeting as well? Could you please share with us the agenda of the GVP Beijing meeting including the workshop on the afternoon of 7th, if it's available?

Many thanks,

(b)(6)

USAID Beijing

(b)(6)

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 research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that promote conservation and prevent pandemics.

Sender: (b)(6) <(b)(6)>

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

(b)(6) (Beijing) <(b)(6)>

Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) <(b)(6)>

(b)(6) (OS/OGA) <(b)(6)>

(b)(6) (Beijing) <(b)(6)>

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Invitation_China National Virome Project Initiative Meeting, Feb. 7 2017, Beijing
Date: Wed, 25 Jan 2017 20:17:04 -0500

Please put me down for the meetings on the 7th.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2017 8:23 AM
To: Beijing ESTH-HHS-FDA-CDC-NIH-NSF
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: FW: Invitation_China National Virome Project Initiative Meeting, Feb. 7 2017, Beijing

Latest agenda for the upcoming GVP meeting is attached. Invitations are starting to go out. Please let us know if you would like an invitation to participate.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Hongying Li (b)(6)@ecohealthalliance.org
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2017 3:13 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: Fu (George) Gao; 白玉
Subject: Invitation_China National Virome Project Initiative Meeting, Feb. 7 2017, Beijing

This email is sent on behalf of Dr. George Fu Gao, Deputy Director of China CDC, Member of Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Dear Sir/Madam at USAID Beijing Office,

I am pleased to extend an invitation to you to participate the China National Virome Project Initiative Meeting on Feb. 7 at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing.

This meeting will bring together technical experts, scientists, policy-makers, and leaders from a number of organizations and departments to discuss about the strategies and plans to launch a China National Virome Project (CNVP). The core working group members from the Global Virome Project will attend this meeting to provide technical supports and resources for this initiative in China.

Please find more information about the meeting in the attachments. I look forward to your participation in this meeting. Please email to Bai Yu (b)(6) with your RSVP as soon as possible, and let us know if you have any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,

George F Gao, DPhil
Deputy Director-General
China CDC
Director and Professor
CAS Key Laboratory of Pathogenic Microbiology and Immunology
Institute of Microbiology
Chinese Academy of Sciences
Beijing 100101
P. R. China
Tel. (b)(6)
Fax (b)(6)

高福
中国疾控中心 副主任
中国科学院病原微生物与免疫学重点实验室 主任
中国科学院微生物研究所 研究院
<http://www.caspmi.cn/gaog/index-ch.html>

Sender: "Switzer, Bryan R (Rick) (Beijing)" (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: Re: FW: WP: State Department cables warned of safety issues at Wuhan lab studying bat coronaviruses
Date: Tue, 14 Apr 2020 21:22:43 +0000

Dave,
Below were the speakers.

Kristian Andersen, Associate Professor, Department of Immunology and Microbiology, Scripps Research

James LeDuc, Director of the Galveston National Laboratory, The University of Texas Medical Branch

Jay Schnitzer, VP and CTO, MITRE Corporation.

Best, (b)(6)

Sent from Workspace ONE Boxer

On April 14, 2020 at 5:13:21 PM EDT, Stilwell, David R (b)(6) wrote:

(b)(6)

What was the name of the researcher from Texas who spoke about his personal involvement with the Wuhan Institute of Virology? We're taking questions on this article.

Thanks

Dave

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.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 7:15 AM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6)
(Beijing) (b)(6) (b)(6) (Shenyang) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Fwd: WP: State Department cables warned of safety issues at Wuhan lab studying bat coronaviruses

Rogin's piece is out.

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

Josh Rogin

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 consulate 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.

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.

"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.

"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.

"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.

"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.

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.

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.

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: (b)(6)

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

From: "Krach, Keith J" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
(b)(6)
Bernicat, Marcia S (b)(6)
Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
E Staff <E2@state.gov>;
(b)(6)

Subject: Re: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

Date: Tue, 28 Jan 2020 10:56:27 +0000

Thanks (b)(6) I'm in office. I will read and give u a call



*Keith J Krach
Under Secretary, State Department
United States of America*

On Jan 28, 2020, at 5:53 AM, (b)(6) wrote:

U/S Krach: The Wuhan Consulate is closed and secured, and all personnel are staging at the airport.

I will be available by phone but not email for the next 30 minutes. (b)(6)
Embassy Beijing is working on our request for corporate feedback but no input yet.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 27, 2020, at 9:54 PM, (b)(6) wrote:

U/S Krach:

Case Update: Press is reporting **106 deaths**, and over 4,000 people infected in China. Chinese officials claim the virus is becoming **more virulent**.

White House Interest: Matt Pottinger chaired today's DC, and Vice President Pence attended part of it. The VP has discussed the issue with POTUS, who urged a message of calm, constructive engagement with China.

E Tasking: D would like E to provide information (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Level 3: The CDC and State Department have moved to a **Level 3 ("Avoid non-essential travel") warning for all of China**, which is the CDC's highest level. (State Dept's previous level was 2 for China, and 4 ("Do Not Travel") for Wuhan.) (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Note: When State

moves to Level 3 or 4, insurance costs rise for doing business in China.

Ordered Departure: The charter flight out should depart tomorrow at 2 pm EST, carrying approximately 40 Chief of Mission personnel and 200 AmCits (including children). Symptomatic passengers will not be allowed to board, and a separate plane is being considered for those passengers. Asymptomatic passengers may still **face a 14-day quarantine in the United States upon arrival**. As of now, the plane will land in Alaska, and HHS will take responsibility for the passengers. The plane will continue on to Ontario, California, where the current plan is to quarantine passengers in an airport hangar on cots. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Lab Release: Experts are following up on press reports linking the current outbreak to the Wuhan Institute of Virology. However, the **focus of the U.S. effort is on the safe evacuation of personnel and AmCits**.

WHO Update: WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom is going to Beijing and may convene a virtual PHEIC meeting.

Assistance Package: Some companies are offering donations; certain medical supplies such as masks and first responder equipment are running low. **D has tasked EAP to develop a possible assistance package**, working with F, USAID, etc. (b)(5)

(b)(5) The CDC has already offered to send two CDC physicians, but China has not yet responded.

D meeting: The purpose of tomorrow's 7 a.m. meeting is (b)(5)

(b)(5)

We heard tonight that +1s will be allowed to attend and sit behind. We are verifying and PDAS Bernicat is ready to attend if you wish.

Meeting Pace: Currently, the **daily meeting schedule** is:

5 am – Call with Post, EAP, OES, Task Force, etc.

6 am – Task Force to provide written readout of call (**E Staff to receive**)

7 am – Deputy's Enterprise-Level Meeting (**E or PDAS Bernicat to attend**)

10 am – Crisis Management and Strategy (CMS) meeting

11 am – PCC

4 pm - Public Health Working Group Meeting (**E Staff to attend**)

5 pm – End of Day CMS meeting (**E Staff to attend**)

8 pm – Call with Post, EAP, OES, Task Force, etc.

-

We will be ready to brief you in the morning on overnight events. The D meeting will be held in the Principals' Conference Room in the Operations Center. (We will walk you down.)

(b)(6)

-

-

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 6:11 PM

To: (b)(6) Krach, Keith J (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Bernicat, Marcia S (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) E Staff <E2@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

(Looping in others in OES)

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 6:02 PM

To: (b)(6) Krach, Keith J (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Bernicat, Marcia S (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) E Staff <E2@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

Keith,

Below, please find the latest on the Wuhan novel coronavirus.

The Ops Center is monitoring the situation 24/7. **There is no action for you at this time. We will brief you further on Monday.**

- **Quarantine Expanded:** China has expanded the quarantine to additional cities surrounding Wuhan. **35 million people**, roughly 10 percent of the U.S. population, are now under lockdown in Hubei province.

<image002.png>

<image003.jpg>

- **China Cases:** China has nearly 900 confirmed cases and 26 deaths. More than 8,000 are said to be under observation. **The youngest death reported thus far was an otherwise healthy, 36 year old man with no chronic diseases or pre-existing conditions** who had been treated with antivirals and antibiotics since being admitted to a hospital on January 9.
- **Second U.S. Case:** The CDC announced a woman in her 60s traveled to Wuhan in late December and returned Jan. 13. She was not symptomatic when she flew. She is currently in stable condition at a hospital in Chicago. The CDC said she has been very helpful in providing information about her contacts. She had limited close contacts and little movement outside her home since returning from China and is a low risk to spread the disease. Health officials in Texas are also monitoring a Texas A&M student who is being isolated at home. **The CDC told reporters that 63 people in 22 states are under investigation for coronavirus; 11 have tested negative.**
- **Consulate Wuhan:** **Ordered departure has been issued** for more than 30 U.S. Consulate Wuhan staff and family members. **EAP is working through complex logistical issues before commencing evacuation sometime during the next 24-48 hours. We've been requested to avoid making any negative comments about China until after our people are out.**
- **Travel Advisory:** The State Department upgraded its travel advisory to Level 4, our highest level possible. **We are explicitly warning Americans not to travel to Hubei province** due to the outbreak (please see below). The CDC has also issued its highest level advisory.
- **Countries Affected:** **France** confirmed two cases – one in Paris and another in Bordeaux. **Vietnam** confirmed two cases in Ho Chi Minh City and two suspected cases in Hanoi. **Nepal** also has its first case, the first in South Asia.
- **Congressional Interest:** Two dozen Senators personally attended an interagency briefing today on the outbreak. Members hailed from a combination of the health and foreign affairs committees. Most questions were about our domestic posture. **Senators were told that while a vaccine may be ready for clinical trials within three months, it would be at least a year until a vaccine is ready for humans.**

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020 7:36 PM

To: Krach, Keith J (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Bernicat, Marcia S (b)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) E Staff <E2@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

U/S Krach: Here is the latest on the novel Coronavirus, also being called in the media as the "Wuhan flu."

- **Ordered Departure:** U.S. Consulate Wuhan is going to **Ordered Departure**, with non-essential staff and family members returning to the United States via a biocontainment process. Eight essential personnel will work out of either Embassy Beijing or Consulate Shanghai for the immediate future. Two State Department contractors will remain in Wuhan to ensure site security of the (80%-complete) new Consulate building. It is still **unclear how Consulate staff will depart Wuhan**, whether by road (now a 16-hour trip) or via a regional airport. **Either way, they will try tomorrow. This will become a matter of public record shortly.**
- **Task Force Established:** EAP and OES will request the Executive Secretary to **stand up a Task Force tonight**, focusing on how to evacuate the Consulate staff. An unresolved question is (b)(5)
- **D Engagement:** Deputy Secretary Biegun spent 30 minutes at today's working group meeting. The Deputy noted he was in China during the 2003 SARS epidemic and said **hysteria is likely to spread faster than the disease**, as we see now with Ebola. He underscored the high-level WH interest, and said he had briefed the Secretary. He also spoke with Ambassador Branstad last night. His topline message to the group was the **need to give clear and accurate information to the public: "Whatever is said cannot be unsaid."**
- **Chinese Cooperation:** The Chinese government **continues to cooperate with WHO** (who then shares with WHO members). The Chinese government is not required by treaty to share information with us directly, only with the WHO. The Chinese government gave **no notice to the Wuhan diplomatic community** before they quarantined the city.
- **Cases:** The press is reporting **639 cases confirmed in China and an additional death, bringing the death toll to 18**. China's health commission released information on the deceased; most were elderly and in poor health. The youngest victim was 48 years old with diabetes and history of a stroke. There is still no confirmation of sustained human-to-human transmission. However, **new cases are being confirmed across China**, which would raise the possibility of sustained human transmission. Any discovery of additional human-to-human outbreak centers will change our response rapidly.
- **Possible Additional U.S. Case:** A Chinese family of three (returning to China after visiting Mexico) is being **evaluated at LAX for possible infection**. The incubation phase has been lengthened to 10-14 days, with an outer limit of possibly 40 days. That means we may just now be seeing the leading edge of infections, with total numbers to come **being much higher**.

- **Source:** The virus' **source remains unknown**, with continued speculation of animal-to-human transmission. Press is reporting that the virus may have originated from snakes, although other experts claim the source could be bats.
- **American Citizens:** Post has not received many AmCit calls requesting assistance, but there is interest by some to return to Wuhan. There is **one AmCit in Wuhan on a State Department-funded exchange program**.
- **WHO Declines to Declare A Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC):** The WHO found the situation to be an emergency, **but "not yet" a PHEIC**. The only two current PHEICs are for polio and Ebola.
- **Airport Screening:** Screening is currently being conducted at five airports (LAX, SFO, JFK, ORD, and ATL). The CDC is struggling to staff these five airports and prefers to keep this small number. CBP would prefer to spread the passengers out over 12 airports. Given that all Wuhan flights are cancelled, the **"funneling" strategy is likely no longer viable**.
- **Economic Loss:** The Chinese government has imposed travel restrictions on seven cities near Wuhan, and cancelled many (but not all) New Year's celebrations across China. All venues (including Shanghai Disney) and airlines are refunding previously-purchased tickets. The Office of the Chief Economist is pulling together **statistics on the economic impact on China and on the U.S. civil aviation industry**.
- **Flights from China:** There are **47 daily flights from China to the United States, with 22,000 daily arrivals from 16 different destinations in China**. (see graph below). In terms of overall traffic, **Washington Dulles Airport** is actually one of the top U.S. destinations for passengers traveling from China.

<image004.png>

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 5:44 PM

To: Krach, Keith J (h)(6)

Cc: (h)(6)

(h)(6)

(h)(6) Bernicat, Marcia S (h)(6) Fritz, Jonathan D

(b)(6)

Subject: FW: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

(Looping in a few more)

Sir,

Below, please find today's update on the Wuhan novel coronavirus.

(b)(6)

- **Cases:** There are **555 confirmed cases in China with 17 deaths reported (3.06 percent mortality rate)**. **80 percent of cases are localized in Wuhan, but the outbreak has spread to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and other mega-cities.** The CDC reported today there is still no evidence of human-to-human transmission outside of Wuhan.
- **International Spread:** **Hong Kong and Macau** confirmed their first cases. **Taiwan** has approximately three dozen cases. **North Korea** has (temporarily) banned Chinese tourists (which is helpful in denying money to the regime in Pyongyang). **Thailand** has four cases, **Japan** one, and the **ROK** one.
- **City on Lock Down:** **Wuhan (population 11 million, roughly the same as London) will be placed on total lockdown as of Thursday, January 23 at 10:00am local (3:00am in Davos).** The airport will be closed. The subway, buses, ferries, and expressways leading out of the city will be shut.
- **Screening:** **Before going on lock down Wuhan had implemented severe prevention and control measures, including management of farmers' markets, prohibiting the sale of live poultry, and prohibiting the entry of wild animals and live poultry.** Wuhan had also implemented **temperature screening at airports, train stations, bus stations, and ferry stations, and has established isolation and observation measures** for patients with fever and close contacts.
- **Lunar New Year:** **Last year 415 million Chinese traveled domestically for the holiday. Another 6.3 visited nearly 500 destinations in more than 90 countries. Thailand, Japan, Indonesia and Singapore were the most popular destinations.** The Nordic countries, the United Arab Emirates and Spain saw the fastest growth in Chinese visitors.
- **U.S. Airports:** The PRC's decision to close Wuhan airport essentially renders moot USG plans announced Tuesday, January 21 to funnel all Wuhan-origin passengers to only five U.S. airports (Atlanta, Chicago, LA, New York, and San Francisco). This will make the focus on mitigation and the education of the American public and clinicians all the more critical.
- **Direct Flights:** During January there are **on average 45 direct daily flights from China (16 cities) to 14 cities in the United States** (Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Las Vegas, LA, New York, San Francisco, Saipan, Seattle, and Washington).
- **American Citizens:** **The lockdown in Wuhan will affect U.S. Consulate Wuhan's posture,**
(b)(5)
(b)(5) **Forty-**
two American officers and family members are assigned to U.S. Consulate Wuhan, but only 33 are currently present at post. There are approximately **1,000 American citizens (AmCits)** living permanently in **Wuhan**, and approximately **7,100 AmCits in the broader "consular district"** which includes the provinces of Henan, Hubei, Hunan, and Jiangxi. The four provinces are together **home to more than 265 million people.**

- **Wuhan Economy:** Wuhan is a major domestic transportation and logistics hub – think the Chicago of China – with rail, river, and expressway connections. Wuhan is a **center of steel and auto manufacturing** including the number two Chinese brand and foreign joint ventures for GM, Honda, and Citroen-Peugeot. **A number of U.S. companies call Wuhan home including GE, BorgWarner, Cummins, Pfizer, FedEx, Synopsys, Diamond Power, and Rockwell Automation.**
- **POTUS Comments:** The President told CNBC today with regards to the one confirmed case in Washington State, “We have it totally under control. It’s one person coming in from China. It’s going to be just fine.”
- **PRC Transparency:** PRC health authorities held a **live, nationally televised press conference** today, where they promised to publish information on the epidemic in a timely, open, and transparent manner. PRC media described efforts to stem the outbreak, including new exit and entry restrictions in Wuhan and an agreement to refund tickets for Wuhan travelers. **Discussion of the outbreak on social media is not being censored.** Four of the five “hot topics” on the Chinese-version of Twitter were about the coronavirus, garnering 186 million views and generating 330,000 online conversations.
- **Transmission:** PRC officials said the main transmission mode is **respiratory transmission** and that virus mutation is possible. Human-to-human and community transmission has occurred including to medical staff.
- **World Health Organization:** The WHO convened an expert panel today to discuss whether the virus should be designated Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), a rare step aimed at getting more money and resources from global donors to fight an outbreak. **The meeting deliberated for seven hours without making a decision, and so plan to meet again tomorrow for a second day. The PHEIC designation has only been used five times:** against polio, the swine flu, the Zika virus and two recent Ebola virus outbreaks in Africa.

From: Krach, Keith J (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 10:00 PM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

Thank you for the update. This is really good to know.

From: (b)(6)

Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at 1:34 AM

To: "Krach, Keith J" (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: For U/S Krach: Update on the USG response to the Coronavirus

Dear U/S Krach: (b)(7) and I attended a PCC meeting today on the Coronavirus situation, led by Senior Director Ruggiero, who reports to Deputy NSA Pottinger.

(b)(5)

These are the relevant facts, in case you are asked:

- There are now **291 confirmed cases in China**, with additional cases in **Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand**, and a suspect case in **France**. Contrary to initial reports that focused on potential animal-to-human transmission at a seafood market in the central Chinese city of Wuhan (population 19 million) it now appears **there is limited human-to-human transmission**. Six people with serious underlying conditions have died (mortality rate of 2.3 percent, which is lower than SARS or MERS). The illness has been most severe in the elderly and people with other pre-existing conditions.
- The **Chinese government has been remarkably open and transparent** about the outbreak, especially compared with SARS, which killed nearly 1,000 (primarily in Hong Kong) in 2002/03.
- Discussion of the outbreak in state media has been factual and there has not been censorship of the topic online. Xi Jinping issued a statement about the outbreak yesterday. U.S. Embassy Beijing, which has both CDC and an HHS Attaches at post, reports **strong cooperation by Chinese authorities** thus far.
- The **outbreak is likely larger than the current number** of confirmed cases and will increase following the Chinese New Year holiday this Saturday with hundreds of millions Chinese on the move.
- The **first U.S. case was announced today** – a 35 year old tech worker flying into Seattle who has already been treated and released. He self-identified as coming from Wuhan when he was at the hospital. He is cooperating with CDC and State of Washington public health authorities on follow-up.
- The **USG set up health screening last Friday at LAX, SFO, and JFK airports**, which captures 75 percent of travelers from Wuhan and **will have screening up at Chicago O'Hare and Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson by this weekend**, capturing nearly 100% of travelers arriving directly or indirectly from Wuhan. The CDC is working with CBP to **funnel all passengers with a link to the affected area through these and only these five airports**. CDC is **also promoting messaging to inform the American public** what to look for and what to do in the event of illness, with the most important audience being clinicians.
- The **USG's strategy** so far has been: (1) help the Chinese **optimize exit screening**; (2) implement **U.S. entry screening**; and (3) **educate the public and clinicians** about the virus. (b)(5)

- The NIH is **working with the private sector to develop a vaccine**, which could be ready for clinical trials in 3 months.

- For the moment, (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) The State Department, is, however, upgrading the consular messaging for China to include a health warning.

- The **WHO is convening an emergency committee meeting tomorrow to determine whether the situation meets the threshold of a "public health emergency of international concern,"** and if so, what recommendations should be made.
- **D participated in a DC-level call this afternoon convened by Matt Pottinger.** Press guidance is being circulated, and A/S Stilwell expects to get questions on the situation tomorrow when he does a background brief on the Secretary's California trip.
- The NSC will likely hold a daily PCC; **we will provide you with brief updates.**

Be well, and use your **hand sanitizer**.

(b)(6)

Sender: "Krach, Keith J" (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Bernicat, Marcia S (b)(6)
Fritz, Jonathan D

Recipient: (b)(6)

E Staff <E2@state.gov>;

(b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R (b)(6)"
To: Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020
Date: Thu, 2 Apr 2020 16:18:54 +0000

I'll call at 1430.

From: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 11:57 AM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Indeed. We have a town hall at 1 so prob after 2. Thanks.

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 11:44 AM
To: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

After 1. For being a slack time, it's really busy!

From: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 9:34 AM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

I should be free 10:30-11ish and after 1 if you have time to call today.

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:59 PM
To: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

There is one more possibility we can discuss. □

From: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:57 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Copy, can do tomorrow. (b)(5)

(b)(6) (our ExecSec messed up the first version and had to re-issue which delayed things considerably). I reiterated/clarified the Deputies' decision in my sub

yesterday (b)(5)

(b)(5)

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

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:51 PM

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

Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Probably worth a secure call when you get back to the office.

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

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:49 PM

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

Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Teleworking today. Have a 6 p.m. call but free after that.

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

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:44 PM

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

Subject: RE: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Tried to call at 5:45. Reply when you have time to talk.

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

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 5:40 PM

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

Subject: FW: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Refreshing this one. (b)(6)

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

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 9:06 AM

To: David R Stilwell (b)(6)

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

Subject: Re: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Taking off the others. (b)(5)

(b)(6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 1, 2020, at 8:58 AM, (b)(6) wrote:

Wish we could. Alas, we are still in truce-land . . .

From: Stilwell, David R (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 8:53 AM
To: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6) (b)(6) Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

Here's the new line: "According to reports, on December 27, 2019, Zhang Jixian, director of the Department of Respiratory and Critical Care at Hubei Hospital of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine, reported the first three suspected cases."

Pretty easy to call them on it publicly.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 6:57 PM
To: PACOM.J514 (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)



(b)(6)



Subject: Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks on March 31, 2020

ALCON,

Aloha and good day. Here is a summary of daily MOFA press conference. The highlights include:

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) updates (as of this writing):
 - PRC National Health Commission: 81,518 confirmed cases (+79), 3314 deaths (+9), 76,000+ recovered cases; 854,307 confirmed cases (+69,000), 42,016 deaths (+4243) in total, globally. PRC authoritative media noted: national college exams are postponed to July; more states in a “loose lockdown” in the US as the orders came after POTUS made a “dramatic course reversal” announcing the social distancing guidelines extended to 30 April; cited White House’s leading health expert’s comments insisting that US will be “much better prepared” if the second wave of coronavirus is going to hit; PRC’s premier “vowed to provide assistance to countries affected by the COVID-19.”
 - 185,279 confirmed cases (+21,482), 3780 deaths (+639, surpassed China’s death toll) in the US; WH released the models that show coronavirus’ future course, at least 100,000 deaths being predicted; POTUS commented that it is going to be a “very, very painful two weeks”; CDC reviewing guidelines in the use of masks; World Bank warns COVID-19 could bring recession to countries in East Asia and the Pacific – pushing 11 million+ people into poverty.
- MFA was critical at a claim that China is to blame for the pandemic outbreak, being accused for covering up the accountability of the infected and conducting the disinformation campaign. MFA portrayed such “jarring noises” as “quite discordant” with the concurrent pandemic and the unity to fight it. MFA showcased China’s timely response by reiterating the sequence of events that the Chinese government took in which MFA also mentioned that China was in communication internally and externally with the WHO and other countries, to include the US, by the end of December and early January. MFA stated that China has “set an example and bought precious time” for the world in which claimed that China was lauded for such “transparent and responsible attitude” by the international community. The spokesperson added accusing the US side for trying to shift “the biggest blame of the century to China and make it the biggest scapegoat.” MFA added that China is willing to share the experience on COVID-19 while upholding the “vision of a community with a shared future for mankind” and urged to those to abandon “political bias and arrogance.”
- In response to the POTUS’ advisor and the director of trade and manufacturing policy comments on China’s COVID-19 cover-up, MFA flatly described such remarks as “lies that are not worth refuting.” MFA reiterated “the truth” in a timeline of the Chinese government’s conduct in which claimed that China was in communication with the WHO and the US in a timely manner. The spokesperson added portraying his remarks as wanting to “muddy the water, shift blame and undermine China-US cooperation” and urged the director to “grasp the gist of the phone call” between POTUS and Xi. Of note, during the COVID-2 (2002) epidemic that originated from Hong Kong, China reportedly was accused of delaying the revelation of the outbreak for three months at a minimum.
- In response to the SecState and NATO’s secretary general’s discussion over the importance of countering efforts by China to spread disinformation and propaganda related to the virus, MFA reiterated China’s conducts in being “transparent and responsible manner” which has been “widely applauded by the international community.” The spokesperson continued to comment that 1) China has been “working around the clock” to produce medical supplies, 2) provided timely updates to the WHO and the international community, and 3) China has no interests or time “to launch any despicable ‘disinformation campaign.’”
- MFA did not confirm but stated that China noted the US media reporting of some commercial flights from China that delivered medical supplies to the US. MFA emphasized that both US and China “should unite in the fight against the virus.” MFA stated that the both heads of the US and

China's health departments are in communication. MFA added that China hopes "some US officials will act in accordance with the consensus reached between the two heads of state by phone and work to create enabling conditions for the two sides' joint fight against the pandemic."

- In response to an accusation that China is "hoarding medical products instead of assisting other countries," MFA stated that China's top priority is "to prevent and control the epidemic at home" and safeguard the health of its populous. MFA commented that China has already provided much needed medical supplies to 120 countries and more than 30 countries have "signed purchase contracts with Chinese exporters" on medical materials and equipment.
- MFA stated that the JMSDF destroyer was "sailing in the relevant waters and endangering the safety of the Chinese vessel" as a fishing vessel collided with the JMSDF combatant in the East China Sea, east of Zhoushan. MFA added that the incident occurred "in the coastal waters of China" and stated that China is in communication with Japan.

That is all.

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on March 31, 2020

2020/03/31

*** Question: Some officials in a handful of countries including the US have been trying to blame China for the pandemic outbreak, accusing China of covering up the actual caseload of the infected and disseminating disinformation on COVID-19. They also said that they will reckon with China after the pandemic passes. What is your response?

*** Answer: At present, COVID-19 is ravaging across the world, especially in Europe and the US. People of all countries have called for unity to fight the pandemic, but still some people have made jarring noises from time to time, quite discordant with the current atmosphere of unity against the pandemic. I want to stress a few points.

As the coronavirus is novel virus unseen in the past, its detection, research, testing and confirmation naturally requires time. According to reports, on December 27, 2019, Zhang Jixian, director of the Department of Respiratory and Critical Care at Hubei Hospital of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine, reported the first three suspected cases. On December 29, Hubei and Wuhan health committees instructed related centers for disease control and prevention and hospitals to carry out epidemiological investigation. On December 30 Wuhan Municipal Health Committee issued an "urgent notice on the treatment of pneumonia of unknown cause". On December 31, the NHS sent an expert group to Wuhan to investigate on site. On January 3, 2020, China started to send timely updates to WHO and other countries, including the US. On January 11, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention put online five whole genome sequences of the novel coronavirus and shared data with the world and WHO. On January 23, Wuhan was put under lockdown and unprecedented comprehensive, thorough and rigorous measures were taken. The Chinese government took decisive and strong measures at the earliest time possible and the Chinese people have been united as one in this fight against the pandemic, which ensured the life, safety and health of the Chinese people to the highest extent.

WHO estimates that the decisive, effective and timely measures taken by the Chinese government prevented the infection of tens of thousands of people. Many countries also think China's practice offers explicable precedence. Our open, transparent and responsible attitude has been highly acclaimed by the international community.

We have no intention to judge other countries' response to the pandemic. But while China set an example and bought precious time for the world with huge efforts and sacrifice, as WHO, foreign leaders, experts and media say, did a certain country make full use of the time to enhance preparedness? I think its government knows that very well, and its people can feel it too.

Since January 3 China has been notifying the US of epidemic-related information on a regular basis. On January 7, the US CDC and its embassy in China issued warnings on traveling to Wuhan. On January 25, the US announced the decision to close its consulate in Wuhan and withdraw all staff. On February 2, the US government banned entry of all Chinese nationals and foreigners who had been to China in the past 14 days. Now so many days have passed, and some in the US still claim China should be held responsible for the COVID-19 in the US. Don't they feel guilty or ashamed? They are trying to shift the biggest blame of the century to China and make it the biggest scapegoat. However, such an attempt is just impossible as the blame is too heavy to be shifted. Sorry, it won't work.

The pandemic is in some way like a magical mirror that exposes a person's morality and character to the fullest extent. The virus knows no ideology, border or race. The destinies of all countries are closely intertwined. No one can make up for lost time by slandering others or shifting the blame. The only way to defeat the virus is through solidarity and cooperation.

At the G20 virtual summit last week, President Xi put forward propositions on overcoming the difficulties hand in hand. Upholding the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind, China would like to share our experience on COVID-19, conduct international cooperation, and provide as much help as we can to countries in need. That is what we say and what we do. We hope certain individuals will, like the CPC and the Chinese government, put people's life, health and safety first, abandon political bias and arrogance, and focus on international cooperation in pandemic response.

*** Question: In a recent interview, White House trade adviser Navarro accused China of a cover-up that has set the world back six weeks, saying China saw human-to-human transmission cases as early as mid-December. I wonder if you have any comment?

*** Answer: The lies told by this US politician are not worth refuting. I noticed that during that interview, even the host interrupted him several times and pointed out he was wasting everybody's time.

What is the truth? The truth is, since the epidemic broke out, we have always been open, transparent and responsible. We notified WHO and the international community of related information in a timely manner, shared genome sequencing findings of the virus at the earliest time possible, responded to other countries' concerns, conducted international cooperation and provided help to others. The sacrifice made by the Chinese people has bought valuable time for global anti-epidemic response.

Since the beginning of January, China has been sending regular updates to WHO and other countries, the US included. How can the US politician allege that China's delay set the world back six weeks? What is his intention? He just wanted to muddy the water, shift the blame and undermine China-US

cooperation as well as global cooperation in fighting COVID-19. No one with a sense of justice will fall for his words.

We advise Mr. Navarro to try and grasp the gist of the phone call between Chinese and US presidents on March 27. He should stop smearing China and undermining China-US relations, and work to advance rather than harm the two peoples' interests.

*** Question: The US State Department Spokesperson said yesterday that Secretary Pompeo spoke with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and discussed the importance of countering efforts by China to spread disinformation and propaganda related to the virus. I wonder if you have a comment?

*** Answer: Since the epidemic broke out, China, in an open, transparent and responsible manner, has been providing timely updates to WHO and countries around the world including the US. We have also been doing our best to provide support and assistance to countries in need. All this has been widely applauded by the international community. Some US officials are accusing China of disinformation campaigns, I wonder if they could point out what information is not true? Were they referring to the effective containment China has achieved, or the assistance it has provided to other countries?

As to how the US has been dealing with this crisis, there has been abundant media coverage in the US and the American people have seen it with their own eyes. The Chinese people are following with concern the development of the situation and sincerely hope the US will overcome the epidemic as soon as possible to safeguard American people's health and safety.

After the outbreak, China has been racing against time to fight the virus and contain its spread. Even as we speak, many Chinese businesses are working around the clock to produce medical supplies and reinforce other countries' combat. We don't have the interest or the time to launch any despicable "disinformation campaign".

President Xi Jinping, upon invitation, held a telephone conversation with President Trump last Friday. The two heads of state agreed that under current circumstances, China and the US should stand united and fight COVID-19. The remarks you mentioned clearly run counter to the consensus of the two leaders. We hope they will focus on containing the spread of the virus at home and contribute to China-US cooperation in responding to the pandemic.

Question: A Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer collided with a Chinese fishing boat in waters of the East China Sea on late March 30. Do you have more details on the incident?

Answer: According to competent department, there was a collision around 19:30 yesterday in the East China Sea, east of Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, involving a Chinese fishing boat and a Japanese SDF vessel. The collision damaged the Chinese fishing boat and caused lower back injury in one fisherman. China Coast Guard is still dealing with this on site as we speak. The cause of the collision is under investigation.

I want to point out that the collision occurred in the coastal waters of China. The Chinese side has expressed concern to the Japanese side over the Japanese SDF warship sailing in the relevant waters and endangering the safety of the Chinese vessel.

We are in communication with the Japanese side over this and hope they will cooperate to determine the cause as soon as possible and prevent such incidents from happening again.

*** Question: As COVID-19 spreads all around the world, countries have an enormous need for N95 respirators and other medical supplies. Some people think China is hoarding medical products instead of assisting other countries. Do you have a comment on that?

*** Answer: That's not at all true.

China's fight against COVID-19 isn't over yet. We are under heavy pressure to guard against imported cases and a rebound in indigenous cases, and so there is a huge demand for medical supplies. It is the government's top priority to prevent and control the epidemic at home and safeguard people's health. Ensuring the health of 1.4 billion Chinese people is in itself a great contribution to global public health security.

That said, we are also providing medical supplies to countries in need. Here are some figures for you. First, the Chinese government has provided 120 countries and four international organizations with surgical masks, N95 respirators, protective suits, nucleic acid test kits, ventilators and other assistance.

Second, local governments donated medical items to their sister cities in more than 50 countries. Chinese companies made donations to over 100 countries and international organizations.

Third, some countries requested via diplomatic channels Chinese assistance in their commercial procurement, and we recommended qualified exporters for them. To date, 30 countries and two international organizations have signed purchase contracts with Chinese exporters on masks, protective suits, nucleic acid test kits, etc. Buyers from many other countries are also discussing procurement with Chinese enterprises.

As our businesses resume work and production, I believe they will give more material support to the international community. The Chinese government will continue providing support and convenience for foreign procurement. We hope to see and welcome greater cooperation with foreign companies to help stabilize the global industrial chain of medical supplies.

You mentioned there is now a great demand for N95 respirators in other countries, I think you all know that there is a shortage of them in China as well. We have been reserving them for frontline medical workers whose posts make them most vulnerable. The general public, including Chinese leaders, all wear ordinary masks, as I'm sure you've noticed in news footage.

Question: According to reports, four Chinese students in Spain were confirmed to have contracted COVID-19. How has the Chinese embassy in Spain been helping them? How are these students now?

Answer: The CPC Central Committee attaches great importance to and cares deeply about the health and safety of Chinese citizens overseas. Our diplomatic missions overseas have been in close contact with the students in their host countries.

After four Chinese students were infected, our embassy in Spain and consulate-general in Barcelona have been closely following their conditions. They urged the Spanish side to ensure they are receiving all

medical treatment they need, and also brought in Chinese doctors to offer advice online. We will continue to watch over them and offer every assistance possible.

Question: US President Donald Trump said that China has sent some medical supplies to the US to help fight COVID-19. Can you confirm this information and share some more details?

Answer: As I just said, President Xi Jinping held a telephone conversation with President Trump last Friday. President Xi said that the Chinese people sincerely hope that the US will contain the spread of the pandemic at an early date and minimize its impact on the American people. Under the current circumstances, China and the US should unite in the fight against the virus. Health departments and epidemic experts of the two sides have all along been in communication. Last night, Minister Ma Xiaowei of China's National Health Commission and US Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar spoke over the phone to exchange ideas on the two countries' pandemic prevention and control efforts. Some provinces and cities and local businesses have already donated medical supplies to the US side. We have noted that some US media have reported that a commercial charter flight has taken a batch of epidemic control materials it purchased from China to the US. China understands the current difficulties the US is facing and stands ready to offer support within our capability.

We also hope that some US officials will act in accordance with the consensus reached between the two heads of state by phone and work to create enabling conditions for the two sides' joint fight against the pandemic.

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: Tobin , Elizabeth (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing | NSF) (b)(6)
 (h)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
 (h)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: (b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (h)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
 (h)(6) (PPL/DE) (h)(6)
Subject: Re: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation
Date: Wed, 17 Jan 2018 08:27:20 -0500

Thanks. Glad to see that this is moving forward with strong interagency support. Is anyone from Embassy Beijing participating?

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 20:11
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing | NSF) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: RE: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

Thanks, I reached out to Bangkok ESTH and they sent me the attached document and the following:

"Bilateral ESTH is heavily engaged with Mahidol as it is the first year the entire slate will be awarded to a single country (United States). Our Ambassador is hosting the Laureates for a large reception 2/1, and is attending the black tie announcement event 1/31. He may also meet with the Prime Minister in connection to Mahidol.

The PMAC conference is partially supported by RDMA, whose Office of Public Health will attend much if not all of the conference. Note the current schedule is online at <http://pmac2018.com/site>.

~~SBU~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 9:29 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing); (h)(6) (Beijing | NSF) (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: Re: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

Checking with (b)(6) in DC who was briefing the interagency just after the holidays.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 02:36

To: (b)(6) (Beijing | NSF) (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6) (Beijing)

Subject: RE: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

Thanks (b)(6)

It looks like the official launch is planned for January 30 in Thailand—(b)(6) do you have any updates on this?

(b)(6)

~~SBU~~

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 12:23 PM

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

Cc: Oh, Sarah (Beijing)

Subject: Re: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

I have not heard about this, but we can ask around. I recall (b)(6) proposing that this was something that could be a relevant OBOR project (but without any explicit commitment), a year ago when he convened a meeting to discuss China's Virome Project. At the time he was still with (b)(6) but is now no longer at (b)(6). I don't know whether (b)(6) news is from a more recent communication- it would be good to find out what specifically he heard from whom. It would be good to determine if the funding is for GVP (and for what activities? Setting up infrastructure for specimen collection and/or database, or related research, or other? Who will receive the funding?), or for the China National Virome Project (highlighted below).

Best,

(b)(6)

U.S. National Science Foundation 美国国家科学基金会

No. 55 Anjialou Rd.

Chaoyang District, Beijing 100600
CHINA
Office Tel. (b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 10:40 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: FW: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

Have you guys hear anything about CAS funding GVP activities under OBOR?

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, January 12, 2018 7:21 AM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cc: (b)(6) (Beijing), (b)(6)
Subject: FW: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

Hi (b)(6)

I want to echo kudos shared during a briefing today from (b)(6) regarding your/this cable – he shared it with folks around the table (INR, OES) to indicate China's interest in this project. Rock on!

Quick follow-up: he mentioned he learned (from CAS?) that China has earmarked a tranche of funding to support their part in the GVP from OBOR Initiative funds. Your cable mentions funding that already exists, but does not get into any possible OBOR funds – have you heard anything echoing what (b)(6) shared today?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Official -SBU—
UNCLASSIFIED

From: SMART Core**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2017 3:56 AM**Cc:** (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SBU~~

**Info Office:**

MTS_INDONESIA, MTS_PRIN, REG_IMO_OFF, PD_ANP,
CM_CHINA_MONGOLIA, ANP_PRIN, EP_APEC, J_PRIN,
EX_ADM_GSO, J_ECON, MLS_BURMA, EAP_BEIJING, SNKP,
FO_STAFF, MLS_CAMBODIA, RSP_SCI_TECH, EX_DIR, RSP_CT,
EAP_DEP_DIR, CM_TC, FO_CM_TC, PD_MTS, AITW2,
FO_SPEC_ASST, AITW, FO_SR_ADVISOR

MRN:	<u>17 BEIJING 2458</u>
Date/DTG:	Sep 28, 2017 / 280753Z SEP 17
From:	AMEMBASSY BEIJING
Action:	WASHDC, SECSTATE <i>ROUTINE</i>
E.O.:	13526
TAGS:	PREL, SHLH, TBIO, KGHI, CDC, AID, CN

Captions:~~SENSITIVE~~**Subject:**

China's Interest in the Global Virome Project Presents an Opportunity for Global Health Cooperation

1. ~~(SBU)~~ **Summary and Comment:** The proposed Global Virome Project (GVP), an international non-governmental organization built on a decade-long prototype initiated by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), seeks to address vulnerability from emerging diseases by creating a global database of viruses of animal origin and identifying those pathogens with greatest potential to jump to humans through sequencing their genomes, understanding the ecology involved in transmission, and assessing risk to humans. This knowledge could then be used to devise treatments and countermeasures. In the months leading up to the planned January 2018 launch of the Global Virome Project to codify this "proof of concept" into an international organization, China has expressed considerable interest in becoming a leader of this nascent global effort by contributing to collaborative academic papers, hosting symposia, participating in international activities, and by proposing its own associated China Virome Project. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

2. (SBU)(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

End Summary and Comment.**Health Security is a Global Agenda**

3. ~~(SBU)~~ The Global Virome Project as proposed could be an important scientific contribution to the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). Launched in February 2014, the GHSA is a multi-sectoral effort aiming to accelerate implementation of the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations (IHR) in order to make the world safe and secure from infectious disease threats, whatever their source. Under the Global Health Security Agenda, the United States assists 31 countries and the Caribbean Community, including \$1 billion for 17 at-risk countries to strengthen global health security through a whole-of-government effort to prevent, detect, and respond to disease outbreaks at the local, subnational and national levels.

Pandemic Disease is a Global Threat

4. ~~(SBU)~~ A component to the overall Global Health Security Agenda is reducing the threat of pandemic disease, which is a widespread epidemic of naturally emerging deadly infectious pathogens. According to "The Global Virome Project," a collaborative paper written by several

of the foremost experts on pandemic health issues, viruses of animal origin have caused significant outbreaks, such as SARS, influenza, MERS, Ebola, HIV, and Zika. Outbreaks such as these have had major economic and geopolitical impact and have threatened global security. There are an estimated 1.6 million such viruses worldwide. Scientists have estimated that only 1% of the potential viral threats have been identified and hundreds of thousands of unknown viruses in wildlife have the potential to infect people. However, less than 0.1% of all viruses with the potential to pose a threat to global health are estimated to have spilled over from animals to humans. With growing populations, reduced animal habitats and increasing international travel and trade, these types of emerging infectious diseases pose increasing risks of a global nature.

The Global Virome Project's Beginnings as a U.S. Investment

5. ~~(SBU)~~ GVP grew out of the PREDICT project of USAID, which has, over its seven year history, received \$130 million in U.S. funding and has thus far sampled over 56,000 wild animals and identified about 1000 new viruses. PREDICT hosts the GVP Secretariat at University of California-Davis. The GVP concept was validated at a gathering of international stakeholders in 2016, which included scientists and public health practitioners from the public and private sectors. Its first follow-up meeting was held in Beijing in early 2017, including a half-day session to initiate the associated China National Virome Project (CNVP). GVP expects to be incorporated as an international not-for-profit organization prior to its official launch, which is planned for January 30, 2018 in Thailand at the Prince Mahidol Awards Conference.

The Global Virome Project's Audacious Agenda

6. ~~(SBU)~~ The Global Virome Project is, by the project leadership's own admission, ambitious. Over the course of ten years and at an estimated cost of \$1 billion (\$100 million a year for ten years), the Global Virome Project aims to sample 63% of global mammalian diversity to find 71% of mammalian viromes. The projected costs cover sample collection and laboratory analysis, with phases including countries with the highest diversity of mammalian species. Phase One includes 10 countries and 1562 mammals, Phase Two, 16 countries and 970 mammals, Phase Three with 23 countries and 447 mammals. GVP also expects to collect samples from 740 waterfowl species.

7. ~~(SBU)~~ GVP's core principles include embracing an international scope while fostering local ownership, promoting equitable access to data and benefits, instilling transparency, building national capabilities for prevention, detection, and response for emerging viral threats, and encouraging global ownership through an international alliance. If successful, this initiative will provide a wealth of publicly accessible unbiased data, which should enable innovative research on the mechanisms and ecology of disease transmission, and informatics focusing on virus families as opposed to individual viruses. Such research could accelerate the development of new diagnostics, vaccine technologies, and risk mitigation strategies against whole families of emerging viral diseases.

Like all Risky Endeavors Failure is a Possibility

8. ~~(SBU)~~ GVP looks to the Human Genome Project as a model, in which a comprehensive, ambitious approach led to the development of new technologies and a vast data resource now available to all. Unlike the Human Genome Project, GVP is by design not 'owned' by an institution or specific country, because of its international sampling scope. Its infrastructure will also be distributed globally. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

GVP Enjoys Strong Chinese Government Support in Principle and in Kind

9. ~~(SBU)~~ The Chinese government has shown strong interest in the Global Virome Project and is not shy about expressing interest in funding projects where Chinese scientists will take a lead. (b)(6)

(b)(6) a distinguished virologist, told EmbOfs that the Global Virome Project is a priority project that China CDC must push hard on to get stakeholders involved and organize funding. He stated that China's involvement in this project is a good follow-up to the August 21 World Health Organization dialogue meeting at which Health and Human Services Secretary Price and US Ambassador Branstad where both sides agreed on the need for increased U.S.-China collaboration against growing health threats at the intersection of animal and human health. In February 2017, (b)(6) led a symposium proposing a China virome project, however the specific details of how the two will integrate was left undefined.

10. ~~(SBU)~~ The Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI), now based in Shenzhen, made a blanket offer to conduct 30% of the sequencing for GVP, but did not provide details on how that sequencing would take place or where the subsequent data would be housed. Its current (b)(6)

(b)(6) was instrumental in China's involvement in the Human Genome Project in the 1990s, and is a proponent of sharing data. BGI's commitment (as opposed to (b)(6) commitment) to GVP's values of open, free access to data has not yet been officially stated however. [Note: The BGI group has enjoyed significant funding from the Chinese government. BGI Genomics became a publically-traded company in July 2017.]

11. ~~(SBU)~~ The GVP expects to raise its \$1 billion ten-year budget from a variety of sources, both public and private. Roughly \$5 million per year will cover operations of the non-governmental organization, to include working groups, sample and data standardization and management, and technical assistance to participating country field operations. However, specifics on funding commitments have not been publicly announced.

Both the U.S. and China Strongly Support GVP-related Collaborative Research

12. ~~(SBU)~~ Beyond creating the database of viral sequences which carries the \$1 billion price tag, GVP recognizes the importance of research on the mechanisms and ecology of infectious disease transmission. This type of research already enjoys strong support in both China and the United States, and scientists are increasingly collaborating with each other.

13. ~~(SBU)~~ (b)(6) the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) who studied mechanisms of transmission of SARS between species, stated that CAS has already allocated funding for GVP-related research. (b)(6) Department of International Affairs at CAS, stated that CAS is working on a process and mechanism to support Chinese scientists with backing from the Ministry of Sciences and Technology and The National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) for Global Virome Project type research. He noted that CAS encourages Chinese scientists to take part in or lead international research projects and that CAS has a budget for seed funding to incubate research projects, workshops, and collaboration that can be used for the Global Virome Project. Significant USG support for GVP-related research already exists, including the Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases (EEID) program, which is jointly supported by NIH, USDA, and NSF, is actively seeking collaboration in China, and plans to host a joint workshop supported by NSFC and CAS in early 2017.

Global Virome Project Provides China a Platform for International Collaboration

14. ~~(SBU)~~ It is encouraging that China, along with other countries, is ready to take what started as a U.S.-led initiative and proof of concept to a global scale. The GVP still awaits a commitment of funding for its viral sampling and processing infrastructure. It is likely that the Chinese government will engage both with funding and with in-kind support, which will likely give China a large voice in GVP governance and data-sharing policies. While U.S.-based NGOs and academics are likely to provide some leadership for the GVP, it will be important for the USG to remain engaged in significant ways with the GVP, to ensure that U.S. interests are adequately reflected in this effort, which will facilitate the development of countermeasures against future threats (pandemic preparedness), and enable rapid detection of viral threats and increase the capacity to handle them.

Signature: BRANSTAD

Drafted By: BEIJING (b)(6) (Beijing)
Cleared By: USAID (b)(6) (Beijing)
 HHS/OGA (b)(6) (Beijing)
 CDC (b)(6) (Beijing)
 NSF: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Approved By: ESTH (b)(6) (Beijing)
Released By: BEIJING (b)(6) (Beijing)
Info: TOKYO, AMEMBASSY *ROUTINE*; SEOUL, AMEMBASSY *ROUTINE*;
 ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE *ROUTINE*

Action Post: NONE

Dissemination Rule: DIS_MTS_INDONESIA, DIS_MTS_PRIN, DIS_REG_IMO_OFF,
 DIS_PD_ANP, DIS_CM_CHINA_MONGOLIA, DIS_ANP_PRIN,
 DIS_EP_FROM_APEC, DIS_J_PRIN, DIS_EX_ADM_GSO,
 DIS_J_ECON, DIS_MLS_BURMA, DIS_EAP_BEIJING_TAIWAN,

DIS_SNKP_EAP_REGIONAL, DIS_FO_STAFF, DIS_MLS_CAMBODIA,
DIS_RSP_PUB_HEALTH, DIS_EX_DIR, DIS_RSP_CT, DIS_DEP_DIR,
DIS_CM_TC, DIS_FO_CM_TC, DIS_PD_MTS, DIS_AITW2,
DIS_FO_SPEC_ASST, DIS_AITW

UNCLASSIFIED~~-SBU-~~

Sender: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing | NSF) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
Recipient: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (CDC/CGH/DGHP) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (PPL/DE) (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R"
To: Brownback, Samuel D (b)(6)
Kenna, Lisa D (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Virus Origin; Hong Kong
Date: Wed, 6 May 2020 14:31:40 +0000

(b)(5)

Matthew 22:36-40 New International Version (NIV)

³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^(a) ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^(b) ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Emptily talking “Love thy Neighbor as Thyself” while actually being selfish and cool-blooded—6th of the series “Slandering China’s anti-virus fight is against international justice”

People’s Daily Zhongsheng editorial (p. 3)

What has the United States done for itself and the world amid the pandemic? Is there a slightest hint of “love thy neighbor as thyself”? U.S. politicians’ narrow-mindedness and malicious maneuvers are appalling. They slandered China’s donations as “generosity politics,” expert delegation as “geopolitical expansion,” and supplies assistance as “face mask diplomacy.” They ignored warning from the World Health Organization at first, then blamed China, the WHO and immigrants for their domestic outbreak, intensified sanctions on Iran, Syria and Venezuela, warned against accepting Cuba’s anti-virus medical team, and even insolently demanded change of the WHO chief elected by nations. In front of a global war against the pandemic, nothing is more imperative than saving life and collaboration.

From: Kavaras, Margaret R (Beijing) <KavarasMR@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 4:33 AM
To: Beijing Press Office <BeijingPressOffice@state.gov>
Subject: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Virus Origin; Hong Kong

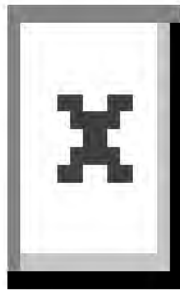
U.S. Embassy Beijing Media Reaction – A Summary of Select PRC Media Commentary

Produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Press Office
Unofficial news excerpts for reference only. Not for distribution outside the USG.

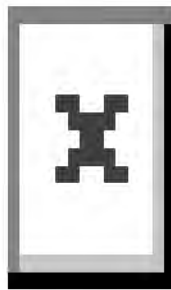
Wednesday, May 6 2020

BLUF – China’s Public Messaging Summary: WHO evidence does not support that the COVID-19 virus is a laboratory construct. In the war against the pandemic, we should build and strengthen a globally integrated framework for public health governance.

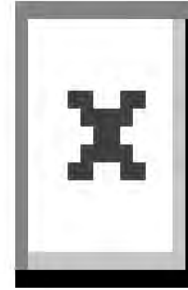
News:



People's Daily: Party Central Committee, State Council, Central Military Commission extend congratulations on successful maiden flight of Long March-5B carrier rocket



Global Times: U.S. coronavirus origin story widely questioned
Subtitle: WHO: no evidence received; Dr. Fauci: pathogen not man-made.
Sidebar: Multiple countries carefully proceed to “post-lockdown” period



21st Century Business Herald: China’s securities market reform will support development of innovative companies

CCTV (05/05): Success of first flight mission of Long March-5B carrier rocket marks a new beginning of China’s space station program; Central authorities send congratulatory message hailing Long March-5B rocket’s maiden flight; State Council Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism press conference: zero newly confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases for two consecutive days; Labour Day holiday witnesses 115 million domestic and international tourist visits nationwide; (pro-Beijing) Hong Kong Coalition launched to help city get back on track and start anew; *People’s Daily* editorial: questioning China’s COVID-19 mortality rate is purely politicized speculation; CCTV commentary: the United States should submit to international investigation into its questionable outbreak prevention and control; WHO: all evidence suggests novel coronavirus originated naturally; WHO: global confirmed COVID-19 cases near 3.49 million.

Trending News Stories (05/06):

1. Congratulatory message hails Long March-5B maiden flight

The success of the first flight mission of China's new large carrier rocket Long March-5B marks a good beginning for the country's space station program, said a congratulatory message sent by the central authorities on Tuesday. The Communist Party of China Central Committee, the State Council and the Central Military Commission extended the congratulations to all personnel participating in the mission after the rocket blasted off from the Wenchang Space Launch Center and sent the trial version of China's new-generation manned spaceship and a cargo return capsule for a test into space. The message noted that all participating units and personnel had been working in solidarity and overcame difficulties amid the COVID-19 epidemic to achieve the success, which laid a solid foundation for the "third step" of China's manned space program to construct a space station. It is the latest accomplishment that all mission teams, under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, obtained in following the path of independent innovation to develop the country's space industry, said the message.

2. China to launch four manned spaceships around 2022

Ji Qiming, an assistant to the CMSA director, said at a press conference Tuesday evening that China aims to complete the construction of the space station around 2022. During the construction of the space station, China plans to launch four Shenzhou manned spaceships and four Tianzhou cargo spacecraft to transport astronauts and supplement materials. The assembly of the station's core module has been completed, and the two experiment capsules and the scientific payloads are under development, according to Ji. The crewmembers to participate in the construction of the space station have been selected and are trained for the missions. China's third batch of reserve astronauts will be selected around July, Ji said.

In Focus – COVID-19:

Global Times reported that the PLA is ready to defend against any U.S. military provocation, even if the U.S. resumes use of its aircraft carriers that are affected by COVID-19. The U.S. has been sending reconnaissance aircraft to the First Island Chain to gather intelligence on China, and military experts expect the U.S. military to escalate provocations against China when the epidemic eases. According to the Global Times, Trump's biggest and only selling point for his reelection campaign is his perceived toughness over trade with China, but if Trump and his deputies do not stop attacks on China over the COVID-19 pandemic, China could announce an indefinite delay in starting phase two negotiations with Trump. CGTN Reported on Ambassador Cui Tiankai statement that the place where the virus was first reported may not be its place of origin, as he said, "It seems like both the United States and countries in Europe have found earlier cases than China did." CCTV evening news aired CRI commentary that "The United States deserves an international investigation into its epidemic response," with Pompeo continuing to spread rumors that the coronavirus originated from a Wuhan virus research institute, this is the case of the guilty party filing the suit first. Xinhua quoted a statement from Dr. Galea, WHO representative in China, that Chinese studies to fill knowledge gaps (on the animal source of the COVID-19 virus) will be crucial to helping prevent similar outbreaks in the future. Dr. Galea added that evidence does not support that the virus is a laboratory construct.

Editorial Commentary:

-

1. COVID-19

Emptily talking “Love thy Neighbor as Thyself” while actually being selfish and cool-blooded—6th of the series “Slandering China’s anti-virus fight is against international justice”

People’s Daily Zhongsheng editorial (p. 3)

What has the United States done for itself and the world amid the pandemic? Is there a slightest hint of “love thy neighbor as thyself”? U.S. politicians’ narrow-mindedness and malicious maneuvers are appalling. They slandered China’s donations as “generosity politics,” expert delegation as “geopolitical expansion,” and supplies assistance as “face mask diplomacy.” They ignored warning from the World Health Organization at first, then blamed China, the WHO and immigrants for their domestic outbreak, intensified sanctions on Iran, Syria and Venezuela, warned against accepting Cuba’s anti-virus medical team, and even insolently demanded change of the WHO chief elected by nations. In front of a global war against the pandemic, nothing is more imperative than saving life and collaboration.

Offset the pandemic with greater policy measures

People’s Daily commentary (p. 5)

We must reasonably intensify policy adjustment to accelerate the restoration of social-economic order and prevent the pandemic’s temporary impact from becoming a long-term trend. Combined policy measures should be more targeted and foster new growth pillars in expanding internal demand. Greater intensity of policy measures does not mean “flood irrigation” in economy. Instead, it should be precision policies for specific categories that allow market to fully play its decisive role in resources allocation and government to play a better role. We need to combine the merits of both our system and market.

The United States must set its own record straight

Xinhua Chinese commentary

If the theory of probability used by U.S. politicians to investigate whether the coronavirus originated in Wuhan labs is applied on America itself, four questions arise. First, when did the first COVID-19 case occur in the United States? Second, what does the e-cigarette pneumonia outbreak in Wisconsin last July have to do with COVID-19? Third, given the popularity of hunting games in America, is it probable that wild animal hunting in the United States has led to the zoonotic spillover of the coronavirus? Finally, how many people have been infected by the virus, and how many died of it in the United States? No official data is available so far. If the United States has surplus energy beyond curbing the outbreak, why not prepare a list of unanswered questions and set its own fudged record straight? The number of confirmed cases and deaths in the United States has already reached the level of a major disaster, whereas politicians in Washington even call it a “great success.” Such a practice has caused increasing criticism in America. If no changes are made in a timely manner, what will happen in public opinion is unpredictable.

Cui Tiankai: U.S. politicians on high positions may not necessarily have high IQ; economy and trade should not be the only ballast in China-U.S. relations

The Paper reprinting China Central Television (CCTV)

In an interview with CCTV, Ambassador Cui refuted the claim that the coronavirus originated in Wuhan, saying the place where the first case was reported is not necessarily the origin of the

virus. He pointed out that earlier cases were found in the United States and Europe, saying the scientific community generally believes that the virus is produced in nature and is not from any lab. Cui called for belief in truth and science. "In this world, there are always people sitting in relatively high positions, but this does not mean that their IQ and EQ are proportionally high," said Cui, suggesting an investigation of other mysterious labs around the world to clear the matter up if an investigation of the Wuhan Institute of Virology is believed to be necessary. He called the claims from the United States demanding China's compensation for coronavirus damages "totally absurd and unreasonable," adding that cooperation on topics such as epidemic prevention and control and public health can become another ballast in China-U.S. relations.

Bannon makes a pot of poison, will Americans drink it?

Global Times editorial

Recently, a good deal of "China is responsible" theories in U.S. public opinion originated from Steve Bannon, former chief White House strategist. For this far-right extremist, he sees the pandemic as an exhilarant, using every chance to spread baseless rhetoric about "virus originated from a Chinese lab" and "China profits from the outbreak." The participation of Bannon, whose anti-China stance is pre-set and obstinate, has added absurdity and insanity to this round of "Chinese responsibility" attack. As in the past, Bannon's vilification of China this time is baseless and unbridled, not worth refuting at all. But given that there are people in the United States today who really believe that drinking disinfectant fluid can kill the virus and that there are people in Europe today who really believe that 5G can spread the virus, we should not be too surprised that Bannon's shoddy conspiracy theories can still gain support in the United States and even in Europe. Bannon's information viruses are more covert and destructive than disinfectant fluid or 5G theories. Hasn't China-U.S. relations been messed up? Although Bannon has left the White House, persons like Navarro and Pompeo controlling Washington's attitude toward China is really a sad thing for Sino-U.S. relations, especially for the United States. At such a critical juncture as the entire United States is facing an unprecedented challenge, how many Americans would drink the pot of poisons Bannon is making?

International prevention and control mechanism needs to be reformed urgently

Global Times commentary

Zhang Chaohan and Feng Qilun from the Northwest University of Politics and Law opined that the COVID19 outbreak continues ravaging, but the international cooperation against the pandemic is still fragile. A few Western countries, although deeply trapped in the outbreak, still did not forget to be involved in political maneuvering to dump blames on other countries. Facts show that the existing international cooperation mechanism for emergency prevention and control has seriously failed and needs to be reformed: First, we should build and strengthen a globally integrated framework for public health governance that highlights the WHO's central role, enhances its comprehensive containment capability in emergency public health incidents other than being only as a technical supporter, offers differentiated duties and rights to developed and developing countries and establishes a supervisory and arbitration system. Second, we should strengthen the authority and enforcement of international law in emergency prevention and control. In order for international law to be truly effective, there is a need to strengthen the coordination of all nations' domestic law and international law and to exercise national enforcement to guarantee international law enforcement. Third, we should make every effort to fix mutual suspicion and obstruction between developed and developing countries so

that the rights and interests of developing countries can be fully safeguarded. Finally, promote sustainable development of all-people health coverage around the world which largely relies on the steady improvement of public health capability in developing countries.

2. Hong Kong

Anti-China saboteurs in Hong Kong must pay the price

Xinhua Chinese commentary

Jimmy Lai appeared in court on charges of unauthorized assembly and criminal intimidation on May 5th. On the same day, the Hong Kong Coalition was launched by local patriots to restore peace, prosperity, and the rule of law in the city. As HK instigators' ringleader, Lai has committed gruesome crimes against the country, and thus deserves harsh punishment. His fellow instigators have been manipulating public opinion to hold the judiciary hostage and create a chilling effect on those who disagree with them. Jimmy Lai and the like acted so stridently because they enjoyed the backing of United States and other Western anti-China forces. As the foot soldiers of anti-China forces, they flagrantly pledged their allegiance to the United States and misled young people to become "black mobs." Their aim is to engineer a color revolution in Hong Kong, usurp authority over the territory, and stir up trouble to help anti-China forces curb China's rise. Exasperated by Lai's arrest, U.S. and Western politicians lashed out. They threatened to implement the Hong Kong Act and exerted pressure on HK police and judiciary, which undermined Hong Kong's autonomy, interfered in China's internal affairs, and revealed their political agenda. As Lai's case entered the legal proceedings, Hong Kong should reflect on why its rule-of-law spirit collapsed so quickly in the disturbance following the proposed extradition bill. Some youngsters' loose attitude towards the law takes time to reverse and is set to cast a long shadow over Hong Kong's future. Given the absence of a fully-fledged legal and enforcement mechanism to defend national security in Hong Kong and the relatively weak national security awareness among Hong Kongers, which have emboldened instigators like Lai, it's urgent to step up national security in the territory to fill the gap and leave no room for traitors to foment trouble. Having offenders pay the price will set a right example, and inhibit all people, especially the young, from stepping into dangerous zones.

Popular Online Commentary from Weitianxia:

1. --Trump tours a mask factory without wearing a face mask
2. You can do whatever you want when you have drunk disinfectant.
3. I suspect that they indeed have treatment. Otherwise how can he appear safe and sound without wearing a face mask?
4. The White House must have a special cure. It's just that the medicine is very expensive and not available to average folk.
5. He must have received a vaccine shot. Since letting people know that the United States already has a vaccine will be the smoking gun and confirm the suspicion that it detected the novel coronavirus ten months ago, it has to hide the vaccine.
6. All the masks being manufactured there are now contaminated. Perhaps the mask you will wear someday has the droplets exhaled by the U.S. president.
7. --Trump says he will unveil the report on the provenance of the novel coronavirus as soon as possible. The president and Secretary Pompeo repeatedly claimed substantial evidence suggests the virus originated in a Wuhan lab

8. A U.S. mayor has coronavirus antibodies, and he believes he had COVID-19 as early as November.
9. What does Trump plan to unveil without evidence? Is he going to fabricate evidence?
10. Since we are in the territory of telling outright lies now, China should just go ahead and prepare a report asserting the pathogen originated in U.S. military labs and overseas military bases.
11. Will a packet of washing powder be enough? [Note: the comment is a reference to the test tube used by former Secretary Powell at the UN Security Council as evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, which Russian President Putin made fun of by saying it could be a tube of washing powder.]
12. Did the United States find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq?
13. Trump is planning to fabricate evidence, push its allies to pressure China, make extortionist claims, and force China to grant more concessions. As such, the China-U.S. relations are doomed to fracture, and the Trump administration will be shooting itself in the foot.
14. With so many deaths, a thorough international investigation is necessary. But it shouldn't be done by the United States singlehandedly.

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.

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*.

Xinhua (新华社): Premier state-run news agency that provides content to China's state-run media as well as its own platforms which include more than 20 newspapers and a dozen magazines. Xinhua's official website, www.xinhuanet.com, reports receiving 75 daily viewers, with over 200 million page views. *Xinhua* also runs an English-language website.

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.

Weitianxia (微天下, 16 million followers) is a prominent international news Weibo account operated by sina.com. Users post articles and comments related to international issues. This media reaction summarizes and translates the most popular posts related to politics, international relations, and social issues.

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)(2) You must have a U.S. Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

Recipient: Brownback, Samuel D (b)(6)
Kenna, Lisa D (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R"
Kissel, Mary E (S) (b)(6)
To: Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; U.S. Leadership Missteps; Taiwan and WHO
Date: Sun, 12 Apr 2020 00:44:00 +0000

(b)(5)

From: Beijing PAS (b)(2)
Sent: Friday, April 10, 2020 5:04 AM
To: Beijing Press Office (b)(2)
Subject: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; U.S. Leadership Missteps; Taiwan and WHO

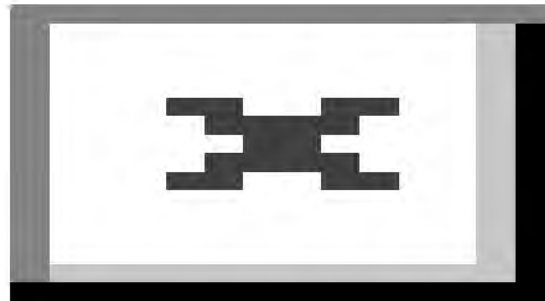
U.S. Embassy Beijing Media Reaction – A Summary of Select PRC Media Commentary

Produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Press Office
Unofficial news excerpts for reference only. Not for distribution outside the USG.

Friday, April 10, 2020

BLUF- Pompeo is still focused on Wuhan as the source of COVID-19, which is a desperate attempt to distract from America's missteps. The WHO should be protected from slander, and Taiwan's attempts to use the epidemic to undermine the one-China principle and enter the WHO must be countered.

News



People's Daily: China unveils guideline on improving market-based allocation of production factors

Global Times-Chinese: White House entangles in "WHO misstep"; Tedros urges no politicizing of virus; UNSC discusses pandemic first time ever; Sidebar: Border town in Northeastern China becomes new epidemic hotspot

21st Century Business Herald: Global market "snapping up" Chinese APIs (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient)

CCTV (04/9): Xi encourages community workers in a Wuhan neighborhood to keep working hard against epidemic for people's health; Xi speaks on phone with Presidents of South Africa, Turkey; China unveils guideline on improving market-based allocation of production factors; Premier Li calls for enhanced border restrictions, increasing testing capability in vulnerable areas, and routinized prevention and control for full resumption of work and production; China issues guidebook on epidemic control, resumption of work; State Council Task Force: China continues to see growing number of domestic asymptomatic cases; Wuhan integrates designated hospitals for centralized medication of hospitalized COVID-19 patients; CCTV commentary: accelerate full restoration of production, living order amid normalization of prevention and control; State Council Press Office on prevention of forest fire in spring; international community: China shares experience, promotes global synergy in fight against pandemic; WHO: global positive cases of COVID-19 close to 1.4 million.

Trending News Stories (04/10):

1. China unveils guideline on improving market-based allocation of production factors
China has issued a guideline on improving the market-based allocation mechanism of production factors in a bid to further facilitate the free and orderly flow of factors and stimulate market vitality. Efforts will be made to further deepen reform and opening-up and remove institutional barriers that hinder the free flow of factors to lay a solid foundation for high-quality development, according to the document issued by the Communist Party of China (CPC)

Central Committee and the State Council. China will promote market-based allocation of factors of production, including land, labor and capital while accelerating the development of the market of technology and data factors, it said.

2. Taiwan Affairs Office of State Council: strongly condemns DPP's "malicious" verbal attacks on WHO

A Chinese mainland spokesperson Thursday strongly condemned the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) authority in Taiwan for its "malicious" verbal attacks on the World Health Organization (WHO) and its director-general. Zhu Fenglian, a spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, also slammed the DPP for conniving in the wanton spread of racist remarks by the internet mob from its camp. Zhu said the DPP took whatever means to "bank on the epidemic to seek independence." The spokesperson urged the DPP to immediately stop political manipulation. "The DPP's attempt to take the opportunity of the epidemic to undermine the one-China principle and seek entry into the WHO is doomed to fail," she added.

Factual Coverage

CCTV reported that Washington has been constantly attacking the World Health Organization, accusing it of providing a "faulty recommendation" during the coronavirus outbreak and threatening to put a hold on U.S. funding for the organization. Washington should ask itself what it did during those six weeks instead of blaming the WHO for the U.S. leadership's mistakes. Huanqiu reported that Pompeo continued to stress that "the virus started in Wuhan, China" and accused China of "hiding data, confusing the public and punishing people who tell the truth". In response MFA Spokesman Zhao Lijian said that the source of the virus should be studied by scientific experts, the U.S. side has access to information and data on the epidemic from China and that smears and criticism against others will not kill the virus. Global Times reported that the U.S. administration has scrambled globally to secure more anti-epidemic materials, which has sparked tensions with its allies including France, Canada and Germany. In face of the pandemic, the US turns out to be self-interested and incompetent and is constantly willing to sacrifice its allies. China Daily reported that the use of stigmatizing virus names by biased politicians and the media has caused considerable harm. US President Donald Trump has repeatedly referred to the novel coronavirus as the "Chinese virus", while US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo keeps on using the term "Wuhan virus". Xinhua reported that MFA Spokesman Zhao Lijian accused Democratic Progressive Party authorities in Taiwan of doing all they can to make reckless political maneuvers and hype up the issue of Taiwan's participation in the WHO and the World Health Assembly since the outbreak of COVID-19.

Editorial Commentary

1. COVID-19

The importance of cooperation against non-traditional security threats

PLA Daily (pg 4)

Op-ed by Liu Junhong, the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)'s director of Global Studies: Only cooperation can help mankind out of COVID-19's non-traditional, undifferentiated security threat to all regardless of borders or ideologies. The pandemic crushed the Western institutional, capital, and biomedical fairy tales the developed world flaunt; the U.S.-led traditional security-based alliance quickly flagged, and collective

security's dysfunction just exposed the post-Cold War security loopholes. The new, comprehensive, sustainable, and shared outlook on security China proposed is exactly what today's world seek and need. Countries need to get on the same page and coordinate their policies to forestall global economic recession, political havocs, and debt defaults while maintaining the global supply chain and financial system.

Provide more help for MSMEs to resume work and production

Guangming Daily [commentary](#) (pg 2)

Commentator Chen Shu opined that to stabilize employment, it is ultimately necessary to stabilize and vigorously expand the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), a "reservoir" that absorbs employment, to revitalize the economy. To this end, not only should financial policies be favorable towards MSMEs, but also large enterprises that hold important positions in their industries and industrial chains should also support MSMEs to resume production and help them tide over the difficult time while restoring or restructuring industrial chains. In China, hundreds of millions of people are employed in MSMEs. Without employment of this population, domestic demand would be an empty phrase.

Catching the coronavirus on arrival

China Daily [editorial](#)

Along with the influx of arrivals from overseas, the country has seen a sharp increase in the number of imported cases, which rose to 1,103 on Wednesday. In an effort to further reduce the risks of novel coronavirus infections entering from overseas, China on Monday introduced harsher punishments for inbound travelers who intentionally conceal their symptoms or falsify their travel records. In the latest move from the General Administration of Customs, apart from being blacklisted, inbound passengers committing such acts will face fines up to 30,000 yuan (\$4,230), and severe violations will be transferred to law enforcement authorities for investigation. Identifying any arrivals who might be infected is now a priority for domestic epidemic prevention and control efforts.

U.S. drags global virus fight, dims prospects

Global Times-Chinese [editorial](#)

The United States' poor anti-virus performance is definitely second to none among all countries. With the most powerful national strength and the best public health facilities, the United States did nothing when the virus set its footprint on U.S. soil and became the new epicenter of the pandemic. Instead of providing urgent medical supplies to its allies and countries badly hit by the virus, the United States snatched up medical supplies from other countries. All these have disappointed the international community. Washington provokes disputes about who should be held accountable for the pandemic, making it the second political battle besides the global virus fight. It attacked China first, then took aim at the World Health Organization. These crushed world unity and confidence in fighting the pandemic.

[Similar *Global Times-English* [editorial](#): U.S. drags global virus fight, dims prospects]

Take combined policy measures to let the engine of consumption run at full speed

Global Times-Chinese [commentary](#)

Xi stressed expanding domestic consumption in the Politburo meeting on April 8. Consumption is the main driver and stabilizer of China's economic growth. We must combine normalization of work and production with expansion of domestic demand and release frozen consumption potential. Authorities at all levels have released a combination of policies and precision measures to boost consumption demand. We should endeavor to restore socioeconomic order amid normalcy of the pandemic control.

It is difficult for the U.S. military to both fight virus and maintain military activities*Global Times-Chinese commentary*

Hu Bo from Peking University says the U.S. military is in a dilemma of fighting the coronavirus and maintaining its military deterrence. The poor performance of the world's most powerful military is jaw-dropping. The fundamental reason, among others, is that coping with the two tasks simultaneously is a mission impossible, as exposed by the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt. The United States has a paranoia about "China threat," as China has never been a military threat. The United States should address major threats in reality such as terrorism, COVID-19 pandemic and other future problems, instead of readying itself every day to address "China threat" and conflicts with China.

2. WHO**US should not let its differences with China hijack people's health***China Daily editorial*

Having failed to scapegoat China, the United States, whose hypocrisy knows no bounds, turned to blaming the WHO to desperately deflect criticism, taking for granted that the WHO is supposed to be the U.S. mouthpiece. The U.S. political poison just lacks the sting. The WHO has repeatedly urged countries to prepare while providing reliable advice. Only that Washington decided to do nothing while gloating at China's outbreak. Unfortunately, some countries took the U.S. bait and criticized China for misleading them into unpreparedness while the actual culprit was Washington. That Washington squandered the opportunity China won the world is not China or the WHO's fault. The country will keep undermining global cohesion—and continue to suffer at home—until it accepts the fact that COVID-19 is a natural disaster, and a common threat to all.

3. IPR protection**Ruling promises better IPR protection***China Daily editorial*

The Chinese Supreme Court ruled in favor of former Chicago Bulls player Michael Jordan's appeal against a Chinese sportswear firm for trademark infringement. The ruling is widely read as Beijing honoring its key commitment to the China-U.S. phase one trade deal, namely, better protect intellectual properties. More importantly, it set an important precedent for other cases to be closed sooner while showing how "the wind of change" is blowing in the right direction. China has been working hard to level the playing field for all businesses, domestic and foreign, including making its Trademark Law a lot harsher last year, which will not only benefit overseas companies, but boost China's economic competitiveness and attract foreign investment. Yet, just like the Supreme Court ruling on the Jordan case, the Trademark Law needs to be enforced faithfully be there third-party oversight or not.

Popular Online Commentary from Weitianxia

1. Pompeo: international organizations that spend American money should serve American interests

2. Don't take the international organizations that are also funded by other countries as the NGOs under your control.
3. What Pompeo says is "no money, no human rights".
4. There is nothing wrong for the Americans to practice their value of "self-interest above all".
5. Funding Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus' personal account, rather than the WHO, would be more effective and helpful.
6. You are talking strangely like the abject Taiwan authorities do.
7. UN: Brother America, could you please pay your long overdue of \$1,157 million to the United Nations? @U.S. Embassy in China
8. Trump again blasts WHO
9. Didn't the WHO declare the coronavirus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on January 31? Isn't that highest level of public health alert to the world? It has been calling for all countries to mobilize quickly within the short window period China created in the fight against the outbreak. Did the United States shut itself from the rest of the world without knowing what was happening, including the WHO warnings? Did you only selectively read the diary from an old lady in Wuhan (i.e. Fangfang Diary) every day?
10. Given that some people constantly blame WHO for not acting properly in response to the outbreak at the early stage, I would say that no one can make a perfect initial judgement without knowing enough about the virus with sufficient supporting data. Governments of hotspot countries across the world unexceptionally act the same way as China did in their initial response, constantly updating their reactions along with the development of the outbreak, trying to bring the best outcome out of balanced measures over lockdown vs. opening-up. Persuasively, based on the different outcomes displaying in the second stage, decisive and coordinated measures slow down the spread of the disease while inattentive response, with freedom outweighing lives, fuel the transmission of the virus at an accelerate pace.
11. Now countries are racing against one another on the research and development of effective vaccines, which is definitely the utmost solution for the global challenge.
12. The worst thing for the Americans is that they elected a madman as their President, which is consequently a disaster for the entire world.
13. That's not necessarily true. Under the Trump administration, the United States witnessed the economy at its best, the stock market at a record high, and unemployment a record low. The Americans did not elect him for no reason. We, as non-Americans, do not really get what is happening there. That said, Trump indeed did poorly in containing the outbreak.

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.

China Daily (circ. 200,000): English language sister publication of *Renmin Ribao*; targets foreign/expatriate audience in China and overseas.

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.

PLA Daily (解放军报, *Jiefangjun Bao*, circ. 400,000): Daily publication of the People's Liberation Army.

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.

Weitianxia (微天下, 16 million followers) is a prominent international news Weibo account operated by sina.com. Users post articles and comments related to international issues. This media reaction summarizes and translates the most popular posts related to politics, international relations, and social issues.

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. You must have a U.S. Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

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

Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

From: "Stilwell, David R"
Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
CC: Tobin, Elizabeth D. EOP/NSC (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Pompeo; U.S. Pandemic Response; HK and Taiwan
Date: Tue, 28 Apr 2020 13:03:03 +0000

(b)(5)

1. Xi stresses institutional strengths to respond to risks

Xi Jinping on Monday presided over the 13th meeting of the Central Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reform. Xi stressed efforts to deepen reform, improve institutions, improve the governance system, and make good use of institutional strengths to respond to risks and challenges. The fundamental reason behind China's solid progress in epidemic **prevention** and control as well as work and production resumption lies in the advantages of the CPC leadership and the socialist system, he said. The meeting deliberated and passed a plan on securing public health emergency supplies, a guideline on reforming the system for regulating medical insurance funds, a plan on reforming the ChiNext market, a plan on protecting and restoring major national ecosystems, a guideline for boosting the healthy growth of young people, and the implementation plan of major reform measures taken at the fourth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee.

From: Beijing PAS (b)(2)

Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 4:10 AM

To: Beijing Press Office (b)(2)

Subject: Beijing Media Reaction: COVID-19; Pompeo; U.S. Pandemic Response; HK and Taiwan

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.

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

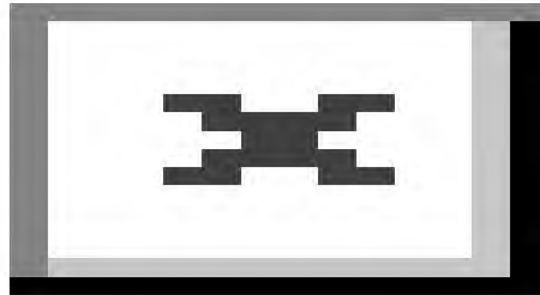
-

-

BLUF – China's Public Messaging Summary: We demonstrate outstanding crisis-handling capabilities during this pandemic, while the U.S. government frequently blames us to divert

domestic attention away from their unsatisfactory containment efforts. Pompeo should focus more on combating the virus and less on blaming others, as this will only belittle the U.S.'s international image.

News:



People's Daily: Xi says China will continue to firmly support Nepal's COVID-19 fight

Global Times-Chinese: U.S. keeps wantonly passing buck amid chaos; Subtitle: media laments American divide amid pandemic, politicians frame China for stealing vaccines
Sidebar: Sweden's capital city about to show positive result next month for herd immunity?

21st Century Business Herald: Industrial businesses on the way to improve revenue

CCTV (04/27): Xi reaffirms deepening reform, improving governance and leveraging institutional advantage against risks and challenges; China prioritizes people and life in battle against epidemic; CCTV commentary: Chinese political system the biggest advantage in overcoming epidemic, China's anti-epidemic practice inspires world; Chinese lawmakers deliberate bills in panel discussions; Central Guiding Group leaves Hubei for Beijing; China launches national healthcare campaign; State Council Task Force: consolidate anti-epidemic achievement, guard against importation of COVID-19 according to law; step up nationwide resumption of production with policy mix; students about to graduate from high schools in Beijing, and from junior high and high schools in Shanghai and Guangdong return to school; CCTV donates advertising resources to boost consumption in products from Hubei; CCTV commentary: Pompeo spreads political virus, turns himself enemy of humanity; WHO: global cumulative COVID-19 cases top 2.85 million.

Trending News Stories (04/28):

1. Xi stresses institutional strengths to respond to risks

Xi Jinping on Monday presided over the 13th meeting of the Central Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reform. Xi stressed efforts to deepen reform, improve institutions, improve the governance system, and make good use of institutional strengths to respond to risks and challenges. The fundamental reason behind China's solid progress in epidemic prevention and control as well as work and production resumption lies in the advantages of the CPC leadership and the socialist system, he said. The meeting deliberated and passed a plan on securing public health emergency supplies, a guideline on reforming the system for regulating medical insurance funds, a plan on reforming the ChiNext market, a plan on protecting and restoring major national ecosystems, a guideline for boosting the healthy growth of young people, and the implementation plan of major reform measures taken at the fourth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee.

2. China's netizen population hits 904 million: report

The number of netizens in China had reached 904 million as of March this year, up by 75.08 million from the end of 2018, according to a report on China's internet development released Tuesday. Internet penetration in China had reached 64.5 percent, up 4.9 percentage points over the end of 2018, said the report issued by the China Internet Network Information Center. The number of netizens accessing the internet through mobile phones in China had increased by 79.92 million from the end of 2018 to 897 million in March 2020, accounting for 99.3 percent of the total number, said the report.

In Focus – COVID-19:

Xinhua reported that Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said, "Many in the United States have been questioning and worrying whether the U.S. government has responded timely and effectively to the outbreak," and that he hopes the U.S. will work with the international community. The Paper reported that Geng Shuang emphasized that China is the first country that reported the outbreak, but that doesn't mean China is where the virus had originated and that some politicians are politically manipulating the origin of the virus to attack and discredit other countries. Xinhua further reported that authorities across China are urged to implement epidemic prevention and control measures for the upcoming May Day holiday such as controlling passenger flows preventing the gathering of crowds. CCTV reported that Pompeo has done nothing to prevent and control the outbreak, and instead has kept spreading the "political virus" which is sowing discord and interfering with international public health cooperation. Global Times reported that Zeng Guang, chief epidemiologist with the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention said the WHO and global medical community has hailed China's impressive fight against the virus and quick containment, setting an encouraging example for other countries and regions. China Daily quoted Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention virologist Liu Peipei who said that the increased number of people with COVID-19 antibodies, as well as the existence of asymptomatic patients, are two main obstacles in finding patient zero and who said the scientific community has reached the consensus that the possibility of the virus being man-made is very low.

Editorial Commentary

1. COVID-19/U.S.-China

Political show will only belittle U.S. international image*PLA Daily commentary* (pg 4)

Amid the global pandemic, the U.S. government and media frequently blame China to shift responsibility and divert domestic attention of the government's unsatisfactory containment effort. Many of their absurd moves are not backed by international laws, go against sciences and facts, shift responsibility by blaming others in every possible way, and disregard people's lives. Such a political show will only serve to belittle U.S. international image. The pandemic tests nations' governance model and ability. We advise certain western politicians and media to focus more on combating the virus and less on their political show.

Super-spreaders of political virus may snatch defeat from the jaws of victory*China Daily editorial*

Pompeo is using the sad statistics of the pandemic as chips for his political gamble that attacks China instead of promoting international coordination and solidarity. He is trying to transform the State Department into an arm of the Central Intelligence Agency that he previously headed. It is a dangerous tendency. It risks transforming policymaking into populist witch hunting. His performances amid the pandemic are a continuation of his confessed approach — "we lied, we cheated, we stole." The National Republican Senatorial Committee's leaked document urging Republicans to pass the buck to China shows Pompeo represents a group of China-bashing U.S. politicians who cannot find ways to release their strategic anxiety over China's rise, except by stooping to new lows in their dirty games.

The preposterous, sordid Pompeo logic*Guangming Daily* reprinting Xinhua Chinese *commentary*

The disinformation U.S. politicians fabricated to cover up their administration's problems and scapegoat others represent these politicians' dark mindset. As the U.S. foreign diplomacy chief, Pompeo should have worked to promote global cooperation for his country to shoulder its due responsibilities amid the rampant pandemic. Yet he plays dumb and splashes dirty water on China daily to cheat the public. The only explanation to this ugly, preposterous logic is his notorious motto "we lied, we cheated, we stole." Attacking others does not help Washington make up lost time or get lives back. Nor will scapegoating work to pass the public uproar on to the other side of the Pacific. Focusing on saving lives instead will be more helpful than slandering China.

Four political and psychological motives that drive smear about China*Global Times editorial*

Although China has far exceeded the United States in responding to the outbreak, we unexpectedly encountered sweeping anti-China criticisms started by Washington. There are four motives behind this: 1. The Republicans want to pass the buck to China in a bid to win the elections, so they did their best to vilify China and mobilize all possible opinions around the world to be part of it to conceal their selfish goal. 2. While China demonstrates outstanding crisis-handling and industrial manufacturing capabilities during this pandemic, U.S. elites feel a sense of crisis, intending to prevent China from becoming relatively stronger and fan more hostilities against China in the world. 3. The West is jealous of China's fundamental economic upturn after a standstill and is seeking a physiological comfort. The "Chinese origin" theory catered to this need. 4. Some forces just followed Washington to kick up a fuss. The Chinese

need to see that inviting such trouble is not largely a matter of our will, but a price China must pay for becoming powerful. This round of anti-China rhetoric is mainly comprised of voices from the U.S. and the Five Eyes. There will only be criticisms from Washington from now on.

Act challenging modern civilization must be opposed

People's Daily Zhongsheng editorial (pg 3)

The *Daily Telegraph* newspaper in New South Wales of Australia published an article that included a defaced design of China's national emblem maliciously linking COVID-19 with China. The newspaper brazenly stigmatizes China in the name of the pandemic and incites racism. Such an act is contrary to modern civilization and must not be tolerated. It politicizes the virus, disregards basic integrity, crosses a moral red line and severely hurts the feelings of the Chinese people. The international community should jointly oppose the gross provocation to modern civilization through coronavirus related racist speeches as well as racial discrimination and conflicts triggered as a result.

Chinese President Stresses 'Westward Relocation Spirit' Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

CRIONline Commentary, April 27

In the 1950s, the Chinese leadership decided to relocate Jiaotong University from Shanghai to Xi'an in order to help the growth of China's western regional economy and society. This move, under many harsh conditions, is the now known as the historically famous "westward relocation spirit." In the fight against the infectious disease, the "westward relocation spirit" quickly became one of the most important ideals for medical professionals, university graduates, and ordinary people in China, providing great support for people to confront hardships. Chinese President Xi Jinping's renewed emphasis that the "westward relocation spirit" has a significant meaning for both today's reality and for history. Xi encouraged the Chinese people to not to slacken in their efforts to prevent and contain the infectious disease and to achieve this year's development goals as scheduled and realize an all-around well-off society.

Antibiotic lifesavers at risk from abuse

China Daily editorial

One of the lessons we need to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic is that we must better prepare ourselves for the worst in face of deadly pathogens' threat. We need to address antibiotics abuse lest they lose their efficacy to save lives. Antibiotics abuse-induced drug resistance constitutes a serious threat to public health. Antibiotics leaked into the environment are equally dangerous as they can contaminate surface water and soil to threaten our health. Livestock farms are also a major contributor to antibiotic contamination in China, the reportedly largest antibiotics user in livestock farming. Yet as the world's largest antibiotics maker and exporter, we have yet to have national standards to limit the manufacturers' antibiotics discharge into the environment. Besides, there is little environmental watchdog scrutiny over the disposal and regulation of antibiotics, which are not categorized as a pollution source.

2. Hong Kong

Hong Kong will withstand external meddling

China Daily editorial

The U.S. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs published a report that described the Hong Kong riots as a "fight over democratization," making itself yet another example of the notorious U.S. hypocrisy that seeks to subvert governments and instigate regime changes worldwide through trumpeting democracy and freedom. Such a lie exactly proves that Western anti-China players are colluding with local extremists to instigate confrontation and undermine the rule of law in Hong Kong, while some ill-intentioned in the United States are the black hands behind the Hong Kong unrest. Conscientious people would never see such blatant violence as lawful moves to uphold democracy. Neither Beijing nor the Hong Kong government will be less determined in defending "one country, two systems" in front of the U.S.-endorsed violence.

3. Taiwan

Taiwan doomed to meet with refusal for resorting to "mask diplomacy"

The Paper reprinting CCTV commentary

The masks have undoubtedly played a major role in Taiwan's pandemic outbreak. The DPP is putting on one after another "masks show" from forbidding exports of masks to the mainland at the onset of the mainland's outbreak to the current "mask diplomacy." Facing growing doubts, Su Tseng-chang, the chief of Taiwan's executive body, said he would make an adjustment. Yet as long as Taiwan does not adjust its political calculation to leverage the outbreak for the purpose of Taiwan's independence, they will be doomed to meet with a refusal everywhere. The DPP's attempts to confront historical facts and international norms, even with U.S. backing, are doomed to failure. The DPP authorities must wake up to the fact that donating masks will not win them international support for "Taiwan independence". The cold shoulder their masks encountered around the world is the best proof.

Popular Online Commentary from Weitianxia

1. GOP Senator says don't let Chinese students study STEM in U.S.
2. That way, no one will help American professors with their research projects.
3. When did the United States lose confidence in itself? Never allowing Chinese students to participate in high-end technology, it now turns to bar Chinese students from studying STEM.
4. Charging high tuition fees and profiteering from Chinese students, they now make such shameless remarks. How can we call the universities a university if students are not allowed to freely choose their major?
5. The Chinese government should, in response, fund Chinese public intellectuals to study in the United States to "benefit" the United States in promoting its universal values.
6. Trump: COVID-19 claims more American lives than Vietnam war did
7. Trump smartly uses 2.2 million instead of 100,000 and 200,000 death tolls as a benchmark in order cushion disappointment by lowering expectations. Businessman Donald Trump obviously knows how to play the number-rigging game.
8. He is a shameless talk show performer.
9. He is talking to those who want to listen. You lose if you take what he says seriously.
10. Honestly, Trump should not be blamed for all the government's problematic response to the outbreak.
11. Trump says he takes no responsibility for people ingesting disinfectant

12. Crazy, the bad talks nonsense while the stupid tries it at home.
13. Trump: I'm being sarcastic. What do you want me to be responsible for? I am only responsible for the re-election.
14. The disinfectant killing the coronavirus sounds as ridiculous as the 5G base station contracting coronavirus. But this is what's happening in the developed Western world.
15. The President, in a position where he should be very cautious about what he says and does, is unaware of how influential his words are on some people and keeps talking loosely every day.

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.

China Daily (circ. 200,000): English language sister publication of *Renmin Ribao*; targets foreign/expatriate audience in China and overseas.

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.

PLA Daily (解放军报, *Jiefangjun Bao*, circ. 400,000): Daily publication of the People's Liberation Army.

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*.

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.

Weitianxia (微天下, 16 million followers) is a prominent international news Weibo account operated by sina.com. Users post articles and comments related to international issues. This media reaction summarizes and translates the most popular posts related to politics, international relations, and social issues.

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)(2) You must have a U.S. Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

Sender: "Stilwell, David R"

Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Recipient:

Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)

Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)

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

Bray, Leah (b)(6)

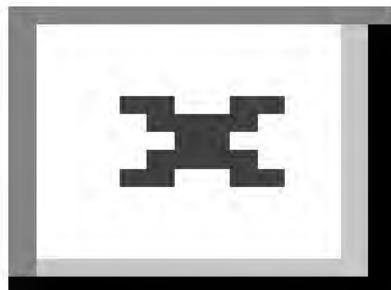
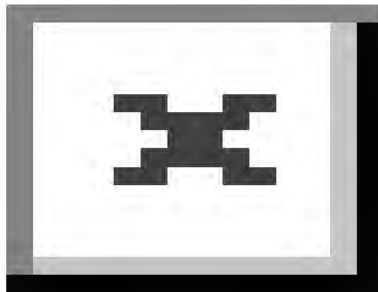
From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)

To: Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
Keshap, Atul (b)(6)

Subject: FW: August 12 - CCP Twitter and Media Coverage of the United States

Date: Wed, 12 Aug 2020 14:26:29 +0000

Can someone Tweet one of these photos on top of Hua Chunying's "red scare" Tweets in the attached? She's ranting about political madness. . (b)(5)



From: (b)(6) (Chengdu) (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 9:51 AM
To: (b)(6) (b)(6) Ortagus, Morgan D (b)(6) Brechbuhl, Thomas U (h)(6)
 (h)(6) EAP-FO-Principals-DL (b)(2) Tobin, Elizabeth
 (b)(6)
 (b)(6) EAP-PD-Office-DL (b)(2)
 (b)(2) EAP-CM-Office-DL (b)(2) (b)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
 (Beijing) (b)(6)
 (b)(6)
 (h)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
 (h)(6)
 (b)(6)
 (b)(6) (LPA/AA) (b)(6)
 (b)(6) Regional China Officers DL (b)(6)
 (b)(6)
 (b)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6) (Canberra)
 (b)(6) Elnigar, iltebir (b)(6)
 (b)(6)
 (Georgetown) (h)(6) (Beijing) (h)(6)
 (h)(6)
 (b)(6)

Subject: August 12 - CCP Twitter and Media Coverage of the United States

BLUF - MFA on Twitter: The Spokesperson account tweeted “Details about the Wuhan Institute of Virology are open and transparent. But much remains unclear about US’ #FortDetrick and over 200 bio labs in the world.” Hua Chunying tweeted “Azar said in #Taiwan that if the virus had emerged in the #US, it might have been snuffed out easily. Really?” She also criticized U.S. actions on TikTok, the Clean Network, and drew parallels to U.S. treatment of the Chinese community during the Cold War. The Chinese Embassy in Washington defended postponing Hong Kong’s elections, commenting “Hong Kong’s decision to postpone the election is a justified and necessary step to ensure people’s safety and health and a safe, fair and just election.” The embassy also tweeted about a pro-China interview with NBA champion David West, China’s positive impact on U.S. jobs and economy, and the recent Aspen Forum. Hu Xijin tweeted “US surveillance aircraft appearing like commercial airline constantly fly near China. They even follow civil aviation flights to confuse Chinese radars. This poses a threat to safety of civil aircraft over the South China Sea. It’s shameful for the US military to do so.” He also criticized recent comments by President Trump on former VP Biden.

please see the attached PDF for additional highlights on this topic

U.S. Embassy Beijing Media Reaction – A Summary of Select PRC Media Commentary

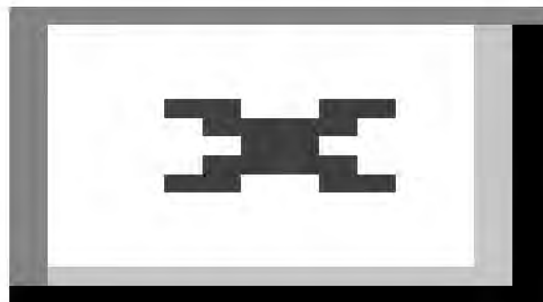
Produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Press Office

Unofficial news excerpts for reference only. Not for distribution outside the USG.

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

BLUF – China’s Public Messaging Summary: Chinese leadership at home and abroad reflects its commitment to consistency, reliability, and the Common Good; U.S. policies under Trump are hypocritical and destabilizing.

News:



People's Daily: Xi signs order to honor four people for outstanding contributions in COVID-19 fight

Global Times-Chinese: NPC decides to extend Hong Kong legislative council's term. *Subtitle:* ensure Hong Kong's normal operation, embodies care of central

21st Century Business Herald: Continue to advance supply-side structural reform, develop innovation-driven real economy

government. *Sidebar:*
U.S. media: Virus
defeats most powerful
country

CCTV (08/16): Xi calls to stop wasting food, promote thrift; Xi signs order awarding 4 persons for outstanding contribution in COVID-19 fight; China's top legislature concludes standing committee session; NPC adopts decision to postpone Hong Kong legislative election; NPC decision provides legal basis for the sixth legislative council to continue performing duties; *People's Daily* on NPC decision: constitutional, legal and reasonable; Hong Kong communities support NPC decision; *CCTV* commentary: strive to win battle against poverty; director of General Administration of Customs: stabilize foreign trade amid ongoing epidemic containment; *CCTV* commentary: pride on thrift, shame on waste; China reports 44 new COVID-19 cases on August 10; people from multiple countries: postponing legislative election in Hong Kong a highly responsible decision; WHO: global COVID-19 cases top 19.71 million.

Trending News Stories (08/12):

1. Xi Signs Order Awarding 4 People for Outstanding Contributions to COVID-19 Fight

Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a presidential order awarding four persons the national medal and honorary titles for their outstanding contributions to fighting the COVID-19 epidemic. The Medal of the Republic was conferred on renowned respiratory disease expert Zhong Nanshan. The national honorary title, "the People's Hero," was conferred on Zhang Boli, a traditional Chinese medicine expert who presided over the research of the COVID-19 treatment scheme combining traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine; Zhang Dingyu, head of Wuhan's designated coronavirus-treating Jinyintan Hospital; and Chen Wei, a military medical scientist who made major achievements in COVID-19-related basic research and development of vaccine and protective medicine.

2. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Voted to Pass the Decision on the Sixth Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to Continue to Perform its Duties

China's top legislature resolved the "vacancy" concern of the HKSAR Legislative Council by adopting a decision for the current Legislative Council to continue performing its duties. After September 30, the sixth Legislative Council will continue performing duties for no less than a year until the seventh Legislative Council starts its four-year term. The decision came as Hong Kong works to

contain a fresh COVID-19 outbreak. Hong Kong's health authorities reported 33 new COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in the city to 4,181. HKSAR Chief Executive Carrie Lam said the NPC's decision demonstrates once again the care and support of the central government for the HKSAR.

In Focus – COVID 19:

Xinhua reports 25 new cases of COVID-19, including 16 imported cases, 9 local cases (all in Xinjiang); no new fatalities. *The Paper* reports half the cases in Urumqi have been asymptomatic and only one in five had fevers, atypical findings compared to other outbreaks in the country. *Xinhua* reports the number of child infections in the United States increased from more than 200,000 in July to more than 380,000 in August, an increase of 90 percent in four weeks. A *Xinhua* commentary argues the global pandemic fight should not be hijacked by myopic politicians: "The international community should also join hands to improve the global governance system on the other side of the pandemic. A global joint prevention and control mechanism must be devised not only for public health crises but also for other shared challenges the humanity will have to confront in the future."

Editorial Commentary:

1. U.S.-China

The "Human Rights Card" Highlights the American Double Standard

People's Daily Zhongsheng editorial (August 12, p. 3)

The Chinese people have long recognized Pompeo and the likes' hypocrisy.

China's unswerving determination to walk its own path and concentrate on its own things well is the most powerful response to those who are obstructing China's development and rise. The more than 5 million confirmed COVID-19 cases in the United States, the higher mortality of African Americans compared with white people, the death of Floyd, the tens of millions of displaced population due to U.S. foreign intervention policy, and the U.S. quitting from the WHO as the pandemic went rampant all illustrate some U.S. politician's hypocrisy and double standard.

Using human rights as a political tool against other countries by the United States has completely deviated from the purpose of human rights. In contrast, under the CPC's leadership in China, the happiness of the people is the greatest human rights.

More than 800 million people have been lifted out of poverty. During the pandemic, China put people and their lives above all else. China's crackdown on terrorists and separatists in Xinjiang promotes ethnic solidarity and safeguard social stability. China's measures to strike a small number of illegal and criminal acts violating national security in Hong Kong also guarantees the majority of Hong Kong citizens' security, rights and freedom. Any attempt by U.S. politicians to smear China's human rights situation with lies is doomed to be futile.

Facing U.S. Provocation, China's Diplomacy Shows "Resilient Fight"

Global Times-Chinese op-ed (August 12)

According to Zhu Feng from Nanjing University, fighting the United States will be the most complicated, most challenging, and most critical long-term mission in China's diplomacy effort to maintain an international environment of peace and development. China needs to coordinate bilateral and multilateral relations and regional and global diplomacy. The key to win the fight against the United States is to create conditions for China to maintain a big picture in which China and the world can promote mutual respect, mutual benefits, openness, and cooperation. The China-U.S. ties should not be abducted by the insane U.S. right wing. Washington's "new Cold War" receives few echoes in the world. Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi and Wang Yi's remarks and articles are what the international community expects. China resolutely fights back on U.S. actions and does not dance with Trump's anti-China attempt, which shows China's commitment to international aspirations for peace and prosperity while defending China's historic rise.

2. Hong Kong

Sanctioning U.S. Individuals a Just Move to Safeguard China's Interests

Xinhua-English commentary (August 11)

The majority of Hong Kong residents are fed up with the U.S. bullying and shameless acts. The U.S. lawmakers and heads of U.S. non-governmental organizations targeted by China's sanctions have egregious records on Hong Kong affairs. They have recklessly distorted and slandered the "One Country, Two

Systems" principle and flagrantly interfered in Hong Kong affairs. The sanctions against them show that China will never back down on major issues related to China's national sovereignty, security, and development interests. The United States must abandon its fantasy of remodeling China to U.S. needs, stop its meddling in China's internal affairs, and stop its irrational cracking down on China's legitimate rights and interests.

This Important Decision is Constitutional, Lawful and Reasonable

People's Daily editorial (August 12, p. 1)

The 13th NPC Standing Committee decided to extend HKSAR's Legislative Council to continue performing duties for no less than a year until the term of the seventh LegCo starts. This important decision takes full account of the pandemic situation in Hong Kong and the actual operation of the Legislative Council, fully demonstrating the central committee's principle of ruling Hong Kong in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law. The decision is constitutional, lawful, and reasonable, and is legally binding in a way that cannot be challenged. The country's top legislature has the right and obligation to address the absence of the Hong Kong legislature. Having the NPC Standing Committee make the decision is the most appropriate and practical way in the current situation. The decision ensures the legislature's normal operation, the SAR government's effective governance and the normal functioning of the society so as to focus the main efforts on the prevention and control of the pandemic, which is of utmost importance at present.

Jimmy Lai, A Genuine Traitor Built not in One Day

Global Times-Chinese editorial (August 12)

U.S. top politicians responded fiercely to the Hong Kong police's arrest of Jimmy Lai Chee-ying, which reflects that his arrest has touched on U.S. interests in Hong Kong and destroyed the channel through which Washington interferes in Hong Kong affairs. Hong Kong affairs have nothing to do with freedom of the press. It is about whether this highly autonomous city abides by the "one country" framework as in Mainland, or accepts Washington's manipulation and serves U.S. strategies. Lee and his ilk want to be U.S. pawns in Hong Kong and dedicated to turning Hong Kong into a pivot. They are special allies of the US. As China-U.S. strategic competition and U.S. hysterical suppression of China intensifies, Lai has

slipped into the shameful position of an accomplice of the United States and become a genuine traitor.

[Similar *Global Times-English* editorial: Jimmy Lai picks wrong side at critical moment]

3. U.S. Military

The U.S. Military Realignment is Highly Destabilizing the Region and the World

PLA Daily op-ed (August 12, p. 4)

Li Guanmei from the PLA National University of Defense Technology argues the United States is accelerating its efforts to reduce deployment of troops in Europe by withdrawing 700 soldiers from Norway, which is related to its “America First” principle. U.S. withdrawal from Norway has shown an increasingly prominent unilateral inclination, revealing a larger rift with its NATO allies. In stark contrast, the U.S. is increasing its military presence in the Asia-Pacific to cause trouble in the South China Sea and disturb regional situations. U.S. various measures to deal with so-called power competition will greatly undermine regional and global stability.

Popular Online Commentary from Weitianxia:

1. #52 American tech giants back legal challenge to Trump's foreign worker restrictions: Trump's proclamation could do irreparable damage. #
2. The United States' technological advantage will soon be gone without the contribution of global talent.
3. This is merely a show to protect America's image and prove that fairness remains to minimize the fallout of the TikTok incident so that foreign investors do not lose confidence in the United States.
4. #Trump: You will have to learn to speak Chinese if I lose the election. #
5. Trump: If I win the election, I am gonna learn to speak Chinese together with my granddaughter.
6. He must have been fooled and crippled by his assistants and advisors.
7. We started learning English long ago.
8. Isn't this disconcerting if all of this could be used as a selling point for the election campaign?
9. #Trump will postpone G7 summit and invite Putin to attend it later. #

10. He needs Russia's support when the elections are around the corner.
11. He is trying to unite Russia against China. If Russia does go, it is a dangerous signal that China will be under attack from both sides.

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.

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.

Global Times-English (circ. 150,000): Daily English-language publication of the Global Times media company. Media outlet targets foreigners inside and outside of China. Its editorial content is similar, but not identical, to Global Times-Chinese.

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.

PLA Daily (解放军报, *Jiefangjun Bao*, circ. 400,000): Daily publication of the People's Liberation Army.

Xinhua (新华社): Premier state-run news agency that provides content to China's state-run media as well as its own platforms which include more than 20 newspapers and a dozen magazines. Xinhua's official website, www.xinhuanet.com, reports receiving 75 daily viewers, with over 200 million page views. Xinhua also runs an English-language website.

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.

Weitianxia (微天下, 16 million followers) is a prominent international news Weibo account operated by sina.com. Users post articles and comments related to international issues. This media reaction summarizes and translates the most popular posts related to politics, international relations, and social issues.

Note: Beijing Media Reaction is produced by the U.S. Embassy Beijing Public Affairs Section. To request addition or removal of a recipient please email beijingpressoffice@state.gov. You must have a U.S. Government email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

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

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To: McCarthy, Ellen E. (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing continues to cast doubt on COVID-19 origins as it signals the disease is under control: M3 Crisis Alerts
Date: Sun, 22 Mar 2020 00:05:41 +0000

Also hearing that "There is an effort underway between OSTP and the national labs to look into the origins of the virus." Not sure who OSTP is, but will let you know if I hear anything more.

From: Stilwell, David R
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2020 7:22 PM
To: Biegun, Stephen E. (b)(6); McCarthy, Ellen E. (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Beijing continues to cast doubt on COVID-19 origins as it signals the disease is under control: M3 Crisis Alerts

D

Regarding this line below: **Chinese media continue to tacitly amplify disinformation about US origins,**
Ellen and I discussed this last week. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Meantime, we'll figure out how to offer up this People's Daily Facebook post (below, there's a tweet too) every time they try to stiff-arm credit for making the world sick.

Best

Dave



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.

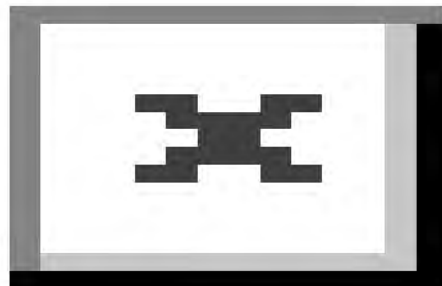
It will serve as the country's research and development center on prevention and control of infectious diseases, as a pathogen collection center and as the United Nations' reference laboratory for infectious diseases, the institute said.

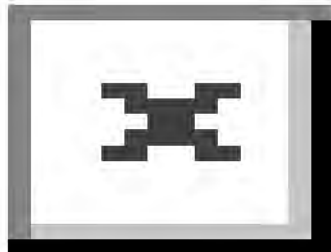
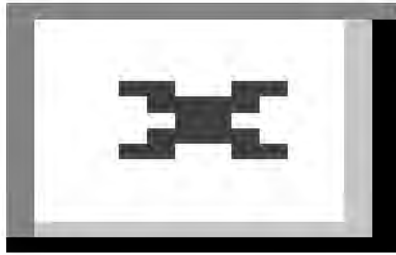
Previous media reports said the Wuhan P4 lab will be open to scientists from home and abroad. Scientists can conduct research on anti-virus drugs and vaccines in the lab.

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)





2.8K2.8K

169 Comments1.1K Shares

From: Stilwell, David R

Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2020 7:11 PM

To: (b)(6) USINDOPACOM JO (b)(6) Keshap, Atul
(b)(6) (b)(6) (b)(6) Kanapathy, Ivan
(b)(6) Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) CIV INDOPACOM (USA) (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L
(b)(6) ▶

Subject: RE: Beijing continues to cast doubt on COVID-19 origins as it signals the disease is under control: M3 Crisis Alerts

(b)(5) They keep up the narrative that "Corona may have bloomed in Wuhan but it didn't come from there." (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Richard,
How do we do that?
Dave

From: (b)(6) USINDOPACOM JO (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 1:50 PM
To: Stilwell, David R (b)(6); Keshap, Atul (b)(6) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(6) Kanapathy, Ivan (b)(6)
Tobin, Elizabeth (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) CIV INDOPACOM (USA) (b)(6)
Subject: Beijing continues to cast doubt on COVID-19 origins as it signals the disease is under control:
M3 Crisis Alerts

FYSA ONLY // **Please ask China SFG before forwarding/sharing** //
Mahalo for your kokua!

Coronavirus crisis alert:

Beijing continues to cast doubt on COVID-19 origins as it signals the disease is under control

Key take-aways - Read the PDF below for more details

1. **Beijing is signalling that China's epidemic is under control.** (See *Government Narrative #1*)
2. **The CCP is trying to quell continued outrage surrounding whistleblower Li Wenliang's death by punishing the police who silenced him.** Wuhan police announced that the local police officers who formally castigated Li Wenliang for whistleblowing would be punished and that Li Wenliang's admonishment would be rescinded. (See *Government Narrative #2*)
3. **Chinese media continue to tacitly amplify disinformation about US origins.** The CCP continues to leverage prominent state media outlets and top Chinese epidemiologists to tacitly amplify conspiracy theories that the US military may have brought the disease to Wuhan during the World Military Games in October. (See *Government*

Narratives #5 & 6)

4. **Netizens believe local governments are mismanaging quarantines.** M3 detected light-to-moderate censorship for discussion of instances where local officials reportedly struggled to handle Chinese students who had returned from studying in overseas locations affected by the disease, and at least one instance in which officials refused to allow individuals to return home despite their 35-day period of isolation in a tent. *(See censorship events #2–4)*
-

As always, thank you for reading. 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 message is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and contains proprietary information governed by a Licensing Agreement. You may not forward, copy, reprint, or otherwise distribute the reports, and you may not provide access to reports to any party without the prior written consent of the China SFG office and the provider of this content.

Use and distribution guidelines:

- *Written approval for use required. If you do not have written approval from the China SFG Office to receive these reports, please contact the China SFG office and destroy all copies of the original message.*
- *Distribution E restriction: Any distribution approved by the China SFG Office and the provider of this content is restricted to the Distribution E category (as defined by the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC))*
- *Distribution markings: Analysis citing this information should be marked*

"For Department of Defense Use Only."

** 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.io, McLean, VA

[Unsubscribe](#)

--
(b)(6)

Subject Matter Expert
Thresher Ventures, LLC

(b)(6)

This email message is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message. If you are the intended recipient, please be advised that the content of this message is subject to access, review and disclosure by the sender's Email System Administrator.

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

Recipient: McCarthy, Ellen E. (b)(6)

From:	"SMART Archive" <>
To:	SMART Core <>
Subject:	(b)(1)
Date:	Tue, 04 Aug 2020 05:51:43 GMT

~~SECRET~~
~~Sensitive~~



MRN:	<u>20 TAIPEI 349</u>
Date/DTG:	Aug 04, 2020 / 040551Z AUG 20
From:	AIT TAIPEI
Action:	WASHDC, SECSTATE <i>ROUTINE</i>
E.O.:	13526
TAGS:	PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV, MOPS, MCAP, TBIO
Captions:	SENSITIVE
Reference:	A) <u>20 GUANGZHOU 27</u> B) <u>20 BEIJING 77</u> C) <u>20 TAIPEI 299</u> D) <u>17 TAIPEI 495</u>
Pass Line:	AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
Subject:	(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

11. ~~(SBU)~~ AIT found seven articles on the official website of the Wuhan branch of CAS referencing the MCF strategy. A September 2016 report documented how CAS set up a technology transfer center and base for innovation and entrepreneurship in Changsha, which “placed its focus on... smart manufacturing, biopharmaceuticals, next-generation information technology, and military-civil fusion.” The Hubei Provincial CCP Committee has an office dedicated to promoting the MCF strategy, and its official website contained 33 distinct pages with references to CAS, according to an advanced Google search. One example was a document issued on April 26, 2020 that answered questions about how to implement a directive called “Provisional Measures for Managing Weaponry R&D and Production Case Records.” This document identified CAS as one of several government agencies and state-run institutions authorized to serve as the “higher level supervisory unit” for local level institutions and enterprises that have been assigned work orders for R&D and/or production of PLA weapons. An AIT search found 2,030 separate references to the MCF strategy on the national website for CAS.

Biotech’s Prominence under the MCF Strategy

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Signature: CHRISTENSEN

Classified By: Name: Christensen, W. Brent, Title: Director
Office: EXEC
Agency: AIT

Reason: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

Declassify On: 2045/08/04

Drafted By: TAIPEI: (b)(6)

Cleared By: POL: (b)(6)
POL: (b)(6)

ECON: (b)(6)

POL: (b)(6)

EXEC: (b)(6)

Approved By: EXEC: Christensen, W. Brent

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:

Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

~~SECRET~~
~~Sensitive~~

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

From:	"SMART Archive" <>
To:	SMART Core <>
Subject:	(b)(1)
Date:	Tue, 04 Aug 2020 07:00:29 GMT

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

MRN: 20 FTR 1109
Date/DTG: Aug 04, 2020 / 040700Z AUG 20
From: Reid, Toy I
To: SMART Archive
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, TBIO, KNCV, MCAP
Captions: NOFORN, SENSITIVE
Reference: A) 20 TAIPEI 317
B) 20 TAIPEI 319
C) 20 TAIPEI 349
D) 20 BEIJING 33

Subject: (b)(1)

1. (S) Summary:

(b)(1)

End

Summary.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

3. ~~(SBU)~~ In an attempt to substantiate these experts' claims, AIT reviewed a number of documents on the official website of the Wuhan Municipal People's Government that affirmed the importance of the biotech industry and its connection to the PLA. Wuhan authorities set a formal goal for the city to become a model of MCF in 2014. An outline of the city's 10th five-year plan, which was published on June 18, 2014, called for "going further to draw the military and government, and military and civilians, into closer relations," with the goal of becoming a "model city for the Two Supports" (a CCP slogan that was a forerunner to MCF and likewise encouraged tighter integration between PLA and civilian institutions). In November 2019, Wuhan issued a directive to its subordinate districts entitled "Opinion on Promoting High-Quality Development of Key Industries," which contained a detailed section on the biotech industry. The directive described Wuhan's special status within China's biotech industry: "In support of Wuhan's designation as a base for the national biological industry, [we aim] to achieve strategic breakthroughs in a series of biotechnologies for which we can claim intellectual property rights, and expand and strengthen the group of leading enterprises and focus products. By 2022, the total revenue for the main lines of business of the city's biological industries should reach RMB 180 billion or more (US\$25.7 billion)." The Hubei Provincial CCP Committee has an office dedicated to promoting the MCF strategy, and in December 2018, that office formally declared the provincial capital of Wuhan the "Model Base for Military-Civil Fusion Industries in Hubei Province."

(b)(1)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Classified By: Name: Christensen, W. Brent, Title: Director
Office: EXEC
Agency: AIT

Reason: 1.4 (a), (b), (d), (h)

Declassify On: 2045/08/04

Drafted By: TAIPEI: (b)(6)

Released By: TAIPEI:

Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

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

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

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To:	Hooker, Allison (b)(6)
CC:	(b)(6) Feith, David (b)(6)
Subject:	RE: Taiwan Analysts Assess the Scale and Scope of the COVID-19 Outbreak in China
Date:	Sun, 19 Jul 2020 14:04:06 -0400

How do we make sure HHS has seen this?

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Friday, July 17, 2020 1:47 PM
To: Stilwell, David R; (b)(6)
Subject: (b)(1)

Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) PACOM JIOC J22 China Section, Geo-Strategic Branch,
China/Taiwan Analyst
Derived From: Multiple Sources
Declassify On: 25X1, E0 12951
=====

Good morning!

I wanted to pass along the first paper in AIT Political Officer (b)(6) series on COVID-19... he's been researching the issue for quite some time now, and this is an excellent report.

Warmest regards,

(b)(6)

~~SECRET~~
~~Sensitive~~

Action Office:

POL, SCO

MRN:

20 TAIPEI 317

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20317%22>>

Date/DTG:

Jul 17, 2020 / 170932Z JUL 20

From:

AIT TAIPEI

Action:

WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE

E.O. :

13526

TAGS:

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV, CDC

Captions:

~~SENSITIVE~~

Reference:

A) 20 TAIPEI 183

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20183%22>>

B) 20 TAIPEI 133

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20133%22>>

Pass Line:

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

Subject:

Taiwan Analysts Assess the Scale and Scope of the COVID-19 Outbreak in China

1. ~~(S)~~ Summary: (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

End Summary.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box.

(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box.

(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box.

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(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:

2045/07/08

Drafted By:

TAIPEI (b)(6)

Cleared By:

POL (b)(6)

POL: (b)(6)

EXEC (b)(6)

Approved By:

EXEC:Christensen, W. Brent

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

Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

POL, SCO_ACTION

~~SECRET~~

~~Sensitive~~

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Official

~~SECRET~~

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

Declassify On: 7/19/2030

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
Recipient:	Hooker, Allison (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
To:	(b)(6)
Subject:	RE: BEIJING ECON NIGHT NOTE - April 12 2018: IMF on OBOR, Semiconductors, Foreign Banks, H7N9, COP24, Coal Mine Explosion, Market Access
Date:	Mon, 16 Apr 2018 17:20:58 -0400

+ (b)(6) who covers this issue at Post

In our meetings at NDRC they only briefly discussed their move to MEE which will be happening shortly apparently.

(b)(6)

~~Official - Sensitive~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classified By: (b)(6) - Foreign Affairs Officer, Office:OES/STC, Agency:U.S.
Department of State
Declassify On: 4/16/2043
Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2018 1:58 PM
To: (b)(6) (Beijing)
Subject: FW: BEIJING ECON NIGHT NOTE - April 12 2018: IMF on OBOR, Semiconductors, Foreign Banks, H7N9, COP24, Coal Mine Explosion, Market Access

Anyone ask (b)(5)

(b)(5) ? (b)(6) -looking forward to meeting up with these folks when they get back.

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Official - Sensitive

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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)

From: (b)(6) (Beijing)

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2018 5:19 AM

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

(b)(6) H Yon(NSC); (b)(6)

(b)(6) Ku, Ruth C; 'MPottingel (b)(6)

(b)(6) (Chengdu); (b)(6)

(b)(6)

(Seoul); (b)(6) (Beijing); (b)(6)

(Chengdu);

(b)(6) (Wuhan); (b)(6)

Beijing DAO; Beijing

Economic Section; Beijing ESTH; Beijing Executive Office; Beijing PAS; Beijing POL section (b)(6)

(b)(6) Chengdu PolEcon DL; (b)(6) D EAP Duty Officer; (b)(6)

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

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

Guangzhou-EP;

(b)(6) INR China Team; (b)(6)

(Beijing); Marchant, Christian M;

(b)(6) (Chengdu); (b)(6)

(b)(6) P EAP Duty (b)(6)

(Kabul); Shanghai Pol-

Econ DL; SHENYANG POLECON DL; (b)(6) (Chengdu) (b)(6)

(b)(6) (Beijing);

(b)(6) (Seoul); (b)(6)

Subject: BEIJING ECON NIGHT NOTE - April 12 2018: IMF on OBOR, Semiconductors, Foreign Banks, H7N9, COP24, Coal Mine Explosion, Market Access

EMBASSY BEIJING ECONOMIC NIGHT NOTE FOR APRIL 12, 2018

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

(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))

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

CABLE SUMMARY

Non Responsive

LOOK-AHEAD DATES

Non Responsive

~~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)
	(b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6)
	(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
	(b)(6)

From:	"SMART Archive" <>
To:	SMART Core <>
Subject:	MANDARIN MERCANTILISTS: June 9-15: Automotive, Aviation/Taiwan, Energy, Financial Services, Health, Industrial Sector, Science and Technology, ZTE/Qualcomm
Date:	Fri, 15 Jun 2018 11:37:09 GMT

~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~
~~Sensitive~~



MRN: 18 BEIJING 1049
Date/DTG: Jun 15, 2018 / 151136Z JUN 18
From: AMEMBASSY BEIJING
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: EAIR, ECON, EFIN, EINV, EIND, EINT, ENRG, ETRD, PGOV, PREL, TSPL, KCYB, CN
Captions: NOFORN, SENSITIVE
Pass Line: AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
AMEMBASSY BEIJING PASS TO AMCONSUL WUHAN
Subject: MANDARIN MERCANTILISTS: June 9-15: Automotive, Aviation/Taiwan, Energy, Financial Services, Health, Industrial Sector, Science and Technology, ZTE/Qualcomm

1. (U) This edition covers highlights of what Mission China's economic officers heard and observed from June 9 to 15.

Automotive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Aviation/Taiwan

Non Responsive

Energy

Non Responsive

Financial Services

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Health

10. ~~(SBU)~~ **Chinese Team Looks to Use New Ebola Vaccine in the D.R.C:** The Chinese government has shipped a newly approved Ebola vaccine to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where a Chinese government team will seek to use the largely untested drug, according to Chinese media reports and Embassy 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.

Industrial Sector

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Science and Technology

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

ZTE/Qualcomm

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Signature: BRANSTAD

Classified By: Name (b)(6) Title: Acting Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs
Office: U.S. Embassy Beijing
Agency: Department of State

Derived From: DSCG 11-01

Declassify On: 2043/06/15

Drafted By: AmEmbassy Beijing: (b)(6)

Cleared By: AmEmbassy Beijing:
AmEmbassy Beijing:
AmEmbassy Beijing:
AmEmbassy Beijing:

Approved By: AmEmbassy Beijing:

Released By: BEIJING: (b)(6)

Info: NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; SECDEF WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; US TRADE REP WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; DEPT OF LABOR WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI ROUTINE; DNI WASHINGTON DC ROUTINE; CIA

WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; DIA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; DIRNSA FT
GEORGE G MEADE MD *ROUTINE*; NGA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*

Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

~~**CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN**~~

~~Sensitive~~

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

From:	"SMART Archive" <>
To:	SMART Core <>
Subject:	MANDARIN MERCANTILISTS Feb 21-23: Hebei Economic Growth, China in Latin America, Quantum Semiconductor, Flu Vaccine Censorship, Anbang Takeover, Likeminded VPN Concerns, DPRK, Credit Scoring License
Date:	Mon, 26 Feb 2018 09:35:53 GMT

~~SECRET~~

~~Sensitive~~



MRN: 18 BEIJING 361
Date/DTG: Feb 26, 2018 / 260935Z FEB 18
From: AMEMBASSY BEIJING
Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*
E.O.: 13526
TAGS: ECON, EIND, EINV, EFIN, ELAB, ETRD, EAGR, PGOV, PREL, SENV, KCYB, EUN, 3A, KR, JP, CN
Captions: SENSITIVE
Reference: A) 18 BEIJING 275
B) 18 BEIJING 317
Pass Line: AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
AMEMBASSY BEIJING PASS TO AMCONSUL WUHAN
Subject: MANDARIN MERCANTILISTS Feb 21-23: Hebei Economic Growth, China in Latin America, Quantum Semiconductor, Flu Vaccine Censorship, Anbang Takeover, Likeminded VPN Concerns, DPRK, Credit Scoring License

1. (U) This edition covers highlights of what Mission China's economic officers heard and observed from February 21-23.

Hebei Economic Growth

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

China in Latin America

Non Responsive

Quantum Semiconductor

Non Responsive

Flu Vaccine Censorship

6. ~~(SBU)~~ News Reports of Development of New Flu Vaccine Censored: English-language media reported that a research group from Wuhan Institute of Virology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, developed a new type of flu vaccine using nanotechnology. The reported nano-vaccine is delivered intranasally and can target broad-spectrum flu viruses and induce robust immune responses in mice. But despite the urgent global need for a broad-spectrum or universal flu vaccine, information on the new Chinese vaccine candidate has so far proven impossible to find. Chinese-language media initially showed links to related articles, but blocked full access to them. Chinese media has now blocked all mention of this announcement. The reason for the censorship is unclear, as the Chinese government usually widely publicizes announcements of scientific breakthroughs of international significance, and has been generally open to discussions on flu.

Anbang Takeover

Non Responsive

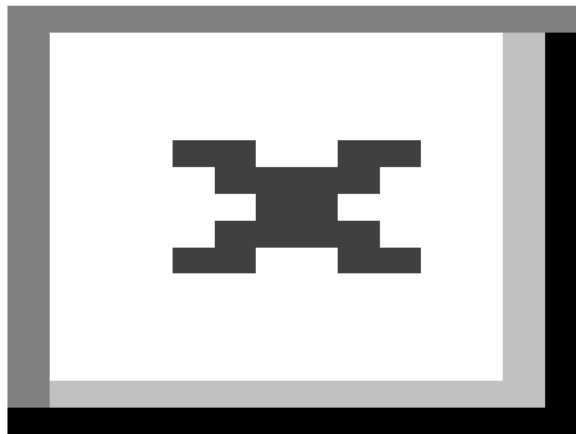
Likeminded VPN Concerns

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

DPRK

Non Responsive



Non Responsive

Non Responsive

Credit Scoring License

Non Responsive

Signature: BRANSTAD

Classified By: Name: (b)(6) Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs

Derived From: DSCG 11-01

Declassify On: 2043/02/26

Drafted By: BEIJING (b)(6)

Cleared By: AmEmbassy Beijing: (b)(6) (Beijing)

AmEmbassy Beijing: (b)(6)

AmEmbassy Beijing: (b)(6)

ECON: (b)(6)

Approved By: (b)(6)

Released By: BEIJING (b)(6)

Info: DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI *ROUTINE*; DIRNSA FT GEORGE G MEADE MD *ROUTINE*; DIA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; CIA WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; SECDEF WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC *ROUTINE*; CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE *ROUTINE*; ZEN/AUCKLAND, AMCONSUL; ZEN/WUHAN, AMCONSUL

Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

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

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

From: "Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
(b)(6) (Beijing) (b)(6)
CC: Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
Subject: FW: (b)(1)
(b)(1)
Date: Tue, 14 Jul 2020 16:43:38 -0400

Beijing' ers

(b)(5)

Thanks
Dave

From: SMART Core

Sent: Monday, July 06, 2020 10:44 AM

To: Reid, Toy I

Subject: (b)(1)

(b)(1)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Action Office:

POL, SCO

MRN:

20 TAIPEI 299

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20299%22>>

Date/DTG:

Jul 06, 2020 / 060241Z JUL 20

From:

AIT TAIPEI

Action:

WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE

E.O. :

13526

TAGS:

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV

Captions:

~~NOFORN~~

Reference:

A) 17 TAIPEI 495

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2217%20TAIPEI%20495%22>>

B) 20 TAIPEI 183

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20183%22>>

C) 17 TAIPEI 511

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2217%20TAIPEI%20511%22>>

D) 20 TAIPEI 195

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20195%22>>

E) 19 TAIPEI 41

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2219%20TAIPEI%2041%22>>

Pass Line:

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

Subject:

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box. The text "(b)(1)" is visible in the top-left corner of this redacted area.

(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box. The text "(b)(1)" is visible in the top-left corner of this redacted area.

(b)(1)

A large rectangular area of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box. The text "(b)(1)" is visible in the top-left corner of this redacted area.

(b)(1)

A small rectangular area at the bottom of the page is redacted, indicated by a solid black box. The text "(b)(1)" is visible in the top-left corner of this redacted area.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(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:

2045/07/06

W/O Attachment(s):

This document is ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ when separated from ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~ attachment(s).

Drafted By:

TAIPEI: (b)(6)

Cleared By:

POL (b)(6)

POL (b)(6)

EXEC: (b)(6)

Approved By:

EXEC: Christensen, (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

Attachments:

(b)(1)

Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

POL, SCO_ACTION

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Official
~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: Stilwell - EAP, Office:A/S, Agency:U. S. Department of State
Declassify On: 7/14/2030
Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	"Stilwell, David R"	(b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(6)	(Beijing) (b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(Beijing) (b)(6)
	(b)(6)	(b)(6)
	Fritz, Jonathan D	(b)(6)

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To:	(b)(6) Keshap, Atul (b)(6)
Subject:	FW: (b)(1) (b)(1)
Date:	Mon, 20 Jul 2020 17:01:12 -0400

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2020 4:00:42 PM (UTC-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada)
To: Stilwell, David R; (b)(6) Hooker, Allison; (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: (b)(1)
(b)(1)

Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) PACOM JIOC J22 China Section, Geo-Strategic Branch,
China/Taiwan Analyst
Derived From: Multiple Sources
Declassify On: 25X1, EO 12951
=====

Good morning from Honolulu!

I wanted to pass along the second cable in (b)(6) *excellent* series on the origins of COVID-19.

Warmest regards,

(b)(6)

~~Official Sensitive~~

This message is ~~SECRET~~ when separated from UNCLASSIFIED attachment(s)

Classified By: (b)(6) Political Officer, Office:AIT, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 7/20/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

From: SMART Core

Sent: Monday, July 20, 2020 5:19 PM

To: (b)(1)

Subject: (b)(1)

(b)(1)

~~SECRET~~

~~Sensitive~~

Action Office:

POL, SCO

MRN:

20 TAIPEI 319

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20319%22>>

Date/DTG:

Jul 20, 2020 / 200917Z JUL 20

From:

AIT TAIPEI

Action:

WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE

E.O.:

13526

TAGS:

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV

Captions:

~~SENSITIVE~~

Reference:

A) 20 TAIPEI 183

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20183%22>>

B) 20 BEIJING 485

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20BEIJING%20485%22>>

C) 18 TAIPEI 145

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2218%20TAIPEI%20145%22>>

D) 17 TAIPEI 511

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2217%20TAIPEI%20511%22>>

E) 20 TAIPEI 299

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20299%22>>

F) 20 BEIJING 894

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20BEIJING%20894%22>>

G) 20 BEIJING 359

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20BEIJING%20359%22>>

H) 20 BEIJING 742

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20BEIJING%20742%22>>

I) 20 TAIPEI 317

<<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20317%22>>

Pass Line:

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

Subject:

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(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:

2045/07/20

W/O Attachment(s):

This document is ~~SECRET~~ when separated from UNCLASSIFIED attachment(s).

Drafted By:

TAIPEI (b)(6)

Cleared By:

POL: (b)(6)

POL: (b)(6)

EXEC (b)(6)

Approved By:

EXEC:Christensen, W. Brent

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

Attachments:

PRC National Health Commission Directive.pdf, Caixin Neican Report.pdf

Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

POL, SCO_ACTION

~~SECRET~~
~~Sensitive~~

=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
	Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)
To:	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)
	Buangan, Richard L (b)(6)
CC:	Feith, David (b)(6)
Subject:	FW: Taiwan Analysts Assess the Scale and Scope of the COVID-19 Outbreak in China
Date:	Sun, 19 Jul 2020 14:02:31 -0400

I missed this part. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, July 17, 2020 1:47 PM

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

Subject: Taiwan Analysts Assess the Scale and Scope of the COVID-19 Outbreak in China

Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) PACOM JIOC J22 China Section, Geo-Strategic Branch,
China/Taiwan Analyst

Derived From: Multiple Sources

Declassify On: 25X1, E0 12951

Good morning!

I wanted to pass along the first paper in AIT Political Officer (b)(6)'s series on COVID-19... he's been researching the issue for quite some time now, and this is an excellent report.

Warmest regards,

(b)(6)

~~SECRET~~~~Sensitive~~

Action Office:

POL, SCO

MRN:

20 TAIPEI 317

<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20317%22>

Date/DTG:

Jul 17, 2020 / 170932Z JUL 20

From:

AIT TAIPEI

Action:

WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE

E.O. :

13526

TAGS:

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV, CDC

Captions:

SENSITIVE

Reference:

A) 20 TAIPEI 183

<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20183%22>

B) 20 TAIPEI 133

<http://repository.state.sgov.gov/searchcenter/Results.aspx?k=mrn%3a%2220%20TAIPEI%20133%22>

Pass Line:

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PASS TO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

Subject:

Taiwan Analysts Assess the Scale and Scope of the COVID-19 Outbreak in China

(b)(1)	Summary:	(b)(1)
(b)(1)		
(b)(1)		End Summary.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(b)(1)



(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:

2045/07/08

Drafted By:

TAIPEI (b)(6)

Cleared By:

POL (b)(6)

POL: (b)(6)

EXEC:Greene, Raymond F

Approved By:

EXEC:Christensen, W. Brent

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

Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

POL, SCO_ACTION

~~SECRET~~~~Sensitive~~=====
Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Official

~~SECRET~~

Classified By: Stilwell - EAP, Office:A/S, Agency:U. S. Department of State
Declassify On: 7/19/2030
Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	"Stilwell, David R"	(b)(6)
	Fritz, Jonathan D	(b)(6)
	(b)(6)	
	Buangan, Richard L	(b)(6)
	Feith, David	(b)(6)
Recipient:		

From:	(b)(6)
To:	Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6) EAP-TC-Office-DL (b)(6)
Subject:	FW: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis
Date:	Wed, 12 Aug 2020 17:56:10 -0400

Team,

Following up on this—(b)(5) Any luck with Sec. Azr? (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thanks!

(b)(6)

Official - Sensitive

~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) CoS/Senior Advisor to the Counselor, Office:S/C, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 8/6/2045

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

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2020 11:53 AM
To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox
Cc: Fritz, Jonathan (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis

Colleagues,

I have some additional guidance. There is no need to turn this around within 24 hours. **Please do be able to offer a recommendation by OOB next Wednesday, August 12** that includes:

- What portions of the cables EAP/EX and Post are comfortable declassifying
- Any concerns EAP/EX or Post may have about declassifying these documents

When coming to your recommendation please remember that the intent is for this information to eventually make its way into TPs for S, so feel free to include as many caveats as you deem necessary.

(b)(5)

I will be on A/L starting sometime tomorrow, and definitely next week. (b)(6) is the best POC as of COB today. (b)(6) has a couple of e-mail addresses in the GAL so be sure to use the one cc'd in this missive.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Official - Sensitive

~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) CoS/Senior Advisor to the Counselor, Office:S/C, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 8/6/2045

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

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2020 10:51 AM

To: EAP-Staffers Mailbox (b)(2)

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

Subject: FW: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis

Colleagues,

Per our conversation, below is the e-mail chain between Office of the Counselor and INR. Attached is an e-mail with both cables attached.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Special Assistant

Office of the Counselor (C)

(b)(6)

Official - Sensitive

This message is ~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~ when separated from ~~SECRET~~ attachment(s)

Classified By: (b)(6) CoS/Senior Advisor to the Counselor, Office:S/C, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 8/6/2045

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

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2020 10:24 AM

To: (b)(6)

Cc: Kissel, Mary E (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis

(b)(6)

Thank you for turning to INR but the process is simpler because these are EAP cables and you only need to go to A/S Stilwell and post to get them cleared because they are the classifiers.

(b)(6)

20 TAIPEI 351

Aug 05, 2020 / 050416Z AUG 20

AIT TAIPEI

WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*

13526

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV, TBIO, NIH, SHLH

NOFORN, SENSITIVE

A) 20 BEIJING 33

B) 20 BEIJING 77

C) 20 TAIPEI 317

D) 20 TAIPEI 319

20 TAIPEI 353

Aug 05, 2020 / 050634Z AUG 20

AIT TAIPEI

WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*

13526

PREL, PGOV, CN, TW, KNCV, TBIO, NIH, SHLH

SENSITIVE

A) 20 TAIPEI 351

B) 20 TAIPEI 299

C) 20 TAIPEI 349

D) 20 FTR 1109

E) 20 TAIPEI 319

F) 20 TAIPEI 317

Official -~~Sensitive~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~

Classified By: (b)(6) CoS/Senior Advisor to the Counselor, Office:S/C, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 8/6/2045

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

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2020 9:02 AM

To: (b)(6)
Cc: Kissel, Mary E; (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis

(b)(6) good morning,

Early this morning, the Counselor noted that he'd shared these two cables directly with the Secretary,

(b)(5)

(b)(6) good morning,

The Counselor suggested that I bring you into this conversation (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Chief of Staff/Senior Advisor to the Counselor
U.S. Department of State | Office of the Counselor of the Department

(b)(6)

NIPR: (b)(6) SIPR: (b)(6)

Official - Sensitive

This message is ~~CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN~~ when separated from ~~SECRET~~ attachment(s)

Classified By: (b)(6) S/C, Agency: U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 8/6/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Wednesday, August 5, 2020 8:31 AM

To: C_Policy (b)(2)

Subject: Must Read: Taiwan COVID-19 Analysis

Two excellent cables out of Taipei (Summaries below) on the origin of the coronavirus.

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Best,

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)



Official

~~SECRET~~

Classified By: (b)(6) Special Assistant, Office:C, Agency:U.S. Department of State
Declassify On: 8/5/2045
Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	(b)(6)	
Recipient:	Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6)	
	EAP-TC-Office-DL (b)(2)	

From:	"Stilwell, David R" (b)(6)
To:	Fritz, Jonathan D (b)(6) Feith, David (b)(6)
CC:	Beran, Sarah M (b)(6) Buangan, Richard L (b)(6) Tobin, Liza (b)(6)
Subject:	FW: (U) China SFG Items of Interest 21AUG20
Date:	Sat, 22 Aug 2020 18:37:30 -0400

First item is particularly interesting. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Of interest; (b)(5)

(b)(1)

Official

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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

Declassify On: 8/22/2030

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

From: (b)(6) INDOPACOM PCJO (USA) (b)(6)

Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2020 12:13 AM

Subject: (U) China SFG Items of Interest 21AUG20

Classification: ~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

1. Mil-Mil Relations

1a.

(b)(1)

1b.

(b)(1)

2. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

(U) PRC articles emphasize need for overseas bases in the Indian Ocean region to defend SLOCs and chokepoints against the US...suggesting the PLA may be preparing to conduct wartime ops in the IO.

(b)(1)

3. ~~(FOUO)~~ PRC Foreign Directed Media - CNA special report in collaboration with China SFG titled, "Black and White and Red All Over: China's Improving Foreign-Directed Media" looks at the CCP's ambitious external propaganda campaign - esp. its objectives and efficacy and objectives.

~~(FOUO)~~ Don't take my word for it...DASD Sbragia "recommend[s] filing as a desk reference for those who work messaging efforts and want to understand PRC processes."

~~(FOUO)~~ The study analyzes 1) the origins of the overreaching objectives of these efforts, 2) how Chinese subject matter experts assess Beijing's successes and shortcomings, and 3) the implications of CCP's efforts to strengthen China's external propaganda. Key takeaways include:

- CCP has sought to improve the reach and resonance of PRC media outlets specifically targeting foreign audiences. Broad objectives include:
 - To counter the perceived anti-China bias in the Western journalism
 - Needs to improve propaganda efforts to win over foreign audiences
 - Needs a greater voice to commensurate with the country's growing international status
 - Improving the integration of internet-based media to maximize overseas users exposed to Chinese news reports
- Beijing is tailoring its external propaganda messaging to improve its resonance by:
 - "Borrowing a boat to go out to sea" – using foreign (non-Chinese) media outlets to spread Chinese-produced content to overseas audience.
 - Increasing presence of Chinese media, scholars, and officials on foreign media platforms
 - Diversifying different languages in which PRC media content is published or broadcast
 - Leveraging foreign voices and overseas bureaus/production centers to create tailored contents for specific target audiences
- Despite the strident efforts to expand China's foreign-directed media in last two decades, challenges include:
 - In the US, many PRC media outlets are required to register as foreign missions
 - PRC media stations are in danger of having its broadcasting licenses revoked after it breached British broadcasting standards
 - Western social media companies are beginning to label the PRC media outlets as "state-controlled media"
 - Inability of PRC media outlets to achieve a level of influence on par with Beijing's growing international clout and failure to effectively capitalize on new media platforms such as social media

(3MB, avail upon request)

4. What's Up at USINDOPACOM?

4a. FRAGO 2 to IPCO 20-22 - 25 pages of additions to original doc. Includes some COVID-specific issues + expanded discussion of DoD OAs as deterrence in competition - esp posture & presence in the region. (15.5MB, avail upon request)

4b. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

4c. (FOUO) PACOM Messaging for AUG2020

(b)(1)

(SBU) Note: No one does palace intrigue better than the CCP so these kinds of reports are insightful and have wilder storylines than reality tv.

6. (U) AUSTRALIA (PRC): The *Australian Financial Review* reported August 11 that PNG's Huawei-built National Data Centre exposed secret PNG government files to being stolen. The report noted outdated encryption software and firewall settings...were insufficient for...[protecting] the entire data archive of the PNG government....[and] that the seemingly deliberate effort by Huawei to deploy lax cyber security was partially thwarted by the center quickly falling into disrepair...**In the end, PNG was left with a USD 53 million debt to the PRC via Exim Bank**, and a barely operational data center. (State Dept excerpt 11AUG)

7. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

Dept Excerpt 12 197687

8. (b)(1)

(b)(1)

V/R

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6) China Strategic Focus Group, USINDOPACOM

(b)(6)

CLASSIFIED BY: INDOPACOM SCG
DERIVED FROM: Multiple Sources
DECLASSIFY ON: 20200821

Classification: ~~SECRET~~//NOFORN

Sender:	"Stilwell, David R"	(b)(6)
	Fritz, Jonathan D	(b)(6)
Recipient:	Feith, David	(b)(6)
	Beran, Sarah M	(b)(6)
	Buangan, Richard L	(b)(6)
	Tobin, Liza	(b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	<EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>; (b)(6)
Subject:	Final as Reviewed by S: 202004794: (SBU) Mission China's 2018 Reporting on C oronaviruses and the Wuhan Institute of Vi rology (WIV)
Date:	Wed, 29 Apr 2020 09:56:06 -0400

UNCLASSIFIED

Per low side email request

S/ES ID: 202004794

Classification: Unclassified

Document Type/Action Requested: Note

For: S

Organization: EAP

Co-Drafter Bureau:

Due Date: 04/20/2020 12:00 PM

Event Date:

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

Description: Note for S

Notes/Special Instructions: 4/20, @ 1308 per S Special (b)(6), this is a PAR.

Clearances:

Copy To:

Must-Have: No

Sender:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	<EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>; (b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	(b)(2) <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL (b)(2)>
CC:	<EAP-Staff-Assistants-DL (b)(2)>
Subject:	FINAL: 202005349: Response to Congressional Letter (Markey) on WIV
Date:	Mon, 11 May 2020 11:19:49 -0400

UNCLASSIFIED

FYI: Attached copy of the final package for your records.

S/ES ID: 202005349

Classification: Unclassified

Document Type/Action Requested: Action Memo

For: S

Organization: EAP

Co-Drafter Bureau:

Due Date: 05/04/2020 07:15 PM

Event Date:

Subject: Response to Congressional Letter (Markey) on WIV

Description: (~~SBU~~) Senators Markey and Murphy requested information regarding the Administration's response to reported safety and management concerns at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), following an April 14 media article, which quoted State Department cables warning about inadequate safety procedures.

Notes/Special Instructions: .

Clearances:

Copy To:

Must-Have: No

Sender:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	(b)(2) <EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL (b)(2)> <EAP-Staff-Assistants-DL (b)(2)>

From:	(b)(6)
To:	<EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>; <EAP-Staff-Assistants-DL@state.sgov.gov>; (b)(6)
Subject:	EAP RE-SUBMISSION - 202005349: Response to Congressional Letter (Markey) on WIV
Date:	Tue, 5 May 2020 16:00:47 -0400

UNCLASSIFIED

S/ES ID: 202005349

Classification: Unclassified

Document Type/Action Requested: Action Memo

For: S

Organization: EAP

Co-Drafter Bureau:

Due Date: 05/04/2020 07:15 PM

Event Date:

Subject: Response to Congressional Letter (Markey) on WIV

Description: (SBU) Senators Markey and Murphy requested information regarding the Administration's response to reported safety and management concerns at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), following an April 14 media article, which quoted State Department cables warning about inadequate safety procedures.

Notes/Special Instructions: Please seek clearances outside of EAP for the action memo and please retain Line edits when resubmitting.

Clearances:

Copy To:

Must-Have: No

Sender:	(b)(6)
Recipient:	<EAP-CM-UnitChiefs-DL@state.sgov.gov>; <EAP-Staff-Assistants-DL@state.sgov.gov>; (b)(6)

From:	(b)(6)
To:	EAP-Staffers Mailbox <EAPStaffers@state.sgov.gov>
CC:	EAP-CM-Office-DL <EAP-CM-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>; EAP-TC-Office-DL <EAP-TC-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>
Subject:	CM/TC morning note input
Date:	Tue, 4 Feb 2020 07:36:44 -0500

CHINA, MONGOLIA, AND HONG KONG (CM)

~~(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)

(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 email)

TAIWAN (TC)

(b)(1)

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

(b)(6)

Office of Chinese and Mongolian Affairs

(b)(6)

(b)(6) Department of State

~~Official - Sensitive~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

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

Declassify On: 2/4/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender: (b)(6)

Recipient:

EAP-Staffers Mailbox <EAPStaffers@state.sgov.gov>;
EAP-CM-Office-DL <EAP-CM-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>;
EAP-TC-Office-DL <EAP-TC-Office-DL2@state.sgov.gov>

From:	"Greene, Raymond F" (b)(6)
To:	Taipei Overnights-DC <TaipeiOvernights-DC@state.sgov.gov>; Taipei Overnights-AIT <TaipeiOvernights@state.sgov.gov>
Subject:	(S/NE) AIT Update, March 13, 2020
Date:	Fri, 13 Mar 2020 05:48:17 -0400

Non Responsive

(b)(1)

Cables

Non Responsive

Non Responsive

(U) Taiwan: COVID-19 Response -- Impact on Cross-Strait Relations, Taiwan's Foreign Relations, Domestic Issues, and China: This report includes highlights of what AIT officers heard and observed from February 24 through March 5 regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. (20 TAIPEI 139)

Official

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Classified By: Raymond F. Greene - Deputy Director, Office:AIT, Agency:U.S. Department of State

Declassify On: 3/13/2045

Reasons: Derived Per DSCG.

Sender:	"Greene, Raymond F" (b)(6)
Recipient:	Taipei Overnights-DC <TaipeiOvernights-DC@state.sg.gov.gov>; Taipei Overnights-AIT <TaipeiOvernights@state.sg.gov.gov>