

World News

The Wuhan Coronavirus continues to dominate the news. As the Wuhan coronavirus has outbreaks in China, South Korea, Italy, and Iran; it's probably time to call it a Pandemic [1, 2, 3, 4]. This as it appears China is involved in a disinformation campaign claiming the Central Intelligence Agency was responsible for releasing the Wuhan Coronavirus [5]. But perhaps the immediate consequence of the virus is the impact to China's economy. Case in point, exports fell 17.2% in January compared to the year before [6]. Additionally, NASA images before and after the Coronavirus outbreak show heady pollution before and little afterwards [7]. However, not all Chinese industry has stopped because of the virus. One piece suggests the arms industry has returned to meet the growing needs of the military [8].

In addition to the Wuhan Coronavirus, China continues to press its military strength. For instance, on February 17, People's Republic of China navy destroyer 161 aimed a laser at a U.S. Navy P-8A aircraft [9]. The military grade laser operated in the invisible spectrum and was detected by sensors [10]. In response, China denied the laser incident [11]. Meanwhile, China's activities in the East China Sea resulted in Japan considering improvements hyper-velocity gliding projectiles (HVGP) program [12].

1. BBC News, *Coronavirus: Northern Italy quarantines 16 million people*, March 8, 2020.
2. Smith, Josh, Reuters, *Mayor in virus-hit South Korean city says outbreak may be slowing*, March 7, 2020.
3. Reuters, *Coronavirus: Death toll rises to 145 in Iran as officials work to contain virus*, March 7, 2020.
4. UPI/Breitbart, *COVID-19 deaths top 3,000 in China*, March 5, 2020.
5. Gertz, Bill, Washington Times, *CIA targeted in virus disinformation cam-*

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Wuhan Coronavirus

Background: In China, much genetic research has taken place that has alarmed some. For instance, scientist He Jiankui was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment for genetically editing babies [1]. Additionally, Chinese researchers put human genes into monkeys [2]. In another research effort, dozens of people had gene editing done to them [3]. Moreover, gene editing was also done to dogs [4].

Research suggests bats are

the likely source of coronaviruses in China [5, 6]. Some information suggests the Wuhan Coronavirus early patients were not tied to a seafood (wildlife) market [7, 8]. So if it did not originate at the seafood market, where did come from? In any case, as a consequence of the coronavirus outbreak, it appears changes will be made in how Chinese research is judged [9].

In other news, China is encouraging conspiracy

theories that the US is responsible for the Wuhan coronavirus [10]. This comes as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused China of withholding information on the Wuhan coronavirus [11].

1. Wee, Sui-Lee, New York Times, *Chinese Scientist Who Genetically Edited Babies Gets 3 Years in Prison*, December 30, 2019.
2. Regalado, Antonio,

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Special points of interest:

- Wuhan Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic
- Dow, NASDAQ, and S&P 500 tank

Wuhan Coronavirus

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- MIT Technology Review, *Chinese scientists have put human brain genes in monkeys—and yes, they may be smarter*, April 10, 2019.
3. Foley, Katherine Ellen, Quartz, *Chinese scientists used Crispr gene editing on 86 human patients*, January 23, 2018.
 4. Regalado, Antonio, MIT Technology Review, *First Gene-Edited Dogs Reported in China*, October 19, 2015.
 5. Fan, Yi, et. al., , *Viruses*, Volume 11, Number 210, *Bat Coronaviruses in China*, 2019.
 6. Zhou, Peng, et. al., *Nature*, *A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin*, February 3, 2020.
 7. Shim, Elizabeth, UPI, *Reports: China's first COVID-19 patient not linked to seafood market*, February 27, 2020.
 8. Huifeng, He, *South China Morning Post*, *Coronavirus did not originate in Wuhan seafood market, Chinese scientists say*, February 23, 2020.
 9. Chen, Stephen, *South China Morning Post*, *China's scientists face major changes in how their work is judged ... and coronavirus anger may be partly to blame*, February 25, 2020.
 10. Shih, Gerry, *Washington Post*, *Conspiracy theorists blame U.S. for coronavirus. China is happy to encourage them.*, March 5, 2020.
 11. Stankiewicz, Kevin, *CNBC*, *Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accuses China of setting back coronavirus prevention efforts*, March 6, 2020.

When we think of the major threats to our national security, the first to come to mind are nuclear proliferation, rogue states and global terrorism. But another kind of threat lurks beyond our shores, one from nature, not humans - an avian flu pandemic.—Barack Obama

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- paign*, March 4, 2020.
6. McDonald, Joe, AP/Washington Times, *China trade slumps as anti-virus controls close factories*, March 6, 2020.
 7. Nace, Trevor, *Forbes*, *Coronavirus: NASA Reveals How China's Lockdown Drastically Reduced Pollution*, March 3, 2020.
 8. Chan, Minnie, *South China Morning Post*, *China's arms industry back in business despite disruption by coronavirus*, February 23, 2020.
 9. Browne, Ryan, *CNN*, *US says Chinese warship fired military laser at US aircraft*, February 28, 2020.
 10. Givas, Nick, *Fox News*, *Chinese destroyer aims laser at US Navy plane in 'unsafe' manner, military says*, February 27, 2020.
 11. AP/ABC News, *China rejects report it fired laser at US Navy plane*, March 6, 2020.
 12. Shim, Elizabeth, UPI, *Japan reviewing deployment of missiles in East China Sea*, February 25, 2020.

World News

Terrorism

Germany is in the news following terrorist attacks. In Hanau, Germany, attacks in two shisha bars left 9 people killed [1]. Days later, a person drove their car into a carnival attending crowd, injuring dozens of people [2].

Elsewhere, in Tunisia, two suicide bombers attacked a checkpoint near the US Embassy, killing one police officer [3]. In Niger, French and African forces killed over 100 terrorists [4].

The US and the Taliban signed a peace deal in an effort to end the war in Afghanistan [5, 6]. However, attacks continued after the agreement was signed [7]. Moreover, the Islamic State (IS) remains an issue. For instance, the IS claimed responsibility for an attack in Kabul directed against the country's chief executive, Abdullah Abdullah [8].

1. McGee, Luke, et. al., CNN, *Germany shooting: Gunman kills 9 at Hanau shisha bars*, February 20,

2020.

2. Oliveira, Nelson, New York Daily News, *Dozens of people hurt after car plows into crowd during Carnival parade in Germany*, February 24, 2020.
3. Alkhshali, Hamdi, CNN, *One dead in suicide bomb attack near US embassy in Tunisia*, March 6, 2020.
4. Halaschak, Zachary, AP/Washington Examiner, *More than 100 'terrorists' killed in Africa during military operation*, February 24, 2020.
5. Welna, David, and Dwyer, Colin, NPR, *U.S. Signs Peace Deal With Taliban After Nearly 2 Decades Of War In Afghanistan*, February 29, 2020.
6. BBC News, *Afghan conflict: US and Taliban sign deal to end 18-year war*, February 29, 2020.
7. Welna, David, NPR, *Despite Bloody Week In Afghanistan, U.S. Pushes Taliban Peace Talks For-*

ward, March 6, 2020.

8. BBC News, *Kabul attack: Abdullah Abdullah escapes deadly attack*, March 6, 2020.

What works most effectively for quelling disease outbreaks like Ebola is not quarantining huge populations. What works is focusing on and isolating the sick and those in direct contact with them as they are at highest risk of infection. This strategy worked with SARS, and it worked during the H1N1 flu pandemic.—Tom Frieden

Economy

Financial institutions are back in the news. The Ericson State Bank in north-central Nebraska became the first bank shuttered in 2020 [1].

However, the dominate news flows from the Wuhan coronavirus. For example, on February 19, the NASDAQ Composite and S&P 500 set new record highs [2]. However, as the Wuhan Coronavirus news continued to grow internationally, fears of a pandemic took hold [3]. This led to a 3%+ collapse of the stock markets [4]. Then on February 25, the market indices fell again to around 3% drop [5]. On February 27, the indexes fell sharply with the Dow falling by its largest point drop ever [6, 7]. Then on March 2, the Dow posted is largest one day point gain ever with all three indices gaining over 4.5% [8]. However, on March 3, the stock indices fell nearly 3% [9]. Then on March 4, the indices rose from 3.9% (NASDAQ Composite) to 4.5% (Dow) [10]. On March 5, the indices fell from 3.1% (NASDAQ Composite) to 3.58% (Dow) [11]. On the last trading day of this reporting cycle, March 6, the three indices again fell [12].

As the Wuhan Coronavirus impacts world business, the weekly employment changes will eventually start to increase. However, for this reporting period, the numbers remained strong. On the employment front, the number of first time claims remained low. For the week ending February 15, the number of first

time claims was 210,000 [13]. For the week ending February 22, the number was 219,000 [14]. Then for the week ending February 29, the number was 216,000 [15]. Finally, the February jobs report reported a 3.5% unemployment rate [16].

1. NBC/AP, *State closes north-central Nebraska bank for insolvency*, February 16, 2020.
2. Imbert, Fred, CNBC, *S&P 500 and Nasdaq jump to record highs, Dow climbs more than 100 points*, February 19, 2020.
3. NBC News, *Coronavirus updates: Death toll in China hits 2,663 as pandemic fears grow*, February 24, 2020.
4. McLean, Rob, et. al., CNN Business, *Dow plunges 1,000 points, posting its worst day in two years as coronavirus fears spike*, February 24, 2020.
5. Thorbecke, Catherine, ABC News, *Dow Jones plunges for 2nd straight day on coronavirus fears*, February 25, 2020.
6. Imbert, Fred, CNBC, *Dow plunges 1,100 points, bringing its decline from a record high to more than 10%*, February 27, 2020.
7. Garber, Jonathan, FOX Business, *Dow's point drop worst on record as stocks fall into correction*, February 27, 2020.
8. Davidson, Paul, USA Today, *Dow jumps nearly 1,300 points on hopes that central banks can boost economies as coronavirus spreads*, March 2, 2020.
9. Imbert, Fred, CNBC, *Here's what happened to the stock market on Tuesday*, March 3, 2020.
10. Reinicke, Carmen, Business Insider, *Dow surges 1,173 points after Congress agrees on emergency spending bill, Biden dominates Super Tuesday*, March 5, 2020.
11. Martin, Ken, FOX Business, *Stocks fall on continued coronavirus fears*, March 6, 2020.
12. Riquier, Andrea, Market Watch, *Stocks end lower but off worst levels as Wall Street wraps up roller-coaster week in positive territory*, March 6, 2020.
13. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, February 20, 2020.
14. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, February 27, 2020.
15. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, March 5, 2020.
16. Cox, Jeff, CNBC, *Job growth smashes expectations for February as unemployment falls back to 3.5%*, March 6, 2020.

A century ago the Spanish flu confounded scientists and devastated whole regions, but while today's society has air travel and an enormous, heterogeneous population, we also have antibiotics, fantastic communication networks and, perhaps most crucially, more data than ever.—

Hannah Fry
