

### World News

The port of Beirut was largely destroyed by an explosion believed to be tied to 2,750 metric tons of ammonium nitrate [1]. Indications are the fertilizer was confiscated in 2014 from a Russian businessman [2].

There are some warnings that China is preparing for some military or a covert action [3]. This comes as China continues its rapid military expansion. For example, during the past year, the Chinese Navy launched two Type-075 assault carriers and more are under construction [4]. Moreover, a commercial satellite picked up an image of a Chinese submarine using an underground base on Hainan Island (South China Sea) [5].

Meanwhile, the Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe, identified China as the biggest national security threat to the US and indicated they are actively involved in ensuring President Trump is not re-elected [6]. Separately, nearly 20,000 fake driver's licenses shipped from China, were seized at Chicago's O'Hare airport in the first half of 2020 [7]. Then, President Trump warned that China and Russia will be grabbing plenty of ballots as part of mail in voting [8]. So if China can counterfeit driver's licenses with ease, what would prevent US mail ballot counterfeiting?

One consequence of China's actions is the US is getting closer to Taiwan. For example, a US envoy attended a memorial service honoring those that died fighting the Chinese bombing in 1958 on Kinmen [9]. The US also approved a large weapons deal with Taiwan [10].

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### Wuhan Coronavirus

One piece suggests the Wuhan Coronavirus was the accidental release for a normal research program [1]. However, China is known to use dual use technology to advance its military [2].

Chinese diplomats and state-run media outlets continue to claim COVID-19 originated in Maryland's Fort Detrick research lab [3]. Meanwhile, China provided NBC with a guided tour of the Wuhan Institute of Virology and claimed the facility is not the source of COVID-19 [4].

Another theory is; the base virus for COVID-19 was

first discovered in 2012. For example, back in 2012, six miners at the Mojiang abandoned copper mine in southwestern China's Yunnan province became sick and three died. Samples of the virus were sent to the Wuhan Institute of Virology [5]. It appears the Mojiang mine virus is the closest match to COVID-19 [6]. So if the source virus was from the copper mine, why did the virus outbreak not start in that geographically distant location? Why instead did it start in Wuhan where samples were known to be kept at the Wuhan Institute of Virology? That three out of six sick miners died, yet the virus did not

spread; suggests a less infectious version. If that is the case, how did it become so infectious? Especially in light of the gain of function research known to be conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The probability that the virus mutated naturally from a mine a thousand miles away is far less than the scenario of a research lab leak. There are questions causing some to believe the most likely source of the virus was a leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology [7]. As more information becomes available, we should be able to better estimate the various likelihoods.

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#### Special points of interest:

- Nasdaq Composite breaks 11,200 level for a new record high
- S&P 500 closes at record high

# Wuhan Coronavirus

(Continued from page 1)

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One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors—Plato

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(Continued from page 1)

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4. Sutton, H I, Forbes, *New Intelligence Shows China Is Building More Type-075 Assault Carriers*, August 7, 2020.
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6. Singman, Brooke, Fox News, *China's anti-Trump election meddling raises new alarm, as DNI calls country biggest threat*, August 17, 2020.
7. Stimson, Brie, Fox News, *Fake driver's licenses flooding into US from China, other countries, US says*, August 9, 2020.
8. Halon, Yael, Fox News, *Trump warns of mail-in voting 'disaster', predicts China, Russia will be 'grabbing plenty' of ballots*, August 12, 2020.
9. Taijing, Wu, AP, *US envoy joins Taiwan president at military memorial*, August 23, 2020.
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ton Times, *U.S. approves historic weapons deal with Taiwan - 66 F-16 fighter jets*, August 18, 2020

# World News

## Terrorism

In Afghanistan, the Islamic State (IS) attacked a prison resulting in a jail break that left at least 24 dead [1]. Then 14 people were killed in three suspected Taliban attacks [2].

Africa continues to experience religious terrorism. For example, Al Shabab, a militant group linked to Al Qaeda attacked a popular hotel in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, leaving at least 12 people dead [3]. In Niger, Africa, six French aid workers were killed by Jihadist militants on motorcycles [4]. In Mozambique, an IS affiliated terrorist group seized control a a strategic port [5].

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*in Islamic State attack, August 3, 2020.*

2. Aljazeera, *Afghanistan: At least 14 security forces killed in three attacks, August 22, 2020.*
3. Salama, Samir, Gulf News, *Saudi Arabia condemns terrorist attack on Mogadishu hotel, August 18, 2020.*
4. Parkinson, Joe, Wall Street Journal, *Terrorists Kill Six French Aid Workers in Niger, Government Says, August 9, 2020.*
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*Much learning does not  
teach understanding—  
Heraclitus*

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## Economy

This news cycle started, on August 3, with the Nasdaq Composite setting another record high [1]. Then on August 4, the Nasdaq closed at another record high [2]. On August 5, the Nasdaq closed at its 31<sup>st</sup> record close for the year [3]. Then, on August 6, the Nasdaq closed above 11,000 for the first time [4].

Moreover, on August 12, the S&P 500 index reached a new record high [5]. On August 17, the Nasdaq hit another all time high [6]. Then on August 18, the S&P 500 index and Nasdaq both closed at a new record highs [7]. On August 20, the Nasdaq had its 35<sup>th</sup> record close for the year [8]. Finally, on August 21, both the Nasdaq and S&P 500 closed at record highs [9].

In contrast to stock market indexes, the unemployment numbers continue to look bleak. For the week ending August 1, the number of first time unemployment claims reported by the Labor Department was 1,186,000 [10]. For the week ending August 8, the number reported was 963,000 [11]. Finally, for the week ending August 15, the num-

ber reported was 1,106,000 [12].

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4. Garber, Jonathan, Fox Business, *Nasdaq clears 11,000 as Apple nears \$2T market value*, August 6, 2020.
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6. Imbert, Fred, CNBC, *S&P 500 rises to start the week, but comes up just short of a record close*, August 17, 2020.
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8. DeCambre, Mark, MarketWatch, *Dow, S&P 500 end higher and Nasdaq books 35th record close in 2020 as tech buoys broader stock market*, August 20, 2020.
9. Kollmeyer, Barbara, et. al., Barron's, *Dow, Nasdaq Edge Higher to Finish the Week at New Highs*, August 21, 2020.
10. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, August 6, 2020.
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12. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, August 20, 2020.

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*The reward of suffering is  
experience.—Harry S  
Truman*

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