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Is Wuhan Coronavirus A Bioweapon? Here are what the facts say.

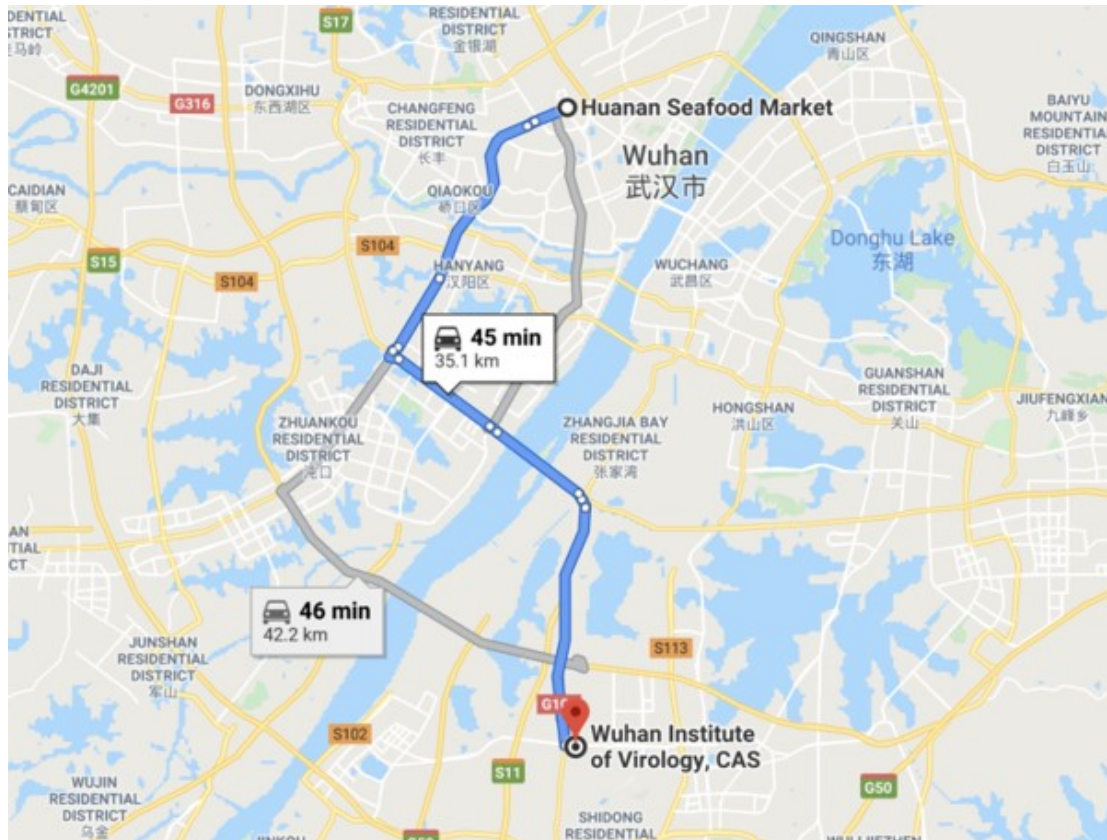
8-10 minutes



By Chris Chia

Recently, reports and YouTube videos have been circulating on the Internet alleging that the deadly Wuhan coronavirus is a bioweapon ignited by the Chinese government on Chinese people.

Some media reported that the bioweapon was leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which is about 32 km away from the pestiferous Huannan Seafood Market, the epicenter of the deadly virus, as the Google map below shows.



Some went on to report that the deadly coronavirus bioweapon was launched by the authoritarian communist regime of iniquity to reduce the Chinese population by half so that the surviving halves are more easily controlled.

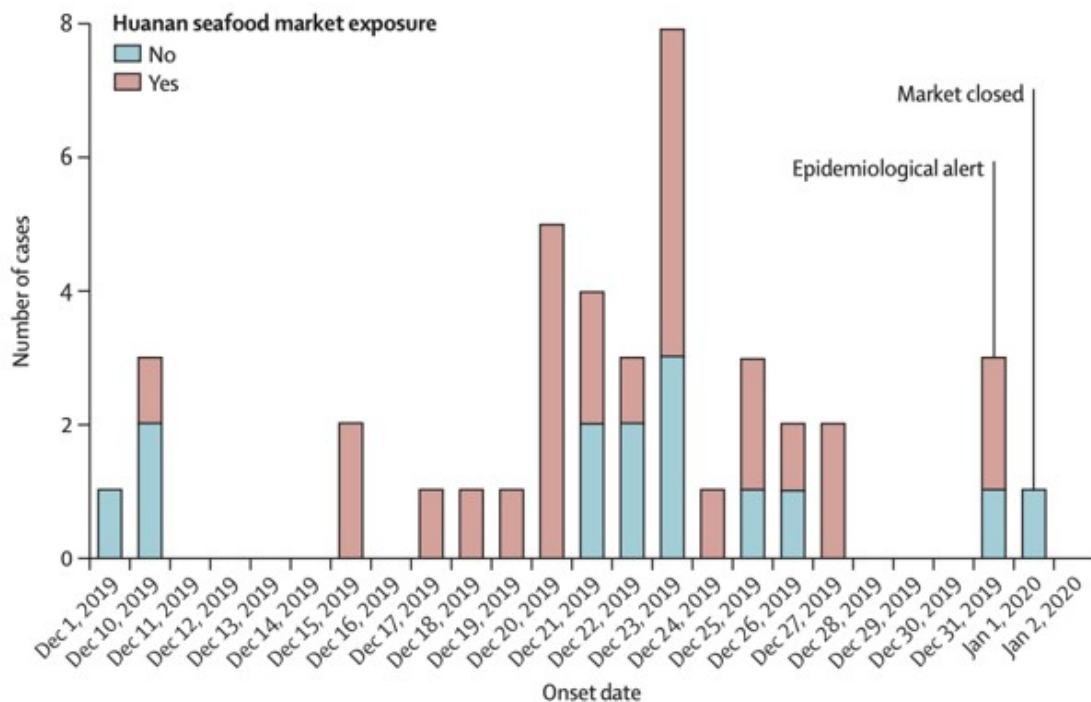
Others say the U.S. government released the coronavirus bioweapon on China to further crush it under its hegemonic exceptionalism.

Conjectures and conspiracies run amok in times like this, especially when a global pandemic is looming. To separate

facts from hearsay and unconfirmed reports, here is what auditable facts and information tell us.

1. 1st Confirmed Case in China Had No Exposure to Seafood Market

In a recent study entitled “Clinical features of patients infected with 2019 novel coronavirus in Wuhan, China” published on 24 January 2020 in [The Lancet](#) by a group of Chinese doctors, the first confirmed case of the 2019-nCoV infection in Wuhan was 1 December 2019. And this patient was not exposed to the Huannan Seafood Market.



Date of illness onset of 41 lab-tested patients in the reported study. Source: [The Lancet](#).

In the above figure, the first case was reported on 1 December 2019. In fact, 30% of the contracted patients studied had no

exposure to the seafood market.

If December 1st saw the first contracted patient, then animal-to-human or human-to-human transmission was happening in November, or even earlier in October 2019. It is also unlikely that the contracted case be the only one, as the transmitting animal or human may have infected other humans and have gone unreported.

If the person contracted the deadly coronavirus on December 1st without exposure to animals in the seafood market, where did the virus originate?

2. Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) Has Strong Expertise in Coronavirus Pathogens

In their website, WIV [reported](#) in January 2018 that their biosafety pathogen level 4 (most deadly level) lab is operational. The lab is capable of conducting experiments on highly pathogenic microorganisms that can cause fatal diseases. This was China's first such lab. It is possible that more labs have been built by China thereafter in secrecy.





In an earlier [article](#), the [Epoch Times Singapore](#) reported that Professor Shi Zheng-Li of WIV [studied](#) horseshoe bats in Yunnan Province and discovered 11 new strains of SARS-related viruses. They found all the genes necessary to make a SARS-like coronavirus. Professor Shi's team found that the strains can already grow in human cells and that the viruses in these bats can transfer to humans.

In their most recent work published on 23 January 2020 in bioRxiv entitled “Discovery of a novel coronavirus associated with the recent pneumonia outbreak in humans and its potential bat origin”, Professor Shi and her team reported that the current deadly nCoV-2019 is 96% identical at the whole genome level to a bat coronavirus.

Professor Shi is Editor-in-Chief of [Virologica Sinica](#), an academic journal from WIV having an impact factor of 2.467 in 2018.

Clearly, WIV has expertise in various kinds of pathogens including the current deadly 2019-nCoV, which is plaguing Wuhan and many other parts of the world. The next section indicates that WIV has strong expertise in this area.

Is WIV a bioweapon lab? This is difficult to establish because

even if it is, it will not be disclosed to the public. A more related question to ask is: Is Chinese military involved in coronavirus pathogens?

3. Chinese Military Involvement in Coronavirus Pathogens

One way to find out how much Chinese military involvement there is in coronavirus work is to understand how much they know about the coronavirus, particularly those coming from bats with SARS-like properties.

We turn to [GenBank](#), an open access genome sequence database maintained by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI, a part of the National Institutes of Health in the U.S. The sequences in GenBank are contributed by labs all over the world.

On GenBank's website, I [searched](#) for genome sequences in their database using keywords “bat”, “SARs-like” and “coronavirus”, as shown below. I obtained 170 result entries.

The screenshot shows the NCBI GenBank search interface. The search query is 'bat SARS-like coronavirus'. The results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Species', 'Molecule types', 'Source databases', 'Sequence Type', 'Sequence length', and 'Release date'. The search results are filtered by 'DISEASE OUTBREAK' and 'Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), Wuhan, China'. The search results are sorted by 'Date Released' and show 20 results per page. The search results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Species', 'Molecule types', 'Source databases', 'Sequence Type', 'Sequence length', and 'Release date'. The search results are filtered by 'DISEASE OUTBREAK' and 'Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), Wuhan, China'. The search results are sorted by 'Date Released' and show 20 results per page.

Species	Molecule types	Source databases	Sequence Type	Sequence length	Release date
Animals (1)	genomic DNA/RNA (167)	INSDC (GenBank) (170)	Nucleotide (170)	Customize ...	Custom range...
Viruses (167)	mRNA (1)	INSDC (GenBank) (170)	Nucleotide (170)	Customize ...	Custom range...

Search results for 'bat SARS-like coronavirus' (170 results):

- Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), Wuhan, China
- Wuhan seafood market pneumonia virus
- Sequence data to support research and public health activities directed at the ongoing novel coronavirus (Wuhan coronavirus) outbreak. Find more outbreak information from the [CDC](#)

Filters: Manage Filters

Results by taxon

- Top Organisms [Tree]
- Bat SARS-like coronavirus (141)
- Bat SARS-like coronavirus WIV1 (2)
- recombinant coronavirus (2)
- Bat SARS-like coronavirus Rs3267-2 (1)
- Bat SARS-like coronavirus Rs4090 (1)
- All other taxa (23)

Find related data

Database: Select

Find items

Search details

Revision date
Custom range...

Items: 1 to 20 of 170

Clear all
Show additional filters

1. [Bat SARS-like coronavirus isolate bat-SL-CoVDC86 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene, partial cds](#)
440 bp linear RNA
Accession: MG772844.1 GI: 1369125249
[Protein](#) [Taxonomy](#)
[GenBank](#) [FASTA](#) [Graphics](#) [PopSet](#)

"Bat SARS-like coronavirus"
[Organism] OR bat SARS-like coronavirus[All Fields]

Search See more...

Recent activity
Turn Off Clear

Each entry shows the lab that submitted the sequence and the submission date, such as this one below, indicating that bat-SL-CoVDC86 was submitted by the Institute of Military Medicine Nanjing Command on 4 January 2018.

NCBI Resources How To Sign in to NCBI

Nucleotide Nucleotide Search Advanced Help

GenBank Send to Change region shown Customize view

Bat SARS-like coronavirus isolate bat-SL-CoVDC86 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene, partial cds
GenBank: MG772844.1
[FASTA](#) [Graphics](#) [PopSet](#)

Go to:

LOCUS	MG772844	440 bp	RNA	linear	VRL 28-MAR-2018
DEFINITION	Bat SARS-like coronavirus isolate bat-SL-CoVDC86 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase gene, partial cds.				
ACCESSION	MG772844				
VERSION	MG772844.1				
KEYWORDS	.				
SOURCE	Bat SARS-like coronavirus				
ORGANISM	Bat SARS-like coronavirus Viruses; ssRNA viruses; ssRNA positive-strand viruses, no DNA stage; Nidovirales; Coronaviridae; Coronavirinae; Betacoronavirus. 1 (bases 1 to 440)				
REFERENCE	Hu, D.				
AUTHORS	Genomic Characterization and Infectivity of A Novel SARS-like coronavirus in Chinese Bats				
JOURNAL	Unpublished				
REFERENCE	2 (bases 1 to 440)				
AUTHORS	Hu, D.				
TITLE	Direct Submission				
JOURNAL	Submitted (04-JAN-2018) Institute of Military Medicine Nanjing Command, Nanjing, NO. 293 East Zhongshan Road, Nanjing, JiangSu 210002, China				
COMMENT	##Assembly-Data-START## Sequencing Technology :: Sanger dideoxy sequencing ##Assembly-Data-END##				

SARS Coronavirus Resource
Retrieve, view, and download SARS coronavirus genomic and protein sequences.

Related information
Protein
Taxonomy
Full text in PMC
PopSet

LinkOut to external resources

Of the 170 result entries, 91 entries are from this military institute, constituting 53.5% of all bat SARS-like coronavirus sequences known in the world. Also there are an additional 25 entries from the Wuhan Institute of Virology and 38 entries from the National Institute of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention based in Beijing.

In all, China's submitted sequences constitute 90% of all bat

SARS-like coronavirus sequences. It does look like China is an authority in this area.

When I only used keywords “bat” and “coronavirus”, I found 63 entries from the Changchun Military Veterinary Institute.

Why are two Chinese military institutes taking such strong interests in bat SARS-like coronavirus, contributing approximately 90% of all known sequences? Is Chinese military trying to weaponize these pathogens?

Of particular interest is that all the sequences submitted by the Institute of Military Medicine Nanjing Command fall between 4-5 January 2018. There is no further bat SARS-like coronavirus sequence contribution from this institute after 5 January 2018.

This is around the time when the Wuhan Institute of Virology went operational with their P4 work. Has the Chinese military developed sufficient understanding of this pathogen to begin weaponizing them in the P4 lab in WIV? Or perhaps in their own copy-cat P4 lab, unbeknownst to the world? Or have they stopped sharing new strains of the bat SARS-like coronavirus altogether?

4. Does China Have A Bioweapon Program?

Yes, according to Dr. Dany Shoham, a senior researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar Ilan University, Israel. In his paper, “China’s Biological Warfare

Programme: An Integrative Study with Special Reference to Biological Weapons Capabilities” published in the Journal of Defence Studies, Vol. 9, No. 2 April-June 2015, pp. 131-156, he mentioned that it is highly unlikely that China will pass the opportunity not to use biotechnology for military use.

Although China ratified the Biological Weapons Convention in 1984, China has been circumventing its requirements by claiming defensive, dual use of biological agents and related technologies. In a report entitled “Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control Agreements”, the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency contended that “China maintained an offensive biological weapons program throughout the 1980s. The program included the development, production, stockpiling or other acquisition or maintenance of biological warfare agents.”

The paper concluded that China is capable of developing, producing and weaponizing some 40 anti-human pathogens and toxins (P&T).

5. Key Takeaways

In summary, here are a few takeaways from this article:

1. It is unclear where the 1st contracted case in Wuhan received the virus.
2. The Wuhan Institute of Virology has amassed substantial information on pathogens, including the bat SARS-like

coronavirus.

3. Chinese military has amassed substantial information on the bat SARS-like coronavirus, having mapped out 50% of all known genome sequences.
4. Chinese has never stopped pursuing an active bioweapon program.