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Fauci and NIH defend giving \$600K to Wuhan to study how viruses can transmit from bats to humans before COVID-19 outbreak - after being accused of funding 'gain of function' research in heated argument with Rand Paul

- Anthony Fauci on Tuesday appeared before a Congressional budget committee
- Fauci defended the spending of \$600,000 on the Wuhan laboratory
- Scientists now believe it is possible that COVID-19 escaped from the Wuhan lab
- Fauci said the money, to be spend over five years, was 'modest'
- He denied again that the cash was spent on 'gain of function' research
- The controversial experiments make viruses more deadly or transmissible
- On May 11 Fauci and Rand Paul sparred over how the U.S. funding was spent
- Fauci insisted it was not spent on 'gain of function'; Paul said it was
- Trump on Tuesday reacted with delight at people now believing 'lab leak'

By HARRIET ALEXANDER FOR DAILYMAIL.COM

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Anthony Fauci has defended the United States' 'modest' and 'very respectable' funding of the Wuhan laboratory - which is now at the center of speculation as a possible source of the COVID-19 virus.

Fauci, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), appeared before a Congressional budget committee on Tuesday.

He defended allocating \$600,000 to a group called EcoHealth Alliance, which then paid the Wuhan Institute of Virology to study the risk that bat coronaviruses could infect humans.

Under the terms of the funding, the money could not be spend on 'gain of function' research - a controversial practice which explores how viruses mutate and become more transmissible or more dangerous.

Fauci said the research was essential, pointing out that the SARS outbreak in the early 2000s was eventually traced back to bats.

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'I would have been almost a dereliction of our duty if we didn't study this, and the only way you can study these things is you've got to go where the action is,' he said.



+20

Dr Anthony Fauci on Tuesday appeared before a House committee to discuss the budget

Fauci admits \$600,000 of public money went to Wuhan



Watch the full video



'You don't want to study bats in Fairfax County, Virginia, to find out what the animal-human interface is that might lead to a jumping of species.

'So we had a modest collaboration with very respectable Chinese scientists who were world experts on coronavirus, and we did that through a sub-grant from a larger grant to EcoHealth.'

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Fauci added: 'The larger grant was about \$600,000 over a period of five years. So it was a modest amount. The purpose of it was to study the animal-human interface, to

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do surveillance and to determine if these bat viruses were even capable of' infecting humans.

Francis Collins, the director of NIH, had said earlier in the hearing that the American taxpayer money that went to the Wuhan Institute of Virology was not approved to conduct gain of function research.

Funding by the U.S. government of research in Wuhan has become immensely controversial.

On May 10 Tucker Carlson used his Fox News show to question 'the deadly experiments that were going on there'.

The following day Rand Paul, senator for Kentucky, grilled Fauci about the funding - which was reinstated with a different grant in August, **NPR** reported, after another earlier grant was blocked in April 2020 amid concern over safety at the Wuhan lab.

Paul insisted that the money was being used for gain of function research: Fauci insisted it was not.

'You are entirely and completely incorrect,' Fauci told Paul at the heated hearing.

'The NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain of function research in the Wuhan Institute.'

Paul, an ophthalmologist, wouldn't let up, repeatedly questioning Fauci on the matter, which has emerged in conservative circles as a theory tied to the origins of the coronavirus.

Paul accuses Dr Fauci of funding the Wuhan Institute of Virology



Watch the full video

0:00 / 7:13



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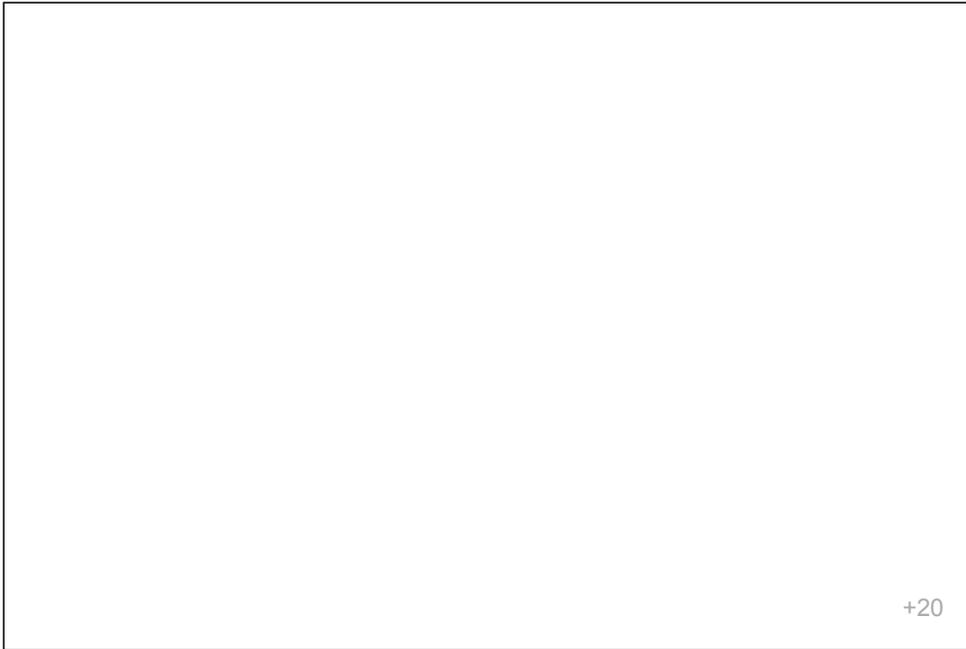
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Rand Paul, senator for Kentucky, on May 11 got in to a heated debate with Fauci about funding

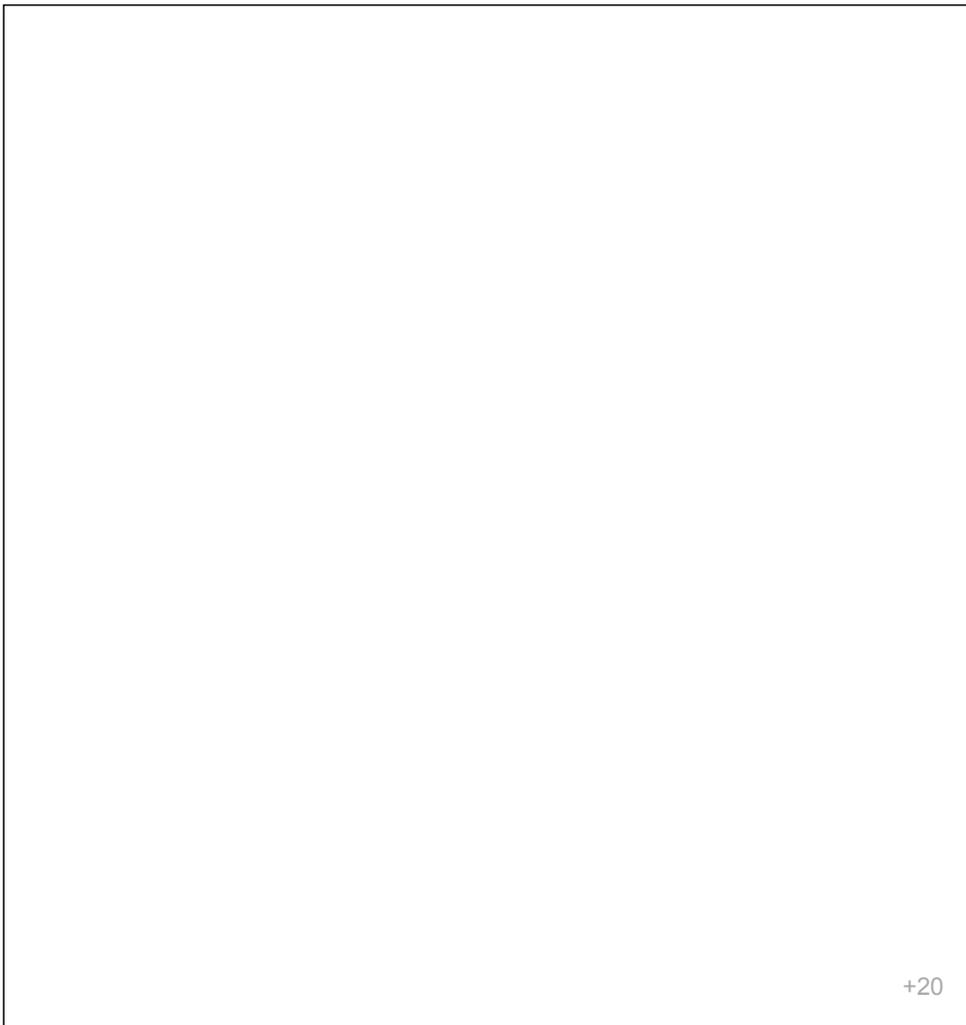
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Fauci defended allocating \$600,000 to a group called EcoHealth Alliance, which then paid the Wuhan Institute of Virology (pictured) to study the risk that bat coronaviruses could infect humans

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'Could you rule out a laboratory escape?' Paul asked Fauci.

'The answer in this case is probably not. Will you in front of this group categorically say that the COVID-19 could not have occurred through serial passage in a laboratory.'

Fauci replied: 'I do not have any accounting of what the Chinese may have done and I'm fully in favor of any further investigation of what went on in China.'

'However I will repeat again, the NIH and NIAD categorically has not funded gain of function research to be conducted in the Wuhan Institute,' he added.

Paul told Fauci: 'You're fooling with mother nature here. You're allowing super viruses to be created with a 15% mortality. It's very dangerous and it was a huge mistake to share this with China.'

'We should be very careful to investigate where this virus came from.'

Fauci replied: 'I fully agree that you should investigate where the virus came from. But again, we have not funded gain of function research on this virus in the Wuhan Institute of Virology.'

'No matter how many times you say it, it didn't happen.'

Fauci on Tuesday reiterated his comments, telling Mark Pocan, a congressman for Wisconsin, that 'there was nothing in the grant application and or the description of the grant, that would call for what is referred to as gain of function.'

'That categorically was not done.'

Fauci is among the scientists now asking for more information about what happened inside the lab - having previously been skeptical about the theory that the virus escaped from a lab.

Donald Trump on Tuesday issued a statement saying that he had been right all along about the 'lab leak' hypothesis.

'Now everybody is agreeing that I was right when I very early on called Wuhan as the source of COVID-19, sometimes referred to as the China Virus,' he said.

'To me it was obvious from the beginning but I was badly criticized, as usual.'

'Now they are all saying 'He was right.' Thank you!'

Fact check on funding for Wuhan lab

USA Today found it 'false' that any US funding led to the COVID outbreak.

In 2014, NIH approved a grant to EcoHealth Alliance designated for research into 'Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence.' The project involved collaborating with researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology to study coronaviruses in bats and the risk of potential transfer to humans.

In total, \$3,378,896 in NIH funding was directed from the government to the project.

Over the course of the two grants approved by the NIH for EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute received about \$600,000 from the NIH, according to Robert Kessler, a spokesperson for EcoHealth Alliance.

The funding was a fee for the collection and analysis of viral samples, the group said. It was directed toward SARS research.

In the grant approved in 2014, about \$133,000 was sent to the institute in the first four years and about \$66,000 in the past year. In the second grant approved in 2019, about \$76,000 was budgeted for the Wuhan Institute, though no money was sent before the grant's termination.

The grant was terminated in April 2020.

- USA Today fact check



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US liberal media's Covid U-turn: A year after TRASHING theory that COVID originated from a Wuhan lab because Trump supported the suggestion - America's woke mainstream news outlets suddenly start asking if it's true!

The liberal media have finally conceded that **COVID-19** may have originated in a Wuhan laboratory - after a year spent ridiculing the suggestion.

The first fatality from COVID-19 was **reported** by Chinese state media on January 11, 2020, when a 61-year-old man who was a regular customer at a market in Wuhan died. The first confirmed case in the United States was 10 days later, when a man returned to **Washington state** from Wuhan.

Within a week, on January 26, 2020, the first article blaming the Wuhan Institute of Virology for the outbreak was published, in The Washington Times. Yet most mainstream media disputed the claims, dismissing them outright or even decrying them as racist.

When Donald Trump, on May 1, 2020, said he had 'a high degree of confidence' that the virus escaped from a lab, the New York Times, CNN, and NPR were quick to mock his comments.

CNN, which by the end of the Trump administration was brazen in its hostility to the president and his advisors, was almost gleeful in its mockery of the idea that the virus could have come from a laboratory.

The Washington Post, New York Times, and NPR were equally dismissive of suggestions that the virus could have come from a laboratory.



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The Washington Post published a fact checker piece on May 25 saying the theory had 'suddenly' become credible after it was repeatedly brought up. It came after a year of naysaying from the liberal media who never accepted that it might be true



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Love Island stars

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▶ Tyga holds hands with girlfriend Camaryn Swanson as they enjoy a day at Disneyland alongside Amber Rose and their kids

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▶ Kourtney Kardashian says she's been enjoying 'time off' in lockdown away from her 'hard' schedule juggling work and motherhood

Kendall Jenner looks like she means

There is outrage over the fact that for the last year, the theory has been widely discredited by the media in America when it may explain the entire pandemic

Some outlets, such as the Huffington Post, even branded any suggestion the virus could have stemmed from a lab as a 'toxic conspiracy theory.'

Few were able to suggest that COVID-19 could have stemmed from a research facility without backlash but that didn't stop some media, including the Daily Mail, from questioning the narrative.

Fox News' Tucker Carlson was also clear in demanding an investigation into whether it could have escaped from the lab.

Finally, in the past few months, came the first signs that opinion was beginning to change.

In January, a World Health Organization (WHO) report only served to raise more questions after Beijing strictly controlled an on-site visit and who the researchers compiling the report spoke to. The WHO team was only allowed three hours inside the Wuhan lab and was unable to examine any of the Wuhan institute's safety logs or records of testing on its staff.

China's actions led to Biden's White House calling for greater transparency.

Even Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the WHO, said that the visit was inconclusive, adding that 'all hypotheses are open' and warranted future study.

By May 11, the leading public health expert in the United States, Dr Anthony Fauci, had accepted that the idea of the virus escaping from a lab had been too quickly dismissed.

Asked whether the virus originated naturally, Fauci replied that he wants to look closer into the matter.

'I am not convinced about that,' **he said**. 'I think we should continue to investigate what went on in China until we continue to find out to the best of our ability what happened.'

'Certainly, the people who investigated it say it likely was the emergence from an animal reservoir that then infected individuals, but it could have been something else, and we need to find that out. So, you know, that's the reason why I said I'm perfectly in favor of any investigation that looks into the origin of the virus.'

Fauci's revelation came as a shock to many on the left who have accepted China's narrative that coronavirus spread from a wet market since the virus first emerged.

Of course, China continues to insist that COVID-19 did not originate in the Wuhan lab.

'The U.S. keeps concocting inconsistent claims and clamoring to investigate labs in Wuhan,' China's foreign ministry said in a written statement on May 24. This fully shows that some people in the U.S. don't care about facts and truth.'

CNN

On May 1, 2020, CNN reported that Trump had 'contradicted' the intel community by claiming to have seen evidence the virus came from a lab.

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Awkward

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Katie, 42, wore her brunette hair in a bun

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Film will follow the story of a detective and FBI profiler

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▶ [AJ Pritchard cuddles up to glamorous girlfriend Abbie Quinnen as they arrive at the London Palladium for Here Come the Boys launch](#)

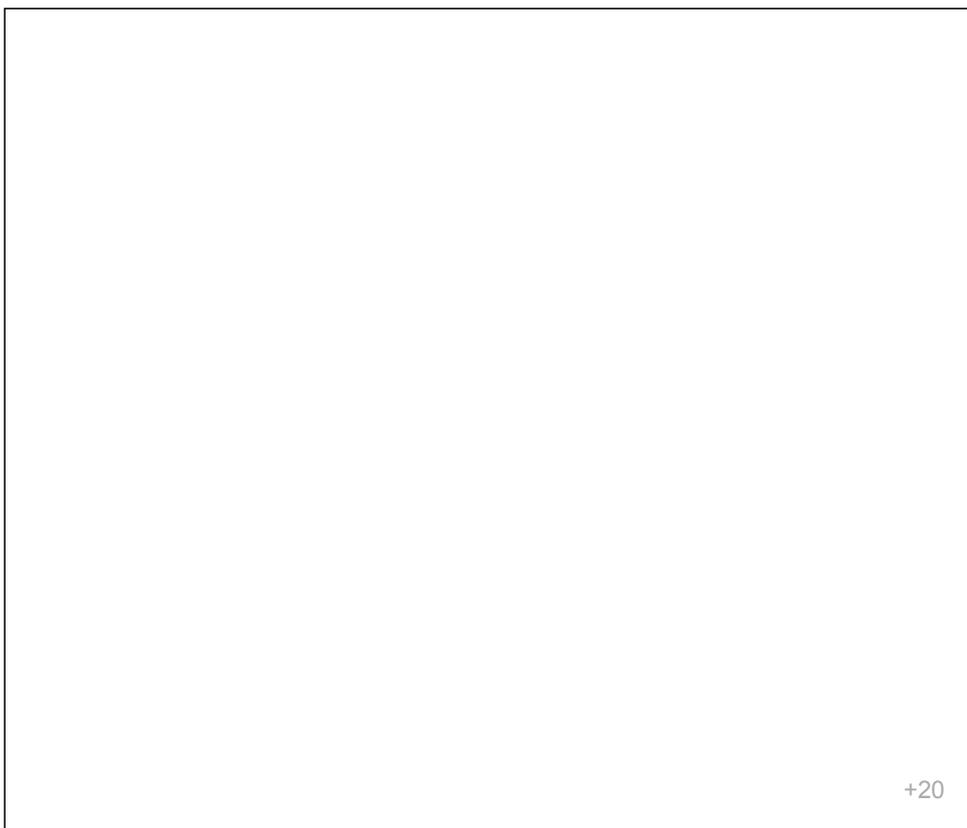
'President Donald Trump contradicted a rare on-the-record statement from his own intelligence community by claiming Thursday that he has seen evidence that gives him a "high degree of confidence" the novel coronavirus originated in a laboratory in Wuhan, China, but declined to provide details to back up his assertion.

'The comments undercut a public statement from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence issued just hours earlier which stated no such assessment has been made and continues to "rigorously examine" whether the outbreak "began through contact with infected animals or if it was the result of an accident at a laboratory in Wuhan."

"Yes, I have," Trump said when asked whether he's seen evidence that would suggest the virus originated in the lab. Later, asked why he was confident in that assessment, Trump demurred.

"I can't tell you that. I'm not allowed to tell you that," the report read.

Then on May 5, 2020, their editor-at-large Chris Cillizza wrote a scathing attack on the suggestion, entitled: Anthony Fauci just crushed Donald Trump's theory on the origins of the coronavirus.



MAY 1 2020: On May 1, 2020, CNN reported that Trump had 'contradicted' the intel community by claiming to have seen evidence the virus came from a lab. They pointed to how rare it was for the intelligence community to make a statement



▶ **Demi Rose goes topless while posing with a vintage Playboy magazine as she announces she's joined OnlyFans**
Racy

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Tigerlily looked ready for the catwalk

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One to watch

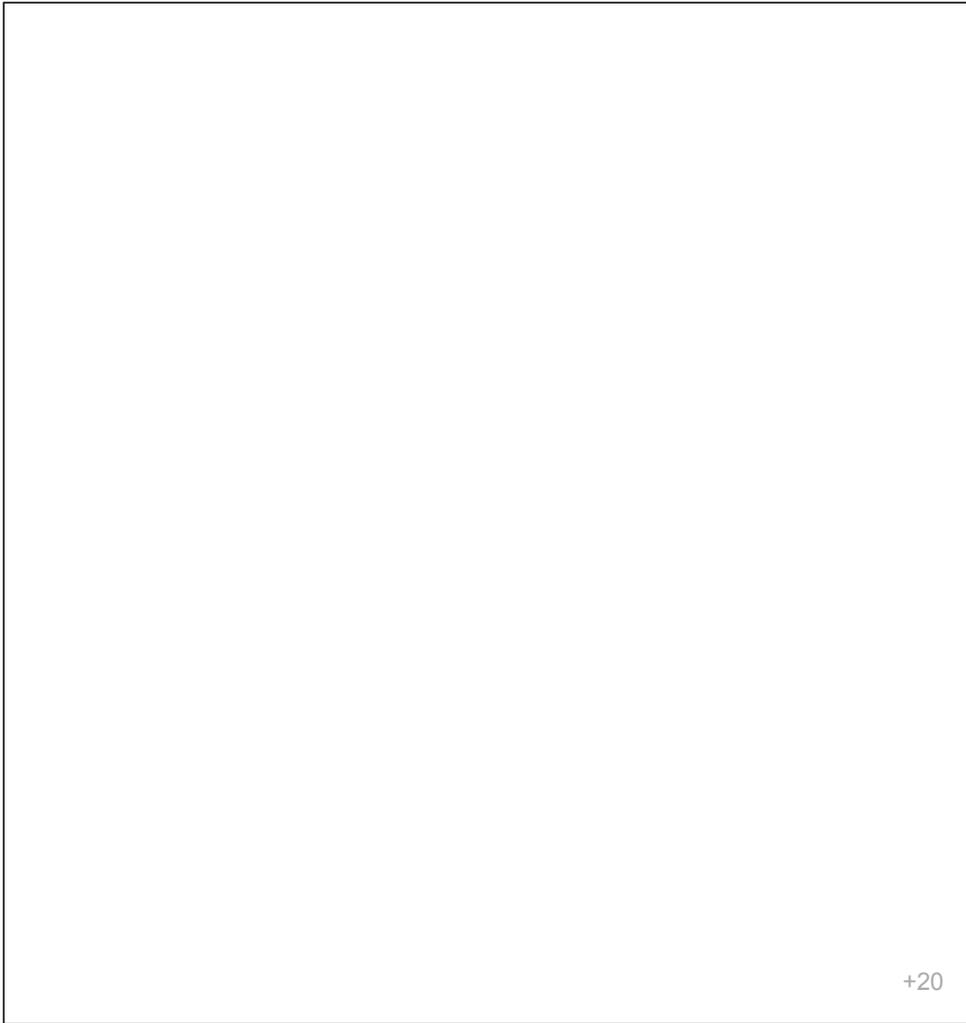
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It was revealed on Wednesday

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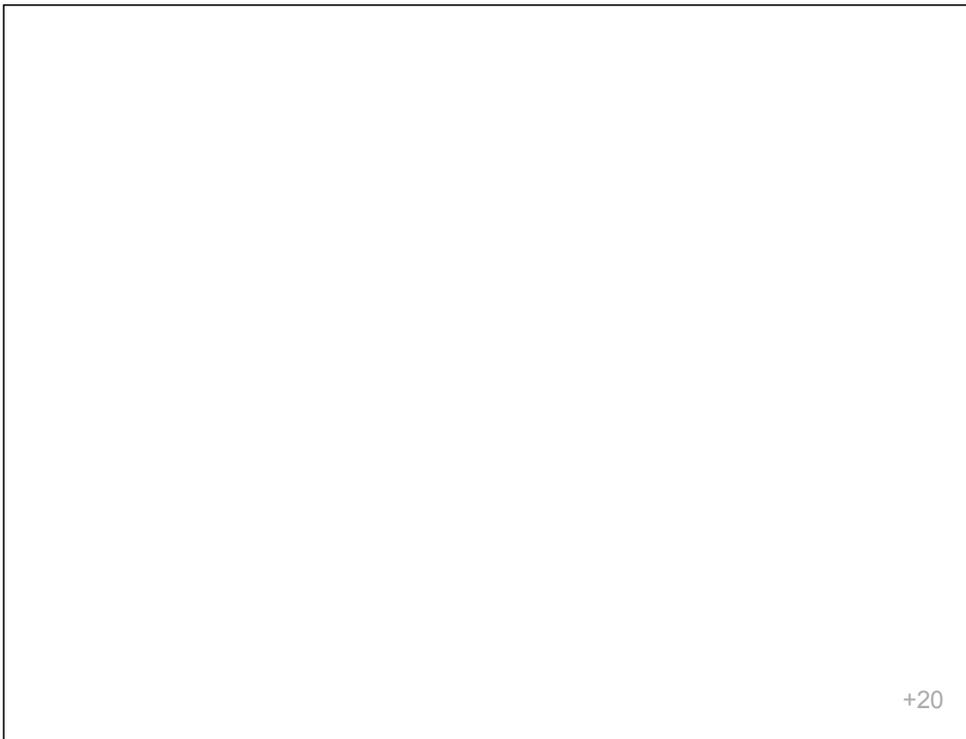
Larsa Pippen wants to get 'back to normal' with ex-BFF Kim Kardashian now she's divorcing





+20

MAY 5 2020: Chris Cillizza wrote an opinion piece saying Fauci had 'crushed Trump's theory' about the origins of the virus



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OCTOBER 2020: CNN published another report about how the theory came from a 'shoddy' paper that was backed by Bannon. It claimed there was no proof whatsoever behind the theory

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Dreaming big

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EXCLUSIVE Mica Paris is up for a return to EastEnders... and reveals there was a woman on set who used a STICK to ensure social distance

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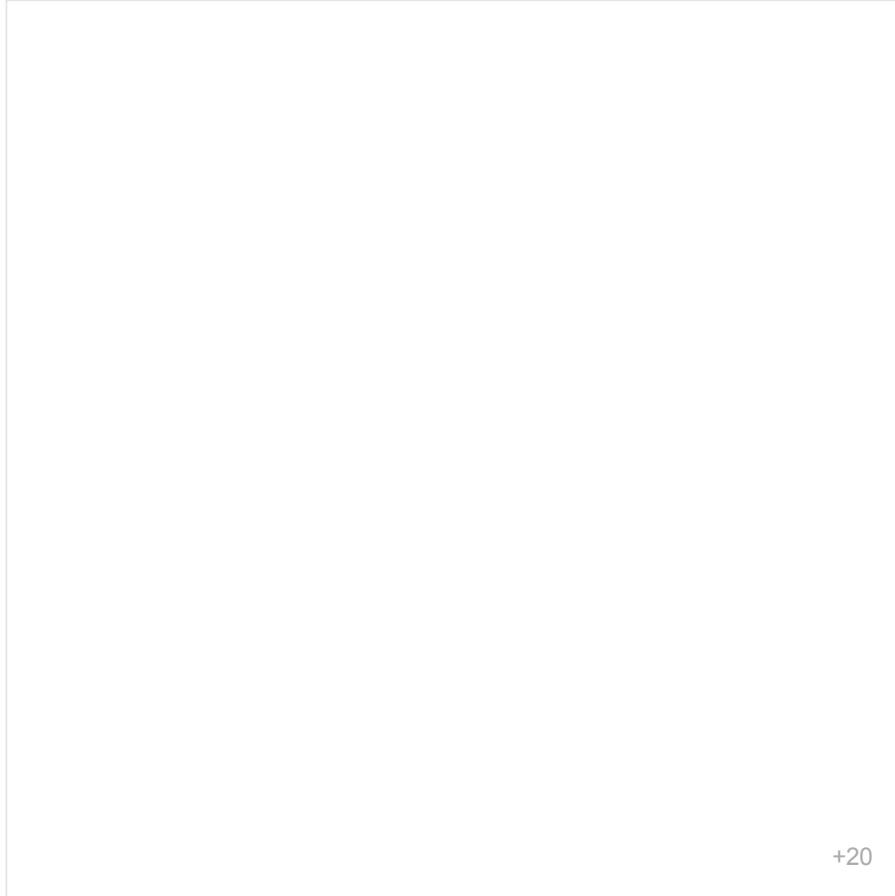
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Daily Mail has been asking if the virus stemmed from a Wuhan lab since April 2020

The Daily Mail has consistently questioned the consensus that COVID-19 was transmitted from humans to animals.

Our reporters have dug into the details and challenged the assumptions about how the pandemic originated.



APRIL 4, 2020:

Did coronavirus leak from a research lab in Wuhan? Startling new theory is 'no longer being discounted' amid claims staff 'got infected after being sprayed with blood'

Ministers fear that the coronavirus pandemic might have been caused by a leak from a Chinese laboratory, The Mail on Sunday can reveal.

Senior Government sources say that while 'the balance of scientific advice' is still that the deadly virus was first transmitted to humans from a live animal market in Wuhan, a leak from a laboratory in the Chinese city is 'no longer being discounted'.

One member of Cobra, the emergency committee led by Boris Johnson, said last night that while the latest intelligence did not dispute the virus was

▶ **SEBASTIAN SHAKESPEARE:** It's bling 'n' buy as Joan Collins' jewels go under the hammer

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▶ Marcel Somerville's fiancée Rebecca Vieira looks incredible in a plunging crop top and skinny jeans four months after giving birth to their son Roman

▶ Bake Off star Candice Brown looks sensational in a gold wrap dress as she attends The Conjuring screening
Striking

▶ RuPaul's Drag Race: All Stars season six cast revealed... with four plus-size queens in the running
Out of 13 RPDR seasons and five All Stars

▶ The Masked Singer: Nick Lachey takes off Piglet mask after winning season five of hit Fox show

Oti Mabuse 'broke out in song' after landing

'zoonotic' – originating in animals – it did not rule out that the virus first spread to humans after leaking from a Wuhan laboratory.

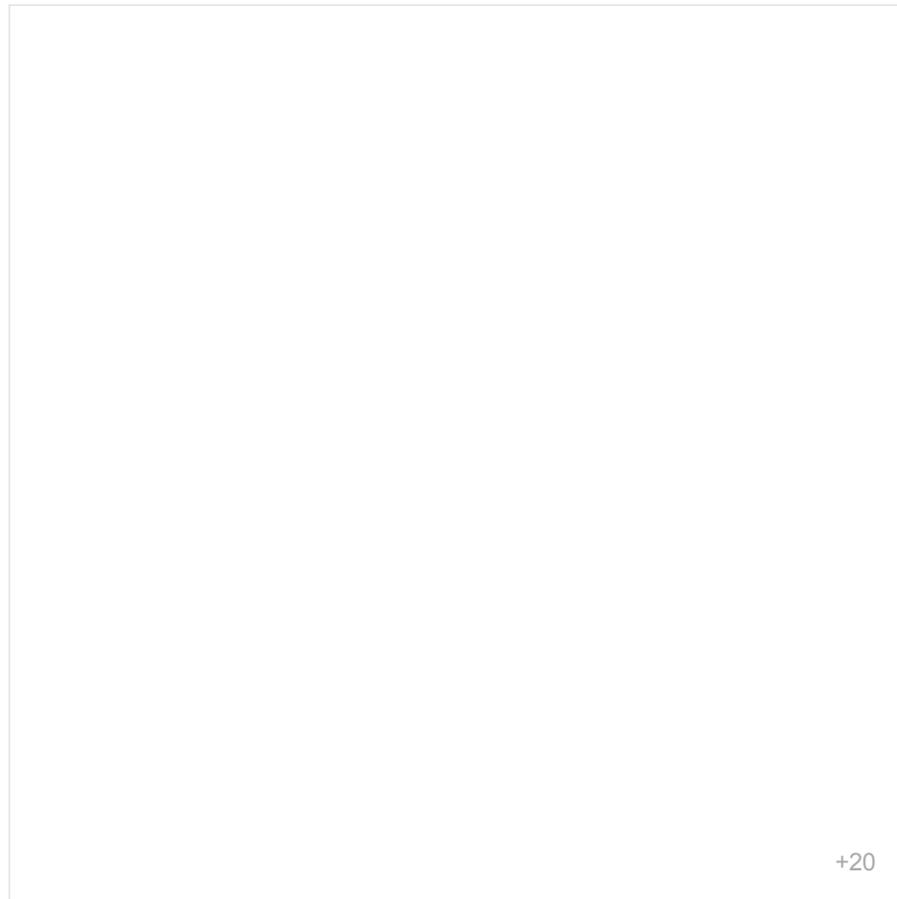
APRIL 15, 2020:

Mike Pompeo demands truth from Beijing as US investigates if COVID-19 escaped from Wuhan lab during experiments and China covered it up by blaming 'wet' food markets

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has demanded that China 'come clean' following reports that coronavirus originated in a Chinese laboratory, not as a bioweapon, but as part of bungling experiments to prove that Chinese scientists were superior to Americans in identifying emerging virus threats.

It comes after President Donald Trump said on Wednesday the U.S. is trying to determine whether the coronavirus first crossed to humans accidentally during experiments with bats at the Wuhan Institute of Virology Lab.

After word of the outbreak finally became public, Chinese leaders were quick to blame Wuhan's 'wet market' where wild animals -- though not bats -- are sold for consumption, leading one source to tell Fox News the debacle is the 'costliest government coverup of all time.'



MAY 2, 2020:

Wuhan virus lab 'cover-up': Startling photos of scientists wearing little protection as they handle deadly bat samples vanish from website of Chinese institute at the centre of global suspicion over pandemic

Pictures which appear to show slack safety standards at the Chinese laboratory at the centre of international suspicion over **Covid-19** have been

▶ **Masked Dancer** judging role and admits her guesses are 'insane' as Mo Gilligan calls Strictly star 'competitive'

▶ **Nicky Hilton is chic in pink Chanel** as she and husband James Rothschild treat their stylish young daughters to cupcakes
Chic

▶ **'What a stinky way to exploit folk': Dawn French reveals scammers use her to sell 'dangerous' diet pills** after her 7.5 stone weight loss

▶ **Chloe Ferry puts on a busty display in thigh-skimming mini dress** as she heads out for drinks with her Geordie Shore pals in Portugal
Fun in the sun

▶ **American Rapper The Game is ordered to pay more than \$500,000 in damages** by an Australian court over his 'fake' 2017 tour
Down Under

▶ **Jada Pinkett Smith gets matching lotus tattoos** with her daughter Willow and mother Adrienne: 'Now I want a sleeve!'
Bonding event

▶ **Bristol Palin proudly shows off scars** from a 2018 tummy tuck... as she reveals she went under the knife the same year as her divorce

▶ **'It hurts but is getting better every day': Jane Seymour, 70, credits ballet** with helping her kneecap hairline fracture after nasty fall

▶ **Bachelorette alum Jason Tartick was offered \$100,000** to be the next Bachelor while Dean Unglert was paid \$600 A DAY on Bachelor In Paradise

Eternally youthful Jennifer Aniston, 52, enjoys pamper session at Beverly Hills spa ahead of highly-

systematically deleted from its website – as **Donald Trump** continues to ramp up the pressure on Beijing over its potential role in the outbreak.

▶ [anticipated Friends reunion special](#)

During the past month, Wuhan's Institute of Virology has removed photographs of scientists working in its laboratories and edited out references to visits by US diplomats who subsequently raised the alarm about the laboratory's work on bats.

US President Donald Trump announced on Thursday that he had seen intelligence that gave him a 'high degree of confidence' that the global crisis had its origins in the institute – a month after The Mail on Sunday first revealed that British Cabinet Ministers had received classified briefings raising the possibility of a leak from the institute.

▶ [Dame Joan Collins, 88, looks elegant in a blue patterned dress and chic white blazer as she attends glamorous property event in Mallorca](#)

Downing Street did not take issue with President Trump's remarks. 'There are clearly questions that need to be answered about the origin and spread of the virus,' a spokesman for **Boris Johnson** said.

▶ ['The Very Hungry Caterpillar' author Eric Carle dies at 91: Family announce his passing saying 'a painter of rainbows is now traveling the night sky'](#)

MAY 30, 2020:

Beijing now admits that coronavirus DIDN'T start in Wuhan's market... so where DID it come from

China has become used to public confessions on television. But this time the words came from one of the nation's top officials and had seismic global implications.

'At first, we assumed the seafood market might have the virus, but now the market is more like a victim,' said Gao Fu, director of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gao's initial analysis had made sense after previous outbreaks of zoonotic viruses (diseases that jump from animals to humans). Yet suspicion grew over the Chinese government's failure to share data from animals sampled in the market following its early cover-ups.

▶ [Brad Pitt scores huge victory in war with Angelina Jolie as he wins joint custody of children after judge found testimony 'lacked credibility'](#)

▶ [Tana Ramsay steps out in London after her daughter Holly, 21, spoke about spending three months in a mental health hospital following assaults](#)

▶ [This modern Cruella is a baddie who deserves our compassion: BRIAN VINER reviews the new big-screen outing for the dog-killing heiress](#)
One to watch

JANUARY 2, 2021:

China lab leak is the 'most credible' source of the coronavirus outbreak, says top US government official, amid bombshell claims Wuhan scientist has turned whistleblower

One of America's most senior government officials says the most 'credible' theory about the origin of **coronavirus** is that it escaped from a laboratory in **China**.

Matthew Pottinger, who is President **Donald Trump's** respected Deputy National Security Adviser, told politicians from around the world that even China's leaders now openly admit their previous claims that the virus originated in a Wuhan market are false.

Mr Pottinger said that the latest intelligence points to the virus leaking from the top-secret Wuhan Institute of Virology, 11 miles from the market, saying: 'There is a growing body of evidence that the lab is likely the most credible source of the virus.'

▶ [Kristin Cavallari showcases her toned figure in sultry black bikini... after rocking cutoff jeans and corset top for Palm Springs photoshoot](#)

▶ [Ferne McCann flashes her abs in a lime green crop top and mom jeans at the press night for Here Come The Boys](#)
Ferne looked flawless on the outing

▶ [Viscountess Emma Weymouth puts on a VERY leggy display in a gold mini dress at the Here Come The Boys press night](#)
Golden girl

JANUARY 9, 2021:

New cover-up fears as Chinese officials delete critical data about the Wuhan lab with details of 300 studies vanishing - including all those carried out by

▶ [No dad bod here! Joel Edgerton shows off his muscular frame as he hits the gym in Sydney... after welcoming his first child with girlfriend Christine Centenera](#)

virologist dubbed Batwoman

The Chinese government is facing fresh accusations of a cover-up after officials deleted crucial online data about the laboratory suspected of being the source of Covid-19.

The Mail on Sunday can reveal that hundreds of pages of information relating to studies carried out by the top-secret Wuhan Institute of Virology have been wiped.

Details of more than 300 studies, including many investigating diseases that pass from animals to humans, published online by the state-run National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) are no longer available.

APRIL 24, 2021:

Worrying new clues about the origins of Covid: How scientists at Wuhan lab helped Chinese army in secret project to find animal viruses

Scientists studying bat diseases at **China's** maximum-security laboratory in Wuhan were engaged in a massive project to investigate animal viruses alongside leading military officials – despite their denials of any such links.

Documents obtained by **The Mail on Sunday** reveal that a nationwide scheme, directed by a leading state body, was launched nine years ago to discover new viruses and detect the 'dark matter' of biology involved in spreading diseases.



'Before we play the game of 'he said, he said' remember this: Only one of these two people is a world-renowned infectious disease expert. And it's not Donald Trump,' Cillizza wrote.

'In short, Fauci's view on the origins of the disease matters a whole lot more than Trump's opinion about where it came from.

'Especially because, outside of Trump and his immediate inner circle, most people in a position to know are very, very skeptical of the Trump narrative that the virus came out of a lab - whether accidentally or on purpose.'

Cillizza's article followed on from one four days earlier, headlined: 'Trump contradicts US intel community by claiming he's seen evidence coronavirus originated in Chinese lab'.

Yet fast forward almost a year, and the tone had greatly changed.

Dr Sanjay Gupta, CNN's chief medical correspondent, spoke on March 26 this year to Robert Redfield, the former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC).

Redfield said that he had concluded the virus escaped from a lab.

▶ **Inside John Terry's lavish £4.35m Surrey mansion renovation with wine and cigar room, swimming pool and luxury kitchen**
Look inside

▶ **Back to where love royally blossomed! Kate Middleton and Wills return to St Andrews University where they met 20 years ago**

▶ **Jennifer Lopez arrives for a fitness session in bedazzled top and curve-hugging leggings... but Ben Affleck skips the gym this time**

▶ **Friends reunion brings 'flashes' of cast magic but is 'bloated' with 'tiresome filler' and 'banal' questions from James Corden, critics claim in early reviews**

▶ **Gwyneth Paltrow, 48, looks youthful as she goes makeup-free while announcing she is joining the board of a company: 'I am thrilled to be part of the ride'**

▶ **Katie Holmes' chef ex Emilio Vitolo Jr is seen chatting up newly single Zoe Kravitz as they leave his father's NYC restaurant together**
Cosy

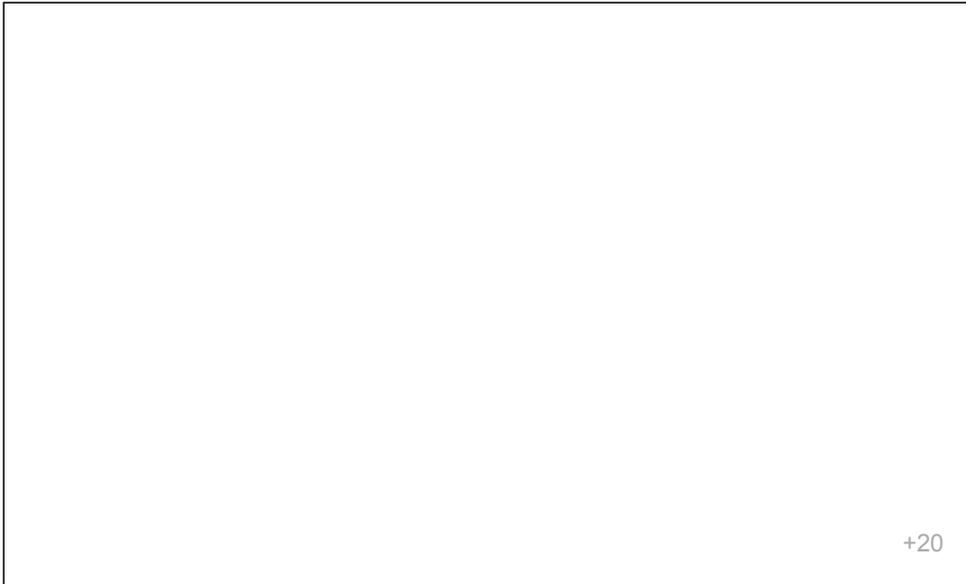
▶ **Amelia Hamlin the giddy teen posts GUSHING tribute to Scott Disick on his 38th birthday that leaves her followers cringing**
Cringe

▶ **Mr. Big time! Chris Noth confirmed to reprise role in the Sex and the City reboot... after it was revealed that leading men Aiden and Steve will also join**

▶ **Zara McDermott flaunts her sizzling physique in busty black bikini and stylish red trousers as she soaks up the sun in Portugal**
Wow

▶ **Nicola Adams cosies up to girlfriend Ella Baig and they lead stars at The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It screening**
Sweet

ARIAs: Diversity's Jordan Banjo and Perri



+20

MARCH 2021: The former CDC head, Dr Robert Redfield, on CNN in March 2021, saying he believes the virus came from a lab. He told the reporter: 'I am of the point of view, I still think the most likely etiology of this pathogen in Wuhan was from a laboratory, escaped. Other people don't believe that. That's fine, science will eventually figure it out. It's not unusual for respiratory pathogens that are being worked on in a laboratory to infect the laboratory worker.' CNN called it 'controversial'

▶ Kiely host awards show (and scoop a gong themselves) as the likes of Greg James and YUNGBLUD win

▶ Bradley Cooper enjoys quality time with daughter Lea in NYC... amid claims his ex Irina Shayk is 'dating' Kim Kardashian's estranged husband Kanye West

▶ Victoria Beckham looks stylish as she steps out with husband David in NYC but decides to keep her face mask ON despite CDC ruling

▶ 'Look at the sheer delight!' Paddy McGuinness shares cheeky snap in bed with topless wife Christine after enjoying a nap while 'home alone'

▶ 'Home for now': Mark Wright gives fans a tour of his temporary £2,510-a-NIGHT suite at the Corinthia hotel in London with wife Michelle Keegan

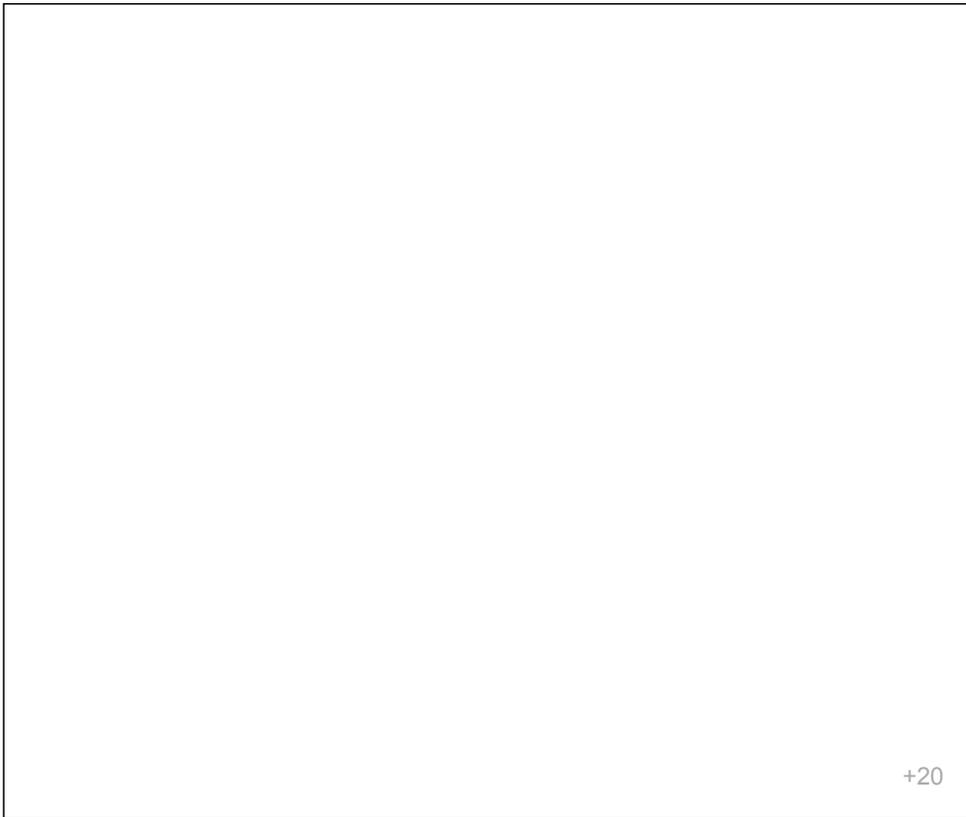
▶ Rosie Huntington-Whiteley puts on a stylish display as she poses in a cream tank top and white flared jeans for stunning snaps

▶ Lottie Moss shows off her quirky sense of style in a lime green corset as she attends PLT fashion launch party
Striking

▶ ARIAs 2021: Vanessa Feltz proudly shows off her 3.5 stone weight loss in a ravishing red cocktail dress on the red carpet

▶ ARIAs 2021: Fleur East cuts a stylish figure in cream leather jumpsuit as she hits red carpet at star-studded event to celebrate the big names in UK radio

Hungover Chloe Sims rolls around in her underwear as she struggles to recover



+20

MAY 2021: On May 24, a new report was which said US intelligence had found there was some evidence the virus came from a Wuhan lab

'I am of the point of view that I still think the most likely etiology of this pathogen in Wuhan was from a laboratory, you know, escaped,' he said.

'Now, other people don't believe that, that's fine. Science will eventually figure it out.

'It's not unusual for respiratory pathogens that are being worked on in the laboratory to infect the laboratory worker.'

On May 23, [The Wall Street Journal](#) reported that three researchers from Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care, according to a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report

The following day the paper [reported](#) on a mysterious mine around 80 miles outside Wuhan where, in April 2012, six miners here fell sick after entering the mine to clear bat guano. Three of them died.

Chinese scientists from the Wuhan Institute of Virology were called in to investigate and, after taking samples from bats in the mine, identified several new coronaviruses. Yet they were not forthcoming with their information.

On May 24, CNN admitted that there may be more to the Wuhan lab than initially believed. They published an update: New information on Wuhan researchers' illness furthers debate on pandemic origins

But Cilizza is still standing by his earlier claims it isn't.

He wrote an opinion piece on why Dr. Fauci was 'hedging' on the subject, and said just because Fauci said he was no longer 'convinced' of the origins, it didn't mean he thought it came from a lab.

New York Times

When any Trump-supporting lawmakers said that the Wuhan lab theory merited further exploration, the New York Times was quick to dismiss their claim.

In the first month of the pandemic they seized on questions raised by Tom Cotton, the Republican senator for Arkansas.

'We don't have evidence that this disease originated there,' Cotton said.

'But because of China's duplicity and dishonesty from the beginning, we need to at least ask the question to see what the evidence says, and China right now is not giving evidence on that question at all.'

His words, on February 17, 2020, would prove prescient - yet the New York Times headlined its coverage: Senator Tom Cotton Repeats Fringe Theory of Coronavirus Origins.

By April 30, 2020, the paper was describing the efforts from the Trump administration to get to the bottom of the virus' origins as a political witch hunt.

'Senior Trump administration officials have pushed American spy agencies to hunt for evidence to support an unsubstantiated theory that a government laboratory in Wuhan, China, was the origin of the coronavirus outbreak, according to current and former American officials,' the paper reported.

▶ [after a wild night out with her sisters](#)
Struggling

▶ [GB News launch date confirmed: Andrew Neil's new channel will go to air with a special programme at 8pm on June 13](#)
New UK news network

▶ [Love Island's Ellie Brown turns up the heat in orange swimsuit as she poses up a storm in sexy new snap](#)
The Love Island star, 23, looked incredible

▶ [Love Island's Georgia Harrison wows in a tiny sage green underwear set for new sultry snaps after relocating to Los Angeles from Dubai](#)
Wow

▶ [Justin Theroux and Woody Harrelson are seen for the first time on the New York set of the Watergate scandal movie The White House Plumbers](#)

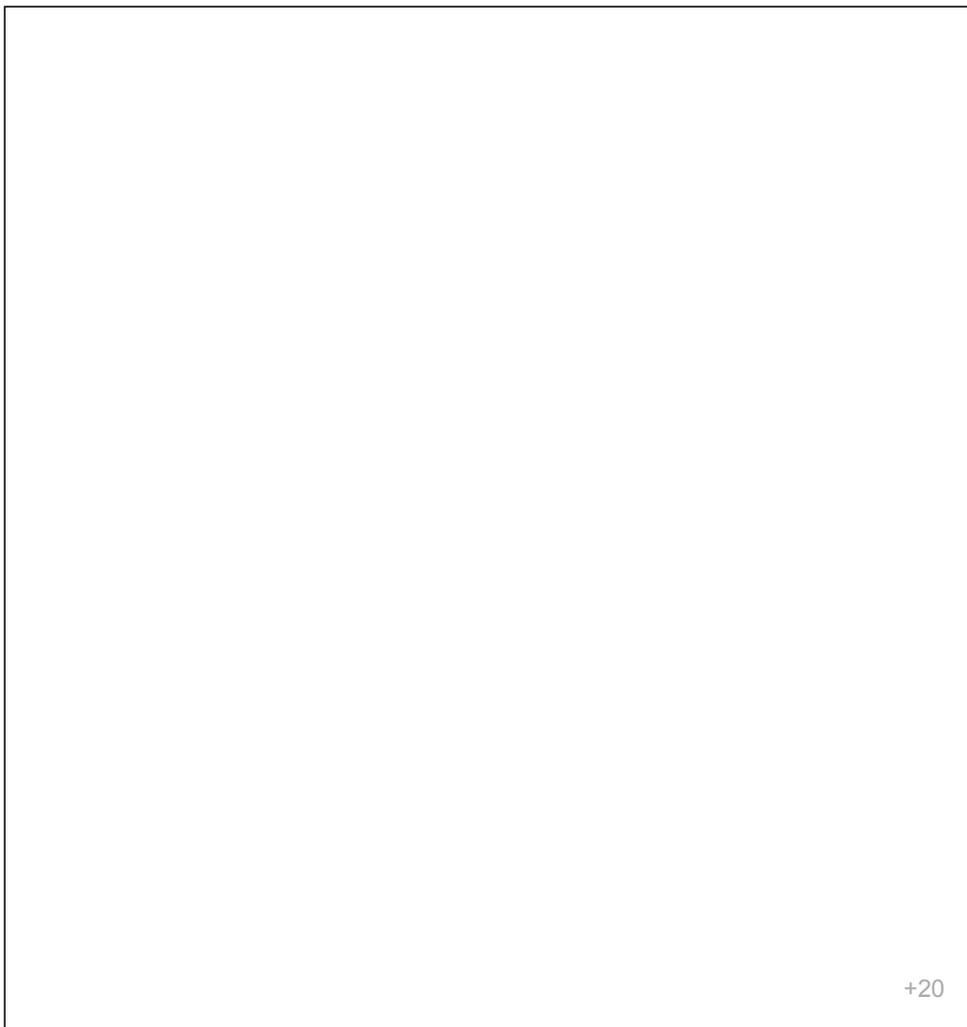
▶ [Love Island's Jess and Eve Gale look incredible in sizzling bikini snaps as they live it up on holiday in Mexico](#)
Jess and Eve looked incredible

▶ [Chris Pratt shows off his six pack abs as he prepares to time travel 30 years into the future to battle aliens in The Tomorrow War trailer](#)
Wow

▶ [Alex Rodriguez heads to the gym in Miami... as ex fiancée Jennifer Lopez continues her tour of love with Ben Affleck in the same city](#)
Out and about

▶ [Louise Redknapp was 'knocked sideways' by the news that ex Jamie is having a baby with Swedish model Frida Anderson](#)

▶ [Kelly Clarkson set to take over Ellen DeGeneres' daytime slot when comedian bows out following low ratings and allegations of bullying](#)



FEBRUARY 2020: The New York Times was initially adamant (left) that the Wuhan lab leak theory was a nonsense invented by Trump, but by 2021 was accepting that opinions varied (right)

▶ **Jessie J shows off her incredible figure in a Calvin Klein thong and sports bra set as she shares sultry selfie**
The Flashlight hitmaker, 33, lowered her waistline

▶ **Halsey sparks marriage rumors as she's spotted wearing matching wedding bands with beau Alev Aydin ahead of the birth of their first child**

▶ **Ed Westwick's girlfriend Tamara Francesconi puts on a leggy display in brown blazer dress as she leaves party to celebrate her PLT line**

▶ **Pregnant Danielle Lloyd emerges for FIRST TIME since announcing she is expecting her fifth child**
Stepping out

▶ **Sylvester Stallone sports all-black for a family night out to celebrate his daughter's birthday at Craig's in LA**
The 74-year-old actor looked dapper

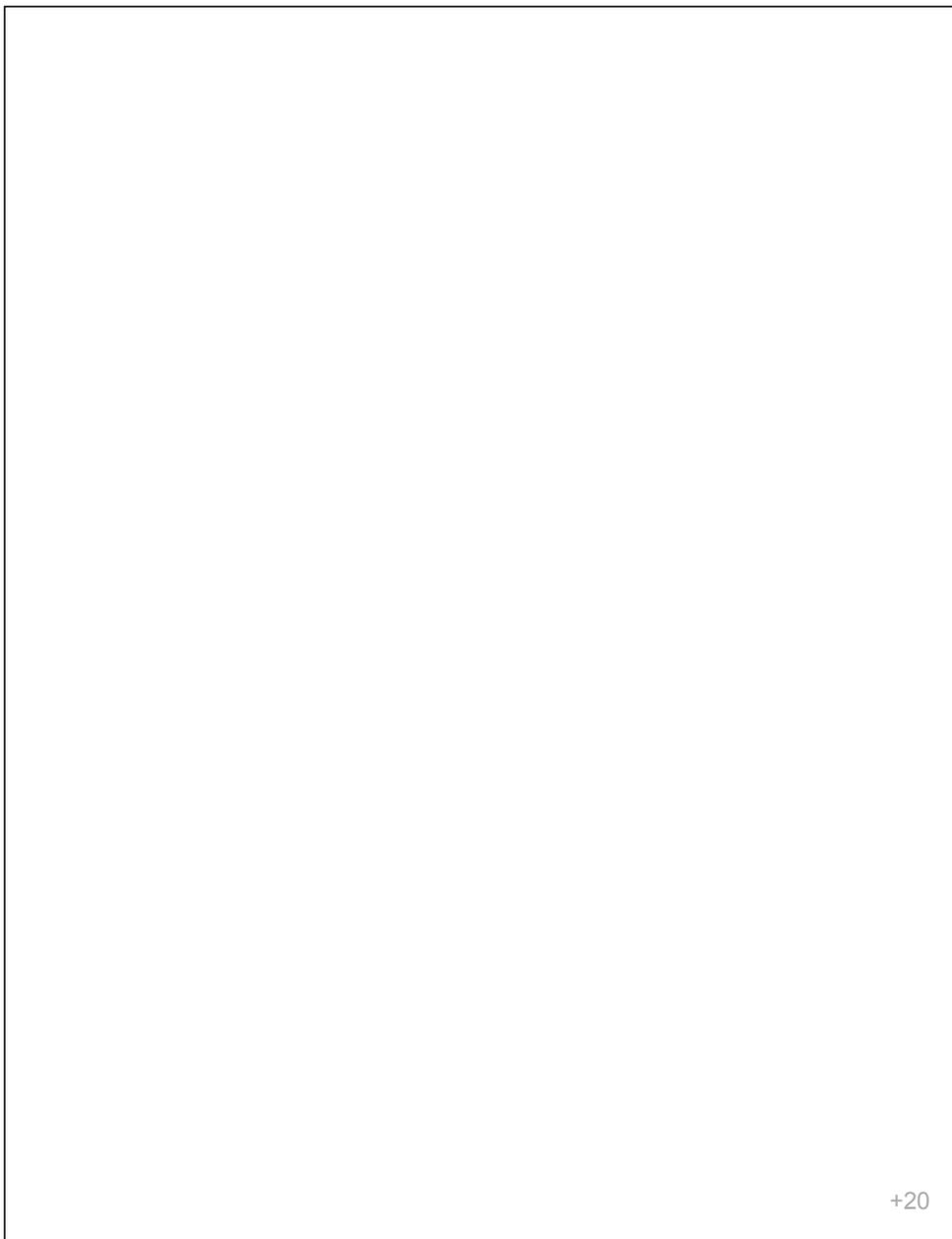
▶ **Jennifer Lawrence cuts a chic figure in black trousers and matching coat during date night with husband Cooke Maroney in New York City**

EXCLUSIVE Alex Jones, 44, didn't realise she was pregnant because she blamed her symptoms on trying veganism and confirms baby girl will be her last child

▶ **Ryan Reynolds, 44, reveals he suffers from anxiety which causes him to 'overwork, over-worry' as pal Hugh Jackman praises him: 'Your honesty is brave'**

▶ **This Is Us creator Dan Fogelman on THAT twist in the fifth season finale and what's to come in season six: 'Everything will be resolved'**
Warning: spoilers ahead!

▶ **'I'm having the time of my life': Love Island's Demi Jones puts on a brave face as she enjoys a trip to the zoo amid thyroid cancer battle**



+20

APRIL 2020: Another NYT report which said Trump officials had been pushing spies to find evidence behind the theory

'The effort comes as President Trump escalates a public campaign to blame China for the pandemic.'

The **story** was headlined: Trump Officials Are Said to Press Spies to Link Virus and Wuhan Labs

Yet this month two former science reporters at the paper - Nicholas Wade, who retired in 2012, and Donald McNeil, who left earlier this year amid a row about his language while guiding a tour of Peru - both said they now felt it was possible, indeed perhaps likely, that the virus came from a lab.

'In early spring 2020, I reported an article for The New York Times on which I put the tentative headline: 'New Coronavirus Is 'Clearly Not a Lab Leak,' Scientists Say,' McNeil wrote on Medium.

'It never ran.'

▶ **Bridgerton's Regé-Jean Page claims he was 'not at all' nervous about leaving the show because his character was meant to only appear in one season**

▶ **What family feud? Kyle, 52, and Kim Richards, 56, team up with sister Kathy Hilton, 62, for a night out... following rivalry that played out on RHOBH**

▶ **'I am a failure!' Kim Kardashian reveals she didn't pass the First Year Law Student Exam in newest KUWTK teaser**
Gutted

▶ **Mark Wahlberg peels off his fat suit on the set of Father Stu in Malibu... after gaining 20lbs to play a boxer-turned-priest in the drama**
Transformed

▶ **In bed with J.Lo! Jennifer Lopez shares snap from Miami love nest she is staying in with Ben Affleck as they are 'full-on dating and very happy'**

▶ **'Just tanning the t**ties': Ashley Roberts' make-up artist applies fake tan to her bosom as she slips into busty white dress in hilarious clip**

▶ **Chloe Ferry showcases her ample cleavage in a gold cut out bikini as she arrives in Portugal for a sun-soaked break**

▶ **WAGS on tour! Partners (and VERY glamorous siblings) of Manchester United stars Fred, Telles and Harry Maguire live it up in Gdask**

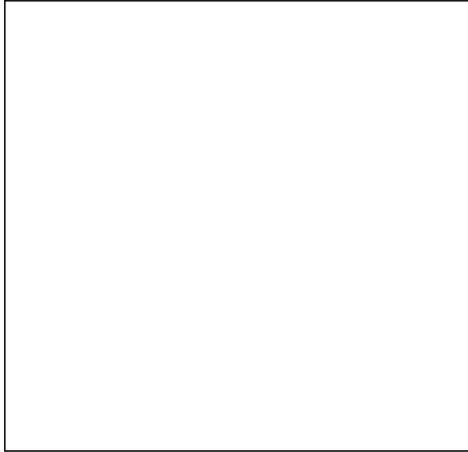
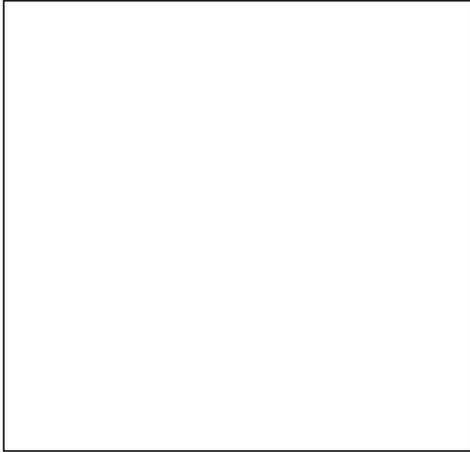
▶ **Catch Kate if you can! Competitive Duchess of Cambridge dons her trusty Barbour jacket and Chloe boots to go land surfing with Prince William at St Andrews**

EXCLUSIVE **Charlie Brooks admits she gets 'lonely' despite bubbling up with her ex in lockdown and says she's 'working on' embracing her looks**

He said that the paper was sharply divided over whether to believe the Trump officials saying it was a lab leak, or the scientists saying it wasn't.

'We still do not know the source of this awful pandemic. We may never know,' he wrote.

'But the argument that it could have leaked out of the Wuhan Institute of Virology or a sister lab in Wuhan has become considerably stronger than it was a year ago, when the screaming was so loud that it drowned out serious discussion.



McNeil, who left The New York Times earlier this year, said that China's 'lack of candor' was 'disturbing'. McNeil was fired by the Times after it emerged he'd used the N-word during a conversation with students on a NYT-run trip. He published an article on May 17 about the subject. He said he'd been told 'overwhelmingly' by scientists that it did not come from a lab

▶ Pregnant Zoe Sugg showcases her growing baby bump as she prepares to welcome baby girl with beau Alfie Deyes

▶ Machine Gun Kelly and Megan Fox mark one year of whirlwind romance with sweet social share

EXCLUSIVE Olivia Meets Her Match: Olivia Attwood and fiancé Brad Dack make the tough decision to postpone wedding until 2022

▶ 'For me it is a confidence thing': Katie Price says she will wear wigs 'all the time' after suffering 'traumatic' hair loss following the birth of her children

▶ Eminem's daughter Hailie Mathers, 25, shows off her incredible figure in a sexy white bikini as she braces herself for 'all the summer days'

▶ Sex Education's Emma Mackey is seen with co-stars Amelia Gething and Alexandra Dowling for the FIRST TIME as they film new biopic in Yorkshire

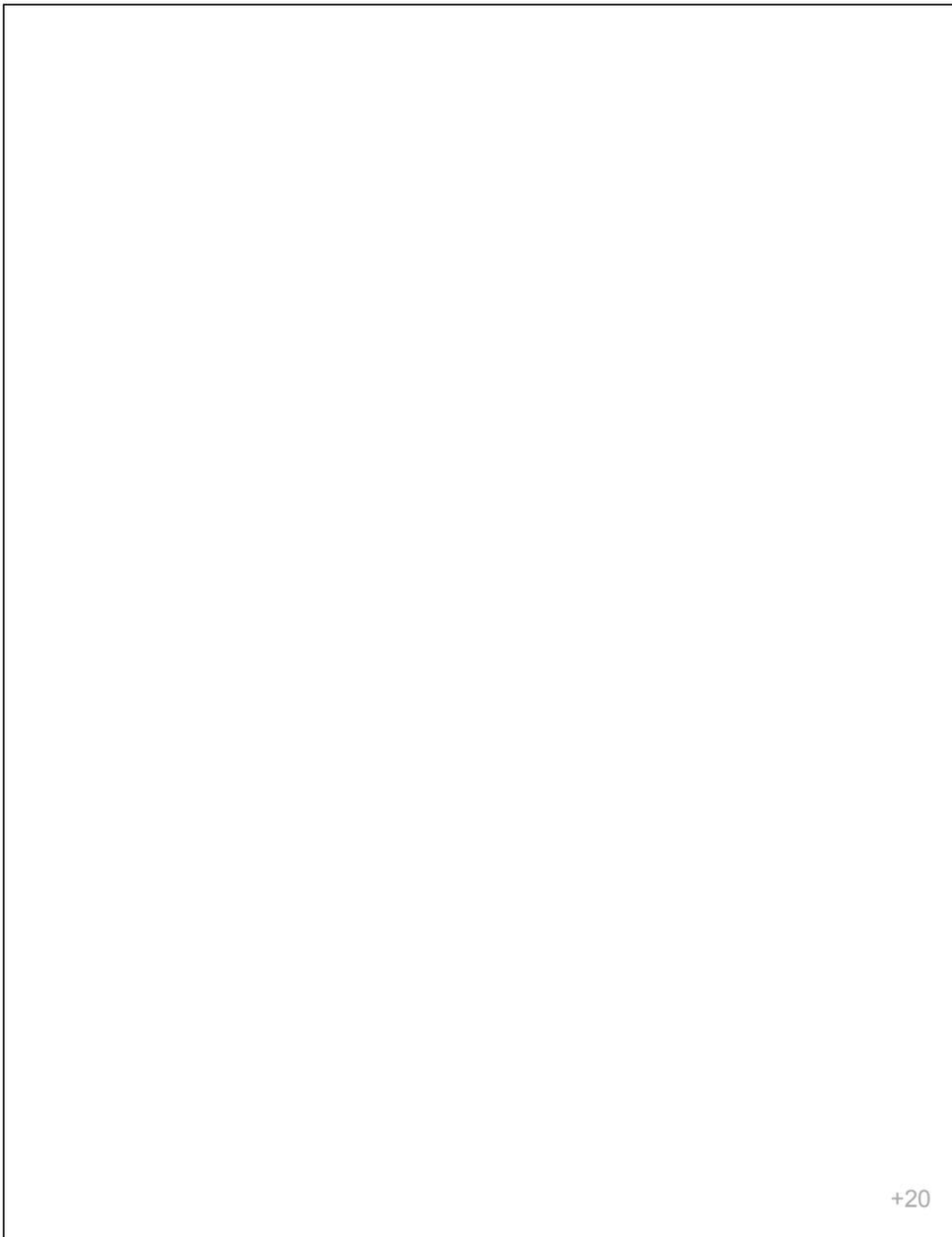
▶ Mrs Hinch returns home from hospital with son Lennie as she shares snap of the sleeping newborn and gushes that her 'heart has doubled in size'

▶ Seth Rogen on comics complaining about cancel culture: 'If you've made a joke that's aged terribly, accept it'

▶ 'Feeling bold with getting bald': Big Brother star Glyn Wise, 33, says his 'confidence is increasing' after the 'emotional process' of losing his hair

▶ 'Sunshine on my mind': Jacqueline Jossa looks radiant as she shows off her svelte figure in chic garments from her fashion line





▶ [Kim Kardashian spends time with daughters North and Chicago on the beach... after Kanye West is linked to Irina Shayk](#)

▶ [Calum Best recalls his father George's interview with Martin Bashir as he slams shamed journalist for 'invading' football legend's privacy](#)

▶ [Katie Price, 43, opts for a laid back look as she goes for a stroll with her fiancé Carl Woods, 32, while filming Steph's Packed Lunch in Leeds](#)

▶ [Liam Gallagher continues his bitter war of words with brother Noel as High Flying Birds star celebrates 10 years of success as a solo artist](#)

EXCLUSIVE ['I would be a madwoman to have more children': Kate Ferdinand reveals she doesn't need 'more kids and more tears' at her lively home](#)

▶ [Bridgerton season two films at Greenwich's Old Royal Naval College with Jessica Madsen getting into character as Cressida Cowper before joining newcomers](#)

▶ [Simon Cowell, 61, looks slim as he keeps up with his exercise regime while cycling on E-bike... nine months after breaking his back in shock accident](#)

▶ [Ferne McCann wows in blue bikini while James Argent strips down to his trunks as they enjoy pool day together following his gastric sleeve surgery](#)

▶ ['I didn't want to die alone': Graham Norton recalls how he asked a 'little old lady' to hold his hand after being stabbed and left for dead in 1989](#)

▶ ['I was listening to Bob Marley': Naomi Campbell, 51, gives rare insight into the 'special moment' she became a mother to baby girl 'via surrogate'](#)

MAY 2021: Now the Times is repeating scientists' calls for an open mind on the theory

'And China's lack of candor is disturbing.'

Wade came to the same conclusion.

'Neither the natural emergence nor the lab escape hypothesis can yet be ruled out. There is still no direct evidence for either. So no definitive conclusion can be reached,' he wrote.

'That said, the available evidence leans more strongly in one direction than the other. Readers will form their own opinion.

'But it seems to me that proponents of lab escape can explain all the available facts about SARS2 considerably more easily than can those who favor natural emergence.'

Washington Post

Reporters for an article published on April 30, 2020, provided a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the Wuhan laboratory's work, and emphasized the risks involved.

Yet their headline read: Chinese lab conducted extensive research on deadly bat viruses, but there is no evidence of accidental release.

The following day, the dismissive tone continued: Was the new coronavirus accidentally released from a Wuhan lab? It's doubtful.



+20

In May 2020 The Washington Post said it was 'doubtful' that the virus came from a lab in a story from its Fact Checker section

By May 24 this year, the paper was very close to admitting that they had been blinkered.

'Given everything we know about how Trump handled such things, caution and skepticism were invited,' wrote Aaron Blake, a senior political reporter at the paper.

'That (very much warranted) caution and skepticism spilled over into some oversimplification, particularly when it came to summarizing the often more circumspect reporting.'

He admitted: 'We might never truly know the truth.'



Now the Washington Post is urging WHO to carry out an investigation into what happened to determine if it did come from a lab

▶ **Tommy Fury marks Molly-Mae Hague's 22nd birthday with loved-up kissing snaps and begs her 'not to hate him' for posting photos of her fast asleep**

▶ **Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos' youngest son Joaquin heads out to prom with his date in his father's tuxedo**

▶ **Helen Flanagan shares close-up snap of her hormonal acne as she thanks fans for advice on dealing with it two months after giving birth to her son Charlie**

▶ **Lady Gaga takes the plunge in ripped T-shirt and sequin track pants in Malibu... ahead of her appearance in Friends reunion**

▶ **Supervet Noel Fitzpatrick breaks down in tears as he recalls how he 'wanted to be there as a vet and dad' for beloved terrier Keira, 13, when she was hit by van**

▶ **'Look who I found': Megan Barton Hanson flaunts some serious underboob in cut-out top as she bumps into Jack Fincham on the street**

▶ **Emma Stone shares rare insight into motherhood after birth of daughter and reveals she has a 'great amount of pressure' taking over Cruella**

NEWZIT LIVE TOP STORIES

TOP STORIES SHOWBIZ SPORT

5 questions Matt Hancock must answer today after Cummings...

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The Guardian See more versions

Marcus Rashford receives 'at least 70' racist messages after Man Ut...

Daily Star See more versions

San Jose shooting – Grandpa, 63, and dad-of-two among victims...

The Sun See more versions



MAY 2021: Journalist Aaron Blake wrote that it is 'vexing' as a subject. He said: 'It has become evident that some corners of the mainstream media overcorrected when it came to one particular theory from Trump and his allies: that the coronavirus emanated from a laboratory in Wuhan, China, rather than naturally. It's also true that many criticisms of the coverage are overwrought and that Trump's and his allies' claims invited and deserved skepticism.'

Huffington Post

As concern was mounting about the virus in the spring of 2020, The Huffington Post was rapidly ridiculing all question of its origins.

'A Toxic 'Infodemic': The Viral Spread Of COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories,' they headlined a story on April 7, 2020.

Yet a little over a year later, on May 24 of this year, the site followed up on the Wall Street Journal's report into the hospitalization of the Wuhan lab workers in 2019, and the issues that this raised.

'Wuhan Researchers Were Hospitalized With COVID-19 Symptoms Pre-Pandemic: Reports,' they wrote.

Matt Hancock to give press conference tonight after...

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COVID-19: Coronavirus vaccine programme opens to all adults i

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MORE DON'T MISS

▶ **'Do they think money grows on trees?'** This Morning viewers outraged as home segment suggests £600 rainbow mirror to inject colour into their homes

▶ **Queen Maxima of the Netherlands looks a vision in a houndstooth print dress as she visits a family leather business to mark its 200th anniversary**

▶ **Inside Bennifer's \$18m Miami love nest: JLo and Ben Affleck mark reunion in lavish rented digs... complete with 11 beds, 12 bathrooms, a pool, spa and jacuzzi**

▶ **Annie star Lois de Banzie dead aged 90: Actress' family confirm the sad news as they pay tribute: 'Her wit and humour will be much missed'**

▶ **Their Love is King! Soul legend Sade's transgender model son Izaak Theo Adu-Watts, 24, marries his hairstylist girlfriend in stunning ceremony**

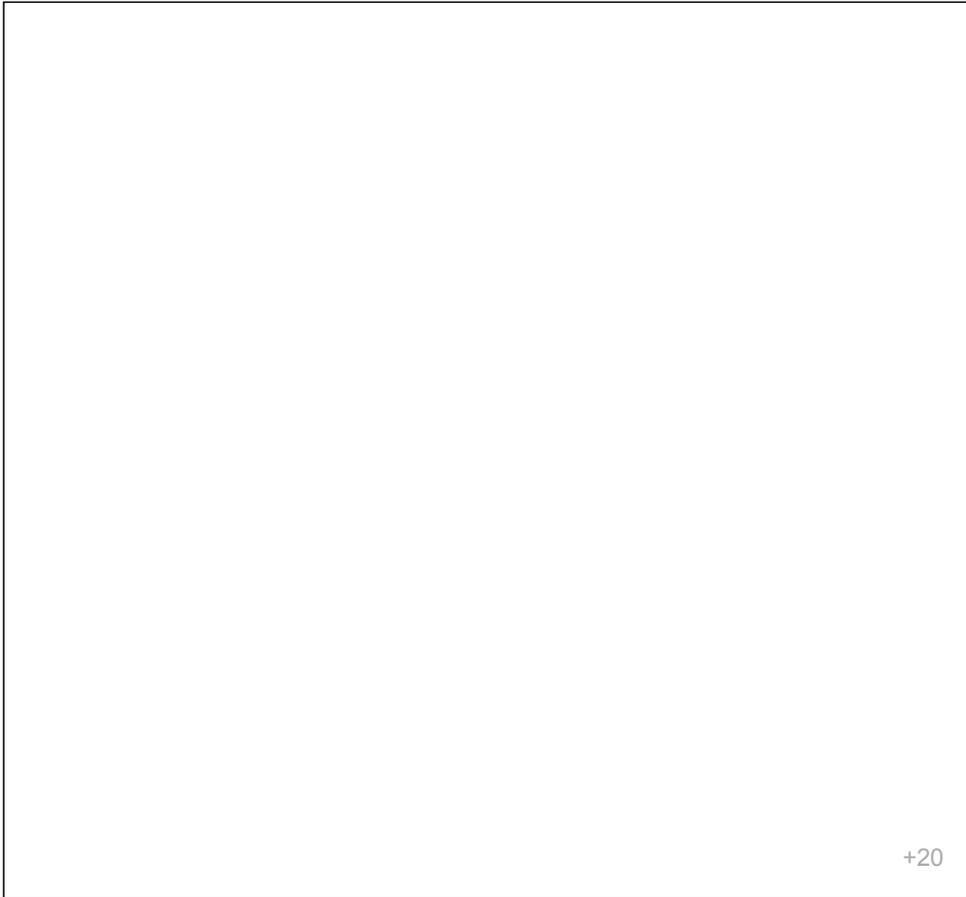
▶ **'I'm a jobbing actor and I have to support my family': EastEnders star Charlie Clements reveals he has been working in a garden centre as well as in a restaurant during lockdown**

Spring in her step! Duchess of Cornwall hails David Hockney's new exhibition as 'glorious and uplifting'



+20

APRIL 2020: The Huffington Post was initially skeptical (left) about alternative ideas surrounding COVID and called it an 'infodemic'



+20

MAY 2021: Now, like every other outlet, Huff Po is broadening its reporting on the theory

NPR

On April 23, 2020, NPR stated: 'Virus researchers say there is virtually no chance that the new coronavirus was released as result of a laboratory accident in China or

▶ as she visits the Royal Academy

▶ As William and Kate return to St Andrews 20 years after they met, how a friendship between a homesick prince and his 'hot' flatmate bloomed into a first love

▶ Love Island alum Katie Salmon's Thailand home is burgled by thieves who steal EVERYTHING except for one bra and a pair of shoes

▶ 'Completely and utterly in love': Hollyoaks star Bronagh Waugh announces she has welcomed a baby boy with husband Richard Peacock

▶ Kim Kardashian and the British billionaire bachelor! Newly-single star, 40, wows in barely-there ensemble to party with London property scion Jamie Reuben, 34

▶ Angelina Jolie claims she's being 'denied a fair' custody trial after judge refuses to let the children testify about Brad Pitt

▶ 'I lost DJ's daddy to drugs and my Angela to alcohol': Kerry Katona breaks down as she discusses losing ex George Kay and her aunt to addiction

▶ Amanda Holden is preened to perfection in a yellow pencil dress and white stilettos as she leaves Heart FM

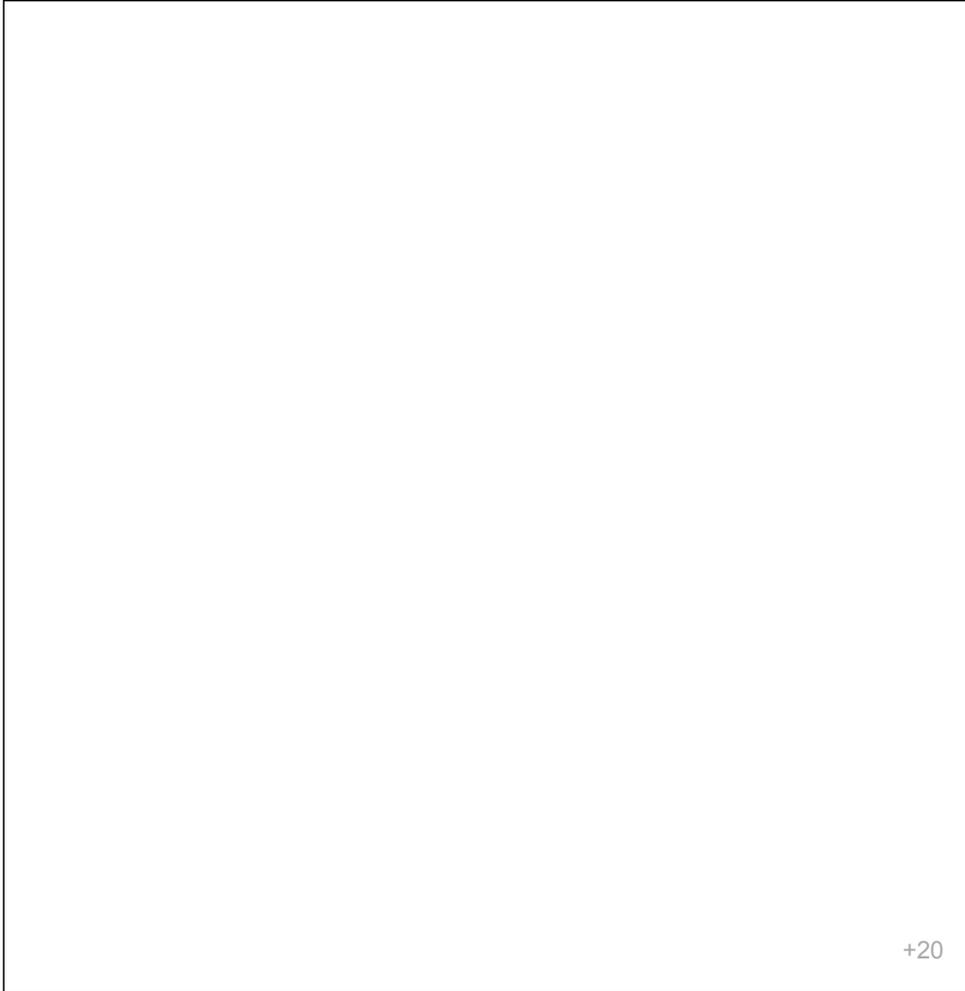
▶ Bethenny Frankel, 50, says she is 'makeup-free with no filter' as she poses in a bikini while sharing she has 'big wine news coming soon'

EXCLUSIVE Tamara Ecclestone's husband Jay Rutland is criticised by mental health campaigners for calling Prince Harry a 't*t' after

anywhere else.'

The radio news network was determined to prove that there was no credibility to the Wuhan lab leak theory, and produced a series of 'explainers' insisting that COVID-19 was transmitted from animals to humans.

'Where Did This Coronavirus Originate? Virus Hunters Find Genetic Clues In Bats,' they **reported** on April 15, 2020.



+20

APRIL 2020: NPR was initially dismissive of suggestions that the virus leaked from a lab (left), but by May 2021 was covering the increasing speculation

[he underwent treatment for anxiety](#)

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MARCH 2021: After a WHO report said the theory was gathering more steam, the headlines became more open minded

Yet a little over a year later, NPR was following the WHO's report - and its worrying conclusions - with interest.

'Theory That COVID Came From A Chinese Lab Takes On New Life In Wake Of WHO Report,' they concluded.

On March 31, they **reported**: Calls For An Open Investigation Into The Possibility COVID-19 Leaked From A Lab.

Among those watching the evolving news lines was Mike Pompeo, Trump's secretary of state.

'Over a year ago, I told @MarthaRaddatz that the Wuhan Virus most likely came from a lab leak,' he tweeted on May 20.

'She stopped just short of offering me a tin hat. The CCP said I was an enemy of mankind,' he said, referring to the Chinese Communist Party.

'And now? Well, now, the Left wing media is scrambling to get on the side of the truth.'

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