

# China Bounces Back from the Mysterious Coronavirus Epidemic

On December 30<sup>th</sup> 2019, first case of Coronavirus was reported in China's metropolis Wuhan. Since then the pneumonia like virus has spread to over two dozen countries around the world, with almost 40,000 patients being affected worldwide. The death toll continues to increase daily, and as of now more than 900 casualties have been reported globally. The new coronavirus is named as 2-19-nCoV, which has affected mostly the people of Wuhan, capital of Hubei province. With the mushrooming of Coronavirus, the flights to and from China have been cancelled and has drastically affected the Chinese economy. To stop the proliferation of the virus outside China, authorities have restricted the travel to and from China. More than 48 million people in China have been restricted from travelling, as the citizens were ordered to only leave their homes for essential reasons. The reports suggest that coronavirus initially affected those who worked or shopped in the Huanan meat market. The symptoms of the coronavirus include cough, fever and difficulty in breathing and in worst cases in leads to organ failure too. In this case of viral pneumonia antibiotics don't work. Coronavirus is said to transmit through human to human contact.



The Chinese health crisis has put the entire global economic system to a test. A heavy disruption is expected in the production of goods of bigger international companies, which includes Apple Inc., Tesla and many others. Food chains like McDonalds and Starbucks have closed down their outlets on the request of the government to contain the spread of the disease. Companies operating in China, or those having production facilities located in China are relocating their staff. The coronavirus is not only a challenge to the Chinese citizens or the booming Chinese economy but many has also challenged the government. To overcome such predictions, the Chinese government responded with effective measures for containing the spread of Coronavirus.

### **Prevention Measures:**

- House to house searches for screening of virus by teams of medical workers.
- Immediately placing the infected to the quarantine centers.
- Transportation lockdown: railways, buses etc.
- Travelling restrictions: to and from China.
- Government ensures food and medical supplies to the affected Chinese cities.

- New hospitals are constructed on a war-footing.
- Holidays for schools and businesses are extended after the Chinese Lunar Year celebrations.
- Screening at the airports.
- Temperature detection of passengers and motorists travelling on airport and highway respectively.
- Cleaning and disinfecting railways, buses and subways.
- Chinese government is using the country's powerful surveillance apparatus to track down the journey of those infected by the coronavirus.
- The Chinese finance ministry has allocated \$10.26 billion to fight coronavirus, which aims to ensure that the public can afford diagnosis and treatment.

For containing the new epidemic the Chinese government has beefed up the preventive measures nationwide and has declared first level public health emergency. Huge force of doctors and nurses are sent to Wuhan. The medical and food supplies are also rushed to the city to avoid any delays in the treatment. Despite the outbreak of the deadly virus, Chinese authorities have taken strong measures in this fight and the factories did not halt their production of masks and protective clothing. A strong coordination of civilian and military resources can be witnessed in China. According to the authorities more than half a million of medical staff has joined the fight for preventing the epidemic. A major policy banks in country, China Development Bank has offered a loan of \$288 million for preventing and controlling the coronavirus. In Guandong Province, the factories have resumed the production of protective masks after the Festive Holidays.



Although the villages are the weakest link in the chain of prevention and control, but after the spread of coronavirus, the villages in China have taken the toughest and smartest steps to fight the new virus. Regular announcements are made by the village chiefs, alerting people to wear masks, wash their hands regularly and avoid meeting and greeting others on the occasion of Lunar New Year. The people are advised to keep in touch with their relatives through mobile phones, instead of travelling to other cities. All those travelling through public transport are advised to wear masks as a safety measure. The passengers are required to undergo temperature detection points when passing through entry-exit points. Passengers have to fill in the health declaration cards and those with symptoms are provided immediate help. As a public health measure, the motorists and labor force have to undergo temperature detection before they start journey on national highway. The public health authorities have ordered the regular cleaning and disinfecting of the railway stations and subways. The railway authorities have also provided masks, gloves, and protective suits to the railway police as a part of preventive measure.



Apart from these measures, the medical and vaccination centers in the country are taking measures to ensure a successful fight against the coronavirus. Two diagnostic kits have been developed to fight coronavirus by the Wuhan Institute of Virology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Furthermore, the Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University has developed an optimized method of testing, which helps the infection to be diagnosed in just two hours. As a result of this, the treatment can start quicker than before and recoveries are faster. The mortality rate by coronavirus is 2% which is far less than that by the SARs, which plagued China almost two decades ago. Chinese doctors have also made progress in vaccine, whereby they have developed two chemical compounds that are effective in the treatment of coronavirus.





The Chinese public has full confidence in the leadership of their country for having the capability and capacity to fight the deadly virus. The Chinese government within 10 days built a new hospital for the treatment of infected patients in Hubei, China's central province. The authorities spent five hours on designing and planning the new hospital. More than 800 construction equipment was rushed simultaneously for constructing the infrastructure of the hospital. It was possible with the hard work of thousands of workers and with the joint efforts of Chinese experts, who worked round the clock. The new hospital, Huoshenshan, which means Fire God Mountain brought hope to many patients. Around 14,000 medical staff from the armed forces is working in the hospital treating the patients. The Huoshenshan Hospital has a capacity of 1000 beds for the patients. Many are suspicious about the mysterious spread of coronavirus, and label it as a biological warfare and propaganda against China. The virus has been a blow to the Chinese economy, and in coming days it can weaken China's negotiating hands in the future trade deals, especially effecting those between Beijing and Washington. Around the world many view the Chinese health crisis due to coronavirus as a commercial-biological-psychological war

against China to undermine her growth as a new strong player globally. The spread of Coronavirus has the power to change the rules of the game, where many will benefit while many will be at the losing end. The propaganda is merely creating a panic and fear against China amongst the masses. This is not the first time in history that people are dying from a disease. Ebola, SAR, swine flu and many other such diseases have killed people in the past. Those who suspect Coronavirus as an artificial crisis, implanted deliberately in China, question the coincidence of the disease being originating in Wuhan, which happens to be an industrial city, and eighth richest city in China.



The Chinese authorities have full confidence in successfully battling against the spread of the disease. The world has acknowledged their most rigorous and comprehensive measures. China has the capability to combat the new deadly virus and will be successful in eventually defeating it. Chinese authorities announced that a total of 3,281 patients were discharged from the hospital who recovered completely after being infected from the coronavirus. The rapid response of China serves as a model for the countries for tackling the future outbreaks. During these moment, Chinese public has been very hopeful and constantly helping in dedicating their

efforts for preventing the outbreak of coronavirus that has infected many. China has appeared as a united nation, and fighting the battle optimistically.

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## US CHINA TRADE DEAL

Over the past 17 months America and China have been trading blows through tariff on goods. The United States of America has imposed 25% tariff on every single Chinese product in US and that will further increase in future, the impact is being felt on industries worldwide. Whereas China decreases its imports from US. But recently a good step has been taken from both the countries in the form of "Trade Agreement".

The US and China signed a historic trade deal on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and this deal could lead the future relation between both the countries. Both the countries are head-to-head from past couple of months and facing trade conflict, there are many circumstances when two world economic powers are creating hurdles for opponent. The deal that has been signed now could give relief to both the states.

Last year the president of the United States of America, Donald Trump, faced many challenges from the opposition to tough re-election bid. Mr. Trump called this deal as a "momentous" whereas the tariffs on the Chinese products in the US will stay the same leaving the Chinese product consumers with bare hands in the US. The deal was signed between Mr. Trump and Chinese Vice premier Lui He, who was negotiating with the representative of the US Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

This trade deal consists of different phases: Phase **"one"**



includes that China have to purchase different products including the crops and technical Equipment's (technology) that will boost the American interest, as china is having a market of over a billion people. The US is always adopting the protectionism policies and constantly choosing self-interest over everything.

In the signing ceremony Mr. Trump said, "Today, we take a momentous step, one that's never taken before with China," that will ensure "fair and reciprocal trade." The acceleration on trade boosted up the stock market rates around the globe, people are observing all this through the eyes of economics and expecting that the US will remove the tariffs from Chinese products in the future. Furthermore, he said thanks to Mr. Xi Jinping for his enormous effort in negotiation. It is the time to visit China for additional "Bilateral Agreements." But he also said he will only remove tariffs "if we're able to proceed towards phase "two." "I'm leaving them on. Otherwise we have no cards to negotiate with."

According to the reports, Trump Administration compelled Beijing to import an additional \$200 billion in US products over two years, above the levels purchased in 2017, this was the time when Trump administration have not adopted offensive policies towards China, including an additional \$32 billion in agricultural goods. Trump pointed the trade pact as a trade boon for the people in the field of agriculture, especially farmers who have been the victim of tariff war. The deal includes significant commitments from China to buy agricultural products, as well as airplanes, pharmaceuticals and oil and gas.

Analyst say that The US-China phase-one deal is essentially a trade truce, with large state-directed purchases attached. On the other hand, economists giving their views by saying "we will continue to see the impact of this in slower investment

and higher business costs.” The deal was signed at the time when US is thinking to implement more tariffs on Chinese goods and this deal delayed that crucial phase for Chinese.

Although the American Business man and farmers will get all the benefits from this trade deal. US can get bit relief after this agreement because in the previous year the US gave \$16 Billion to the US farmers to compensate in China- US trade war. China is only agreeing to make purchases for the next two years and is vague about what happens after. The agreement says, the countries “project that the trajectory” of increased purchases would continue through 2025.

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## USA and Iran: Fog of War

Since the Islamic Revolution in Iran during 1979, the relations between Iran and the USA have been confrontational in nature. Iran was constantly identified as a support system to armed militants in Middle East by USA. The relations fell on a knife edge again when Maj Gen Qassem Soleimani, one of Iran’s most protuberant and influential leaders and responsible for many covert Iranian intelligence operations, was brought to death by drone strike conducted by the USA on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. USA claimed that Soleimani was responsible for carrying out deadly attacks against USA troops and that the “*monster is dead.*” The carnage of Soleimani has brought USA and Tehran at the verge of war, making Iraq a front-line in tensions. It has become a point of concern that USA carried out an attack without informing the government official in

Baghdad which is a clear violation of Iraq's sovereignty causing political vehemence and making a mockery of International Law. Soleimani's death is not entirely responsible for bringing two States against each other but punitive economic sanctions.

As per experts, neither State is willing for a full-blown war but the retaliatory conduct on both sides suggest otherwise. Iran carried out dozens of ballistic missile attacks on air bases in Iraq, in Irbil and Al Asad, west of Baghdad, hosting US troops and causing casualties to retaliatory strikes by US killing of Maj Gen Qassem Soleimani. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei claimed that the attacks are no less than a slap in USA's face and he said that Iran will culminate USA's presence in the Middle East as an answer to the assassination of Maj Gen Qassem Soleimani. Iraq's Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi confirmed that the attacks were carried out only to target bases of US troops and no Iraqi casualties took place during the process. The attacks on US bases in Iraq is one of the deadliest direct assault by Iran since the seizure of USA's embassy in Tehran in 1979.

This reciprocal performance led to an organized rally in front of USA's embassy in Baghdad and set it ablaze while chanting "*Death to America*" and "*Death to Trump.*" Former chief of Iranian Defense Department expressed that it will be no less than a hell on earth and that it will cause chaos beyond imagination. There are no direct communication lines between Iran and the USA. Due to lack of communication and tit-for-tat escalations, it has become difficult for both the opposing sides to deduce on each other's next move. The "guesswork" always have great potential of miscalculation on either side resulting in inadvertent collateral damage and civilian fatalities.

Few of the analysts have suggested that a full scale war against Iran could cost trillions of dollars. There can be a possibility of intensification of proxy militia in Iraq but

both Iran and the USA are most likely to avoid direct confrontation. There is much greater possibility of resource shut off that world relies on oil. Iran exports half a million of 2 million barrels of oil to the world, any intense escalation might lead to global energy crisis. Israel and Saudi Arabia will not be willing to participate in war until they get directly hit by Iran. Even though Iran is a regional power player, it's enclosed with strong USA allies from all around. Ilan Goldenberg stated that if war takes place, the USA will force Iran to submission through air and naval power by bombing warplanes, nuclear facilities, missile sites and launch a cyberattack. He went on saying that one should not just poke the beehive but take the whole thing down.

If a full scale war takes place between Iran and the United States, cities will burn to ashes and death toll will be to the point of insanity. There will be economic devastation on both sides and will give plenty of vacuum to insurgents to become active for their political sakes bringing more butchery. Iran could become failed State and become a new safe haven for extremists. Keeping the outcomes in mind, its wise of leadership on both sides to be willing to avoid any escalations towards serious conflict but a few more one-off attacks can lead to only carnage. World has seen what a war can do to nations, war is a path to mammoth hindrance among nations and it eventually destroys them. If peace prevails among major global powers, military power will become less relevant and States will bring their foreign policies in line delegitimizing the unilateral use of force.

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# USA Military Aid to Pakistan – Recent Developments

Pakistan's geographical location and borders sharing with states like India, Afghanistan and Iran made it impossible to achieve peace without weapons and military advancement. Pakistan has always been under constant threat of being attacked directly or circuitously. We are witness to all the attempts of subverting Pakistan from within and India has been actively participating in that. By keeping in view the deterioration of economic condition and increase in advanced defense system USA has been providing military assistance to Pakistan since long. The unfortunate incident of 9/11 became a challenge for Pakistan to fight against terrorism and militancy along with other internal and external challenges.

To crack down on militants and their safe havens in Pakistan USA passed five year plan 2009-2014 under former president Barak Obama and \$7.5 billion worth of assistance was provided. This bill also created a bit of cleft between civil and military leadership in Pakistan because it was looked upon as threat to sovereignty by military. Along with internal and external security threats, even though Pakistan lost thousands of citizens and military personnel and billions of dollars to this fight, it was constantly hammered to destroy militant's safe havens in Pakistan and USA kept warning Pakistan that if they found any traces of attacks on USA soil back to Pakistan there will be severe consequences.

After Obama the pressure mounted when Trump started the chant of "Do More" because Pakistan was given \$33 billion since 2002 to fight the militants and accused Pakistan of quietly supporting Haqqani network and providing militants with safety on their soil. It was said that rather fighting terror, Pakistani military used \$200 million funds for armament, anti-missile defense system and fighter aircrafts including F-16s

when the terrorists had no air attack capability. Pakistan has received about \$15 billion over the past 15 years including funds for Foreign Military Financing, Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund and International Military Education and Training funds. In January 2018, USA announced that it was suspending \$900 million of security aid and military equipment to Pakistan because it failed to fight effectively against terrorists and militancy.

Pakistan was ashamed and accused internationally for not putting "enough efforts" and just using USA for the sake of money. The relationship was sore between Pakistan and USA until the recent meeting of president Trump and PM Imran Khan where the PM of Pakistan emphasized that USA and Pakistan need to have a good working relationship to proceed ahead on good terms. Trump showed optimism by saying that USA and Pakistan have better relationship now and that USA State Department will provide Pakistan \$125 million for its F-16 aircraft's technical assistance. PM Khan further assured president Trump that Pakistan will do whatever it takes to keep going the peace process and that there are and never will be any safe havens for militants in Pakistan.