



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 24, 2020

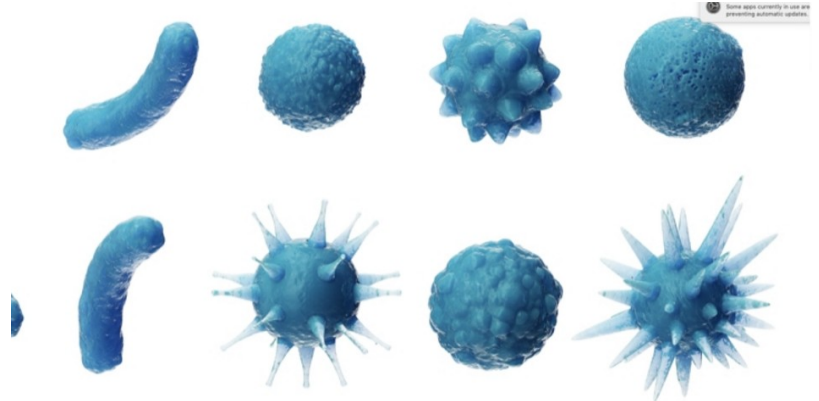
Coronavirus II? Scientists Find 28 UNKNOWN Viruses in Chinese Glacier; Melt Could Unleash Them

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China is one of the world's oldest civilizations. But recently discovered viruses locked in its Guliya ice cap on the northwestern Tibetan Plateau are far older than the [Middle Kingdom](#) is, dating back 15 millennia. Of course, while scientists are rightly curious about these ancient and unknown quantities, they're also concerned — about what could happen if these viruses are unleashed by an ice melt-off.



The discovery was made via recent examinations of two ice cores, approximately 520 and 15,000 years old respectively, taken from the glacier in 1992 and 2015. The analysis “revealed 33 viral populations,” [wrote](#) the authors — 28 of which are unknown.

The authors are 11 researchers, of varying specialties, from a number of different departments associated with three American universities (details [here](#)). Their findings were published in [bioRxiv](#), which is operated by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Not all viruses are harmful, of course; some are benign while others [can even be beneficial](#) to human health and agriculture. That said, the researchers wrote in their study that in “a worst-case scenario” an “ice melt could release pathogens into the environment.”

“This possibility is why scientists want to learn as much as possible about the viruses now so if they are unleashed into the world, we’ll know how to deal with them,” [writes](#) the *U.S. Sun*.

The site points out that while deadly “viruses spreading into the environment from melting glaciers is reminiscent of the Sky Atlantic drama series [Fortitude](#),” the threat is far from fictional.

For example, a related situation arose in 2016 when “biological warfare troops were rushed to the Russian Arctic amid growing concerns over a serious anthrax outbreak,” the *Sun* explains.

“Around 40 people were hospitalised and a 12-year-old boy died from the deadly infection after a contaminated reindeer corpse — buried at least 70 years before — thawed because of a heatwave [*sic*] in northern Siberia.... Over 1,000 reindeer also died,” the organ continues.

The timing of this news of ancient viruses extant in China is eerie considering the nation is currently plagued with an outbreak of coronavirus, which also was previously unknown. The disease, whose flu-like symptoms include a cough, high fever, and difficulty breathing and which can permanently damage



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the lungs, has thus far killed 25 people and infected 830 in China, [according](#) to Beijing authorities. Imperial College London estimated, however, that there could be 4,000 cases in the Chinese city of Wuhan alone.

The outbreak has prompted the government to place eight “Chinese cities, more than 23 million people, effectively under quarantine,” [reports](#) Zero Hedge blog. There are also between 14 and 20 confirmed cases in total in eight other countries: the United States, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia.

The virus originated with illegally traded wildlife in Wuhan, with [snakes being the likely source](#), though badgers and rats are [possibilities](#) as well.

Returning to the ancient viruses, it’s not surprising that the *Sun* and researchers both warn that anthropogenic global warming could cause the feared glacier melt-off and visit viral doom upon us. Climate alarmism is a fetish with the media. As for scientists, they often have difficulty getting government grants unless they tie their research in with climate change, as I [reported](#) in 2014 (scroll down to [page 26](#)).

Yet this fear-mongering appears unfounded. Consider, for example, that the Arctic ice cap grew the same year (2014) that Al Gore warned — citing others’ predictions — it could be gone by, [according](#) to the *Daily Mail*. Moreover, NASA data [showed](#) that 2019 marked the third straight year of growth for Greenland’s enormous Jakobshavn Glacier, a development that stunned scientists.

None of this means China’s Guliya ice cap couldn’t melt; ice thins and thickens in various times and places due to natural processes. During the Cretaceous period, in fact, even the poles were ice-free.

[Some experts do believe](#), though, we’re headed for another ice age, if it makes anyone feel better. Not that it should, as icy temperatures would [likely be far deadlier](#) than any ice-ensconced virus.

Besides, if you’re a fan of nightmares or nihilism, you can always occupy yourself contemplating other science-news-delivered doomsday scenarios, such as the threat of a nearby supernova, colliding galaxies, a roving black hole, a supervolcano eruption, out-of-control artificial intelligence, and aggressive, technologically superior extraterrestrials.

Or you could just have a good meal and a nap. As they say, ya’ gotta’ die of somethin’.

Image: Usis / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Selwyn Duke (@SelwynDuke) has written for The New American for more than a decade. He has also written for The Hill, Observer, The American Conservative, WorldNetDaily, American Thinker, and many other print and online publications. In addition, he has contributed to college textbooks published by Gale-Cengage Learning, has appeared on television, and is a frequent guest on radio.



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