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Assignment Question: The Great Powers And The War Against Covid-19.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) which was identified in 2019 in Wuhan Providence, China. is a newly established coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans. And has become of great effect to the global sphere affecting both the social, economic, political and even religious community.

• The Socio-Economic Impact.

On 18 march 2020, the World Health Organization issued a report related to mental health and psychosocial issues by addressing instructions and some social considerations during the COVID-19outbreak. This report briefly stated; A predicted expectancy of many countries to brace for the possibility of being affected by the novel disease, The cause for individuals avoid stigmatizing people infected with the virus, The urgency for medical workers to be prepared mentally likewise a psychosocial sense. The socio-economic impact of the 2019–20 coronavirus epidemic has had far-reaching consequences beyond the spread of the COVID-19 disease itself and efforts to quarantine it. As the Novel virus has spread around the globe, concerns have shifted from supply-side manufacturing issues to a decline in business and services sector. The coronavirus pandemic has caused the largest global recession in history, with more than a third of the global population at the moment being placed on lockdown.  
  
Supply shortages are expected to affect a number of sectors due to panic buying, increasing usage of goods to fight the pandemic, and disruption to factories and logistics in mainland China, in addition, it also led to price gouging. There have been widespread reports of supply shortages of pharmaceuticals, with many areas seeing panic buying and subsequent shortages of food and other essential grocery items. The technology industry, in particular, has been warning about delays to shipments of electronic goods.  
  
Global stock markets fell on 24 February 2020 due to a significant rise in the number of COVID-19 cases outside mainland China. By 28 February 2020, stock markets worldwide saw their largest decline in a single week since the 2008 financial crisis. Global stock markets crashed in March 2020, with falls of several percent in the world's major indices. As the pandemic spreads, global conferences and events across technology, fashion, and sports are being cancelled or postponed. While the monetary impact on the travel and trade industry is yet to be estimated, it is likely to be in the billions and increasing. By 16 March, news reports emerged stating that the effect on the United States economy could be far worse than previously thought.

• Political Impact

The United States president Donald Trump was heavily criticised for his decisions to the ongoing epidemic. He was accused of making several misleading or false claims and speculation of failing to provide precise information, and of downplaying the pandemic's significance. Trump was also criticised for having shutdown the global health security unit of the United States National Security Council, which was founded to prepare the government for potential pandemics and critical casualties

A number of states have been using this outbreak to show their support to China, for instance, when Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia made a special visit to China with an aim to showcase Cambodia's support to China in fighting the outbreak of the pandemic.  
• Religious Impact

The virus outbreak has affected the religious society in numerous ways, including the cancellation of the worship services of various faiths, the closure of Sunday Schools, as well as the cancellation of pilgrimages surrounding observances and festivals. various churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples have offered worship through livestream amidst the epidemic. Relief wings of religious organisations have distributed medical equipment(s) and other means of aid to affected areas. Adherents of many religions have gathered together to pray for an end to the pandemic, for those infected by it, as well as for the God they believe in to give physicians, researchers and scientists the wisdom to combat the disease. In the United States, Trump designated 15 March 2020 as a National Day of Prayer for "God’s healing hand to be placed on the people of our Nation".

The Epicentre Of The Virus Outbreak

"The epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak is at risk of shifting constantly, posing challenges to public health systems". said Teo Yik Ying, dean at the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health at the National University of Singapore.   
"Would it shift to South Asia? Would it shift to Africa or Latin America? We don't know at the moment, but there is that real risk that the epicentres will continue to shift, and it could possibly even shift back to East Asia," Teo said.  
The coronavirus was first recorded in December last year in the city of Wuhan the epicentre of the outbreak in central China, it has since spread to 180 countries and territories. While China accounted for majority of the cases up until February, the epicentre has since shifted to the West, with the U.S, Italy and Spain being the top 3 worst-hit countries at the moment. Along with the changing epicentre of the disease, there seems to be a second wave of coronavirus infections in countries like China and Singapore. China has seen several cases being brought in from overseas, prompting the government there to shutdown its border to foreigners.

The epicentre could continue shifting until people develop herd immunity said Teo. Herd immunity refers to a situation where sufficient people in a population have become immune to a disease such that it effectively prevents the disease from spreading. Teo explained that it can be achieved either via a vaccine, or as the natural result of being exposed to the virus. Until there is a viable vaccine, it is important to spread out the epidemic to allow time for the healthcare system to recover, said Teo.  
That means allowing for a gradual uptick of cases in contrast to a steep rise of infections, even with the same number of people contracting the virus. The goal is to prevent the health-care system from being overburdened at any one time.

• The Conspiracy Theories

As the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic slowly moves from bad to worse the world also faces a global misinformation pandemic. Conspiracy theories that behave like viruses themselves are spreading just as rapidly digitally as COVID-19 does physically.

**The 5G Conspiracy Theory**: Rumour has it that the virus has its tendency to spread through the digital-sphere across borders without any physical means, this theory is as absurd as it is false. This is biologically impossible for viruses to spread using the electromagnetic spectrum. The latter are waves/photons, while the former are biological particles composed of proteins and nucleic acids. But this isn’t really the case study here, conspiracy theories are enticing because they often link two things which at first might appear be correlated; in this case, the rapid rollout of 5G networks was taking place at the same time the epidemic hit. A propaganda scheme linking the two, avidly promoted by anti-vaccine activists who have long been spreading fears about electromagnetic radiation spearheaded by the Kremlin.

It’s worth reviewing, as the World Health Organization (WHO) stated, that viruses cannot travel on mobile networks, and that COVID-19 is spreading rapidly in various countries that do not have 5G networks. Even so, this conspiracy theory, after being spread by celebrities with big social media supporters, has led to cell-phone towers being set ablaze in the UK, parts of Asia and elsewhere.

**The Biological Weapon Theory:** This was a hypothetical rumour that states that the Novel Virus not only escaped from a lab, but it was intentionally created by Chinese scientists as a bio-warfare weapon. According to Pew Research, “nearly three-in-10 Americans believe that COVID-19 was made in a lab,” either intentionally or accidentally (the former is more adopted popularly: specifically, 23 percent believe it was developed intentionally, with only 6 percent believing it was an accident).

This Theory that the Chinese systematically created the virus is particularly popular on the US political right. It reached the mainstream audience thanks to US Sen. Tom Cotton (Republican,  Arkansas) who amplified theories first aired in the Washington Examiner (a highly conservative media outlet) that the Wuhan Institute of Virology “is associated with Beijing’s covert bio-weapons program.”

**COVID Death Rates Inflation Theory:** This is Another abstract assumption of the idea that COVID death rates are being inflated and therefore the irrelevant need to observe lockdown regulations or exercise social distancing measures. Prominent in promoting this hypothesis is Dr. Annie Bukacek, whose speech warning that COVID death certificates are being manipulated has been viewed more than a quarter of a million times on YouTube. Bukacek appears in a white lab coat and theatrical medical properties making her look like an authoritative medical source. However, during the trend of the video an investigation done by Rolling Stone Magazine was set out and it turns out she is actually a far-right anti-vaccination and anti-abortion activist, previously noted for bringing tiny plastic foetuses into the Montana state legislature. Her presumption that COVID death rates are inflated has, of course, no basis in fact. More likely the current death toll is a serious under-count.

**Was This Occurrence Natural or Man-made?**

Regardless of where you go online these days, there has to be discussions concerning coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Some individuals are even making absurd claims that the Novel CoronaVirus causing the pandemic was engineered in a lab and deliberately released to make people sick. A new study invalidates such statements by providing scientific evidence that this novel SARS-CoV-2 arose naturally. So, what is the Natural Genesis of the novel coronavirus responsible for the COVID-19 epidemic? The researchers do not yet have an accurate answer, But they do offer two plausible theories  
**In the first thesis**, as the new coronavirus evolved in its natural hosts, possibly bats or pangolins, its spike proteins mutated to bind to molecules similar in structure to the human ACE2 protein, thereby allowing it to infect human cells. This scenario seems to fit other recently similar outbreaks of coronavirus-caused disease in humans, such as SARS, which arose from cat-like civets; and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), which arose from camels.

**The Second Thesis,** is that the novel virus evolved from animals into humans before it became capable of causing human disease. Then, as a result of gradual evolutionary changes over years or perhaps decades, the virus eventually adopted the ability to spread from human-to-human and cause serious, often life threatening disease. Either way, this study leaves little room to debunk a natural origin for COVID-19.

And this is good because it helps us keep focused on the essential issues: observing good hygiene, practicing social distancing and supporting the efforts of all the dedicated health-care professionals and researchers who are working effortlessly to address this major global health challenge.

• Coronavirus Impact On Global Economy and Global Health.

**Global Economy**

Coronavirus recession refers to an economic recession which may happen across the world economy in 2020 due to the 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic.   
Some economists advice that China's economy may contract for the first time since the 1970s. Caixin's purchasing managers index for the services sector of China's economy fell to 26.5 in February 2020, the lowest figure recorded since the survey's advent in 2005, and car sales dropped 86% in China in February.

As the coronavirus continues to spread around the world, the stock markets have experienced their worst crash since 1987. Many countries with large economies, such as Italy and Spain, have enacted quarantine policies. This has led to the abolition of business activities in various economic sectors.

Economic turmoil linked with the coronavirus pandemic has wide-ranging and severe impacts on financial markets, including stock, bond and commodity (including crude oil and gold) markets. Major events included the Russia–Saudi Arabia oil price war that resulted in a collapse of crude oil prices and a stock market crash in March 2020. The United Nations Development Programme expects a US$220 billion reduction in revenue from developing countries, and expects COVID-19's economic impact to last for months or even years. Some anticipates natural gas prices to fall.  
  
Three days prior to Black Monday there was another drop, Black Thursday, where stocks across Europe and North America fell more than 9%. Wall Street suffered its largest single-day percentage drop since Black Monday in 1987, and the FTSE MIB of the Borsa Italiana fell nearly 17%, becoming the worst-hit market during Black Thursday. Regardless of a temporary rally on 13 March (with markets posting their best day since 2008), all three Wall Street indexes fell more than 12% when markets re-opened on 16 March.  At least one benchmark stock market index in all G7 countries and 14 of the G20 countries has been declared to be in bear markets.  
  
As of March 2020, global stocks have seen a downturn of at least 25% during the crash, and 30% in most G20 nations. On March 20, Goldman Sachs warned that the US GDP would shrink 29% by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2020, and that unemployment could skyrocket to at least 9%. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison has called the looming economic crisis 'akin to the Great Depression'

**Global Health**

The virus primarily infects people during close contact, often via small droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, or talking. As these droplets are produced when breathing out, they usually fall to the ground or onto surfaces rather than remain in the air over long distances. People may also be infected by touching the contaminated surface and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. The virus could survive on surfaces for up to 72 hours. It is most contagious during the first three days after the onset of symptoms, although spread may be possible before symptoms appear and in latter stages of the disease. Common symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. 'Complications may include pneumonia and acute respiratory distress syndrome. The time from exposure to onset of symptoms is typically around five days, but may range from two to fourteen days. There is no known vaccine or specific antiviral treatment. Primary treatment is symptomatic and supportive therapy'.  
Recommended preventive measures include hand washing, covering one's mouth when coughing, maintaining distance from other people, and monitoring and self-isolation for people who suspect they are infected. Authorities worldwide have responded by implementing travel restrictions, quarantines, curfews and stay-at-home orders, workplace hazard controls, and facility closures. Many places have also worked tp increase testing capacity and trace contacts of infected persons.

'The pandemic has caused severe global socio-economic disruption, including one of the largest global recessions in history'. It has led to the adjourned cancellation of sporting, religious, political and cultural activities, widespread supply shortages accompanied by panic buying, and (due to reduced automotive travel and closure of polluting industries) decreased air pollution and carbon emissions.

Relating to the educational sector, Schools, universities and colleges have closed either on a nationwide or local basis in 196 countries, affecting approximately 98.4 per cent of the world's student population. Misleading informations concerning the virus has spread online therefore creating incidents of xenophobia and discrimination against Chinese people and against those perceived as being Chinese, or as being from areas with high infection rates.

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