

Coronavirus heightens global alarm

24th January, 2020



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Nations around the world are preparing for a possible major outbreak of a new deadly virus. The coronavirus, which started in the Chinese city of Wuhan, has already killed 17 people. It has spread to the USA, Japan, Korea and Thailand. More than 540 people

have caught the virus and are in hospital. The World Health Organization (WHO) is meeting to decide whether the outbreak is a global health emergency. China is urging people not to panic ahead of the Chinese New Year next week. Millions of Chinese will be travelling across the country to spend the holiday season with their families. Meanwhile, the city of Wuhan has suspended its public transport systems to help stop the spread of the virus.

The new coronavirus is suspected to have come from illegally traded animals in a Wuhan market. The virus mutated and spread from an animal to a human. There are fears it could mutate and spread further. Scientists say the virus is contagious and can be passed from person to person through the air. Dr Linfa Wang, a virologist at the Duke-National University of Singapore, said the new coronavirus is in the same family as SARS, but it's different from SARS. He said people needed to look for pneumonia-like symptoms, such as fever, cough and difficulty breathing. Fu Ning, a 36-year-old woman from Beijing, said: "I feel fearful because there's no cure for the virus."

Sources: xinhuanet.com / npr.org / reuters.com

Writing

All international travel should end until the coronavirus has gone. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

nations / outbreak / deadly virus / hospital / the WHO / emergency / panic / holiday / animals / market / mutate / contagious / air / virologist / family / fever / cough / cure

True / False

- a) Nations are not preparing for a possible virus outbreak. T / F
- b) The coronavirus has spread to four countries. T / F
- c) Over 1,540 people are in hospital because of the virus. T / F
- d) The article said China suspended public transport in eight different cities. T / F
- e) Scientists suspect the coronavirus came from insects in a market. T / F
- f) The coronavirus passes from person to person through the air. T / F
- g) The coronavirus belongs to the same virus family as SARS. T / F
- h) One of the symptoms of coronavirus is breathing difficulties. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. nations | a. crisis |
| 2. preparing | b. danger signs |
| 3. deadly | c. changed |
| 4. emergency | d. getting ready |
| 5. panic | e. transferred |
| 6. mutated | f. freak out |
| 7. contagious | g. countries |
| 8. passed | h. antidote |
| 9. symptoms | i. lethal |
| 10. cure | j. catching |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about the coronavirus?
- b) How worried are you about the coronavirus?
- c) What would you do if there was an outbreak in your country?
- d) How can we make sure there is no outbreak?
- e) What has your country told you about the coronavirus?
- f) What would happen if millions of people panicked?
- g) What would you do if your city was in lockdown?
- h) Should China stop all flights out of Wuhan?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. a possible major | a. and spread further |
| 2. More than 540 people have | b. to panic |
| 3. the outbreak is a global health | c. symptoms |
| 4. China is urging people not | d. outbreak |
| 5. public | e. emergency |
| 6. illegally traded animals | f. no cure for the virus |
| 7. There are fears it could mutate | g. is contagious |
| 8. Scientists say the virus | h. transport |
| 9. pneumonia-like | i. in a Wuhan market |
| 10. I feel fearful because there's | j. caught the virus |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How serious is a global pandemic?
- What do you know about anti-microbial resistance?
- What can governments do to stop a pandemic?
- Should we worry more about measles than the coronavirus?
- Will you worry if you get a fever and cough?
- Do you think scientists will find a cure for the coronavirus?
- What questions would you like to ask the virologist?

Spelling

- Nations around the world are rnappgiepr
- a possible major rakteubo
- a global health crneygeme
- China is ingugr people not to panic
- the holiday oassen
- suspended its public transport eytssm
- iylallegl traded animals
- The virus utdmtae and spread
- the virus is otuagosinc
- a tlrivosogi at the Duke-National University
- look for pneumonia-like tmomypps
- fever, choug and difficulty breathing

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. a	5. f
6. c	7. j	8. e	9. b	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Water

You think water is the best thing to prepare for an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a radio, masks or hand sanitizer.

Role B – A Radio

You think a radio is the best thing to prepare for an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): water, masks or hand sanitizer.

Role C – Masks

You think masks are the best things to prepare for an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a radio, water or hand sanitizer.

Role D – Hand Sanitizer

You think hand sanitizer is the best thing to prepare for an epidemic. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a radio, masks or water.

Speaking – Preparing

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to prepare for a coronavirus epidemic at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| • Water | • Stay at home |
| • Radio | • Buy lots of food |
| • Masks | • Buy hand sanitizer |
| • Flu vaccine | • Hospital phone numbers |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.