

# Wuhan lab leak theory: How Fort Detrick became a centre for Chinese conspiracies | BBC News

By BBC staff

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In May, US president Joe Biden ordered a 90-day probe into whether the Covid-19 virus came from a lab accident or emerged from human contact with an infected animal.

Until then, the “Wuhan lab leak” theory had been dismissed by most scientists as a fringe conspiracy theory.

But now as the report is due to be released, China has gone on the offensive. In the past few weeks, Chinese sources have been amplifying a baseless claim that Covid-19 was made in the US.

Using everything from rap music to fake Facebook posts, experts say the propaganda efforts have been successful at convincing the domestic Chinese audience to cast scepticism on international criticism of the country’s role in the Covid-19 pandemic. But, experts say, it has done little to legitimise China to the outside world.

What are the allegations?

Most Americans may have never heard of Fort Detrick, but it is becoming a household name in China.

Chinese propagandists have pushed a conspiracy suggesting that the Covid-19 coronavirus was made and leaked from the military installation in Frederick, Maryland, about 80 km (50 miles) north of Washington DC.

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