

Scientists on WHO Mission to Wuhan Accuse Media of Biased Reportage

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Scientists on a World Health Organisation (WHO) mission to Wuhan to look at the origins of the coronavirus outbreak have accused Western media of “twisting” quotes to fit an anti-China narrative.

The US government and many media outlets have queried WHO findings that do not corroborate theories promoted by Washington, such as the virus escaping from a Chinese laboratory.

In a statement on Friday US national security adviser **Jake Sullivan** said that Washington had “deep concerns about the way in which the early findings of the Covid-19 investigation were communicated and questions about the process used to reach them.”

But British zoologist **Peter Daszak**, who was part of the WHO mission in China said that claims China had refused to hand over data were untrue.

“This was not my experience on the WHO mission. As lead of the animal/environment working group I found trust and openness with my China counterparts. We did get access to critical new data throughout. We did increase our understanding of likely spillover pathways,” he said.

“New data included environment and animal carcass testing, names of suppliers to Huanan market, analyses of excess mortality in Hubei, range of Covid-like symptoms for months prior, sequence data linked to early cases and site visits with unvetted live Q&A etc. All in report coming soon,” the expert explained.

In a swipe at reporting of the mission’s work, he tweeted:

“It’s disappointing to spend time w/ journalists explaining key findings of our exhausting month-long work in China, to see our colleagues selectively misquoted to fit a narrative that was prescribed before the work began. Shame on you @nytimes.”

Danish mission member **Thea Koelsen Fischer** said that scientists’ quotes were being

“intendedly twisted, casting shadows over important scientific work.”

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman reminded the US that the WHO “is an authoritative multilateral international organisation in the field of health, not a funfair where one can come and go at will.”

China called for the US to “hold itself to the highest standards” of openness and transparency saying “the whole world will be looking.”

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