Bio-terrorism Strategy in the Wuhan Coronavirus Pandemic: A Perspective from Conspiratorial and Apocalyptic Hypotheses

Oluka, Nduka Lucas1, Igwe, Elijah Onyedikachi2, Ugboma-Uti, U. Anthonia3

1&2Department of Political Science, Novena University Ogume, Delta State, Nigeria
3Department of Intelligence & Security Studies, Novena University Ogume, Delta State, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author

Abstract: The frequency with which Wuhan Covid-19 virus appears randomly all over the world has raised suspicion that it could be a bio-warfare and hegemonic tool of Beijing, the emergent imperial power to sustain its over bearing ambition and influence in the global system in recent times. The controversies surrounding the outbreak of the virus have left no doubt that the virus is concocted in a laboratory in Wuhan, China. This study, therefore, attempts to ascertain whether the outbreak of Covid-19 or Coronavirus pandemic is a natural epidemic or a bioterrorism as it is alleged to be put to use for sinister motives by the Communist Party in China. The study also relates same to the conspiratorial and apocalyptic hypotheses surrounding its outbreak since late December 2019. The study examines the concept of bioterrorism and biological weapons, and most importantly “Covid-19” and the challenges it poses to the entire world, W.H.O and the intelligence community as a tool of state actor terrorism. To review relevant literatures in the study area, the study adopted historical design which is qualitative and explorative in nature. Historical research method is applied via secondary sources of data, including textbooks, official documents, research articles and opinion papers, and internet materials. The study finds it necessary to suggest appropriate measures to forestall further spread of the strain as a means for biological warfare by the Communist Party of China as alleged by conspiracy theorists.

Keywords: Wuhan Virus, Covid-19, Coronavirus Pandemic, Bio-terrorism, Bio-weapon Strategy, Global Intelligence Failure, China imperialism and Conspiracy theory.

I. INTRODUCTION

It has become increasingly apparent over the past weeks that Covid-19 pandemic may not cease to spread considering unfolding allegations emanating from conspiracy theorists, intelligent agencies and experts in the medical sciences. Conspiracy theorists and the intelligence community have, however, predicted that unless the novel coronavirus is checked by moral restraints and all manners of sincerity on the parts of the World Health Organisation (W.H.O), national government health agencies, and most importantly, China, which is the ground zero of this biowarfare against human race, the virus would not cease to spread. On a global scale, Europe, USA and Asia have the highest records of spreads and casualties occasioned by the outbreak of the virus, a situation alleged to have escalated because of Chinese complexity, Europe complacency, US arrogance, as well as Africans ignorance and poor health facilities; and most importantly global intelligence failure.

Inarguably, the assumption of the conspiracy theorists is becoming very relevant since the outbreak of this novel Covid-19 pandemic considering the unfolding scenarios in recent time. They have consistently and publicly accused Beijing for its complexity over the outbreak of the virus in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province in the Republic of China and the ground zero of the novel Covid-19 pandemic. Xi Jinping’s reckless lies on the outbreak of the virus cum his reluctance to declare the actual situation of the outbreak in China to the W.H.O and the intelligence communities at the initial stage of the outbreak of the virus has aggravated the suspicion that the outbreak is not natural but artificial. Amidst this bewilderment, China has fully recovered from rampaging spread of the pandemic and has repositioned its economy in an amazing manner (Kim, 2020).

Amazingly, the outbreak of the virus Covid-19 has been compared or likened to the World War II (WWII) catastrophe by individuals and commentators. Leading the group of these commentators is German Chancellor Angela Markel, in her words she said, “Since German unification, no, since the Second World War, there has been no challenge to our nation that had demand such a degree of common and united actions”. In this same manner, Professor Margaret O’Mara of University of Washington said, “America Is at War, and there’s only One Enemy” which is the Wuhan coronavirus and which likened to the World War II. In the same vein, Tyler Cowen, an Economists from George Mason University said, “I think there is a good chance.... that this becomes like this generation’s World War II”. Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York said, “We have to treat the outbreak like a war here in New York and this war Ventilators are what the Missiles were in World War II (Rubin, 2020).

Following the amazing circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the pandemic, the speedy recovering and repositioning of Chinese economy, conspiracy theorists and observers alike, have been asking pertinent questions about what was behind this amazing recovering from the unexpected
doldrums and speedy repositioning its economy. Apparently, this has provoked further suspicions and allegations that the outbreak is never a natural epidemic, but an artificial outbreak. Some have argued that the virus was created by the authorities in Beijing in a Wuhan lab, purposely to destabilise and alter the existing world economic order, for the purpose of achieving Beijing’s long term ambition of monopolising all sectors of the world economy. With this mindset, conspiracy theorists alleged that Beijing clandestine objective started manifesting in its immediate exportation of health essentials and other sundry items including ventilators, facemask, etc., to the United States, Africa, United Kingdom, Europe and other countries in Asia. A move that has informed and validated global suspicions that the outbreak is not a natural epidemic but artificially concocted bio-weapon by the authorities in Beijing, China targeted against Washington, USA seen as a rival in South Asia in particular and the whole world in general (Aaltola, 2020, Kim, 2020).

A lot of historians, analysts and commentators following China’s rapid rise from agrarian society to one of the fastest industrial powerhouse in the world have, however, argued that Beijing’s ambition started before and after the industrial revolution in China. In about 39 years of China’s economic growth, it has become a power to recognise in the global economic and political arena. In recent times, it has dominated virtually all sectors of the global economy, including the agricultural, textile, pharmaceutical, science and technology, and oil and gas sectors. It is instructive therefore to note that the excellent and applauding developments in China inspired Beijing to the pursuit of hegemonic ambition, not only, in South Asia but also in other parts of the world, including the Asia continent which it belongs.

According to Yi (2016), “China’s explosive economic growths from its industrial revolution which stated less than forty years ago, is perhaps, one of the most important geopolitical powers in Asia continent, as well as one of the most economic and industrialised nations of the world since its original industrial revolution about 250 years ago”. The world should also not forget the fact that China before the industrial revolution was one of the richest nations with amazing ancient civilisations alongside India from at least 200 B.C. to 1800 B.C. Unfortunately, China’s applauding developments has been put to questioning following the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic alleged to have been cultivated in a Chinese Laboratory and that currently unleashing catastrophe to virtually every part of the world. In short, there isn’t a day without reports in various domestic and international media of the rate of spread and number of deaths occasioned by the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Following these emerging circumstances, one has no option rather than believing in the conspiracy theory that the outbreak of the epidemic is a bio-weapon in the form of Covid-19 pandemic. This is long overdue considering the quest for proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear materials, regarded as Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) by some state actors including China, and some of which are already intercalating the arsenals of some of these recalcitrant state actors and non-state actors alike, such as terrorist organisations, despite the existence of the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) created by UN General Assembly Resolution 502 (VI) of January 1952 under the UN Security Council (UNSC) with the mandate of regulating, limiting, balancing and reducing proliferation of all forms of arms and WMD.

Nafeez (2020) argued that the outbreak of Covid-19 is never a surprise because five year ago some distinguished scientists under the Commission on a Global Health Risk framework predicted and warned that in the following century the world is likely to experience outbreaks of pandemics, yet, the intelligence communities and W.H.O failed to prevent such to happen. In another development, Shkrudnev (2020) argued that the outbreak of the virus named Covid-19 is not only complicated by limited medical and laboratory evidences but also by the inability of health agencies to identify who the Patient Zero was, as well as the fact that the virus was not transmitted from contacts with sea fishes and crustaceans from Wuhan province. This has further informed and strengthened the conspiratorial and apocalyptic hypotheses that there is a clandestine motive behind the outbreak of the virus first in Wuhan, and now all over the world with USA and Europe having the highest infectious rates in recent times.

An obvious problem associated with this pandemic is that, at the initial stage of outbreak it defiled scientific explanation despite earliest discovery by researchers that the virus is a spiky ball roughly the size of a smoke particle developed in bats, but still, researchers aren’t sure how the virus shifted from bats to humans. Though, researchers suspect that civets, pigs, snakes, or pangolins were a likely intermediary host for the new coronavirus (Moshers, Woodward & Bendix, 2020). This no doubt has continued to undercut the conspiracy theory that the virus came from a Chinese laboratory. In the affirmative, Nordling (2020) describe the outbreak of the pandemic as a ticking time bomb while reviewing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa’s television address to the nation and which he declared the virus Covid-19 as a “respiratory disease spreading globally and now a national disaster”.

Kemp (2020) have argued the controversies surrounding the recent Chinese investments in technology, particularly in nuclear power programme and the 5G Network and installation in some parts of the world has been linked to a clandestine source of transmission of the virus. It is now a general belief that the technology is a clandestine plot to build vulnerability in critical national government infrastructures in a manner that has never being seen nor experienced, not even, in the developed Western World. With this mindset, he argued that the randomness and frequency with which the virus is appearing in densely populated regions all over the world shows that the virus is not a natural epidemic. It is alleged to
have been patterned to ensure maximum effect and spread. In a nutshell, the multidimensional spread of the virus, aside from killing the undesirables; it also creates jobs, foreign exchange and enriches Chinese firms and industries overseas. Perhaps this is why the W.H.O and the intelligence communities are worried stiff about how to eliminate the spread of the virus across national boundaries, and to contain the strain across the world, including USA, Europe and African Continents.

Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19 Virus), however, has been identified alongside other diseases such as Hemorrhagic fever Ebola virus disease (EVD), HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, Lassa fever, hepatitis, and significant others as one of life threatening diseases of our time, and potential future weapons of mass destruction. Because globalisation has made it easy for the world to be connected and has shrank the world into a global village, so also the virus finds its ways through immigrants to spread easily across the world. Independently, some of the developed countries of the North and a few from the Southern bloc, such as USA, UK, Italy, Australia, Madagascar and significant others, have taken it upon themselves to save the Earth from this catastrophe by conducting researches in order to find cure for the infectious disease.

**Statement of the Problem**

On the 17th of November 2019, a 55 year old man from Hubei, China was discovered to have been infected with a new strain of influenza and was hospitalised as patient with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) until 1st of December 2019 when it was discovered by a team of medical researchers that he was infected with a strange disease which was later named coronavirus. On 31st of December the Patient Zero was officially declared to be infected by unknown coronavirus; a situation that attracted lot of criticisms up to date (Shkrudnev, 2020). This is what turned everyone’s attention to the Wet Markets of Wuhan, a Seafood hub and the ground zero of the outbreak of the pandemic.

With this perturbing thought in mind, two prominent questions that are yet to be answered were raised; first, is there any evidence that Sea fishes and crustaceans are responsible for the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic? Two, has any one identified who the Patient Zero is, or what happened to him? These unanswered questions have bedevilled further investigations as to what is the root cause of the virus, why did Beijing behaved the way it did at the initial stage of the outbreak of the virus in Wuhan, and what is the motive behind Beijing’s attitude? According to Keränen (2011), post-9/11 era featured an unprecedented expansion of global bio-defense initiatives with chronicling events of the rise of bio-defense across political, scientific, and cultural rhetoric from late 1990s till this day. Observations show that bio-security or bio-insecurity production entails two interlocking bombast operations framing biological threats as catastrophic risk and a specter of viral apocalypse thus licensing technological solutions vulnerable. This could be envisioned in the 1989 response of David Huxsoll, a US Army Commander of Medical Research Institute on Infectious Disease (USAMRIID) where he asserted the absurdness of creating disease-causing organisms just to test therapies being developed, now this absurdity have become a reality, as evident in the recent outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keränen further stated that the U.S. scientists under the aegis of national security, genetically engineered smallpox to cross the species barrier, concocted anthrax resistant to vaccine while germs like hemorrhagic fever Ebola and Lassa fever viruses were routinely amplified, this euphemism adoption describes intentional changes to agents’ vulnerability. It therefore entails an array of clandestine research prediction of terrorist or rouge nations’ vision using bioweapons against other nations. The same can be said about the outbreak of Covid-19 situation, a conspiracy of our time. This is exactly what the conspiracy theorists and analysts infer about the recent outbreak of the Wuhan coronavirus pandemic; a problem that is yet to be resolved. Although, recent developments shows that Madagascar and Italy already have a vaccine, probably a cure for it.

Whether the outbreak of the virus is natural or not, recent developments have generated implacable hatred and belief that the virus was concocted by the Communist Party in China, a problem that is currently hindering multi-dimensional approach on how to find final solution to stop the spread of the virus and probably cure the already infected individuals all over the world. Nevertheless, measures have been taken independently by national governments to provide the much needed countermeasures to prevent the spread and rate of cases of the virus. This global disconnect is evident in the Madagascar’s case, a country in East Africa Sub-region which has a very low infectious rate because of its locally made Covid-19 herbal solution (Covid-Organics drink). On this note, instead of the W.H.O as a matter of urgency call for samples of the self-acclaimed remedy from Madagascar and subject same to proper laboratory tests, it went ahead to criticise it as not effective and efficient. This has caused mixed feelings and criticism across Africa.

Accordingly, the potential use of bioterrorism has never been more threatening than it is in the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. In the affirmative, Jansen, Breeveld, Stijnis and Grobusch (2014:) have had to argue that, “the outbreak of infectious diseases in the form of bioweapon, has consistently poses threats to the global health, as such much attention should be given to the emergence of relatively new or unknown pathogens, such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS) and the Zaire Ebola Virus epidemic in recent past. The same should be said about Covid-19, belief to be a concocted pandemic of our time by conspiracy theorists and commentators all over the world. Rather than creating collective countermeasure units, the world super powers instead engaged in Realpolitik and are consumed with self end of the zero-sum-game.
This global distrust and disunity as to whether the virus is a natural or artificial outbreak is evident in Dasgupta (2020) adoption of Huntington’s conspiratorial and apocalyptic hypotheses surrounding China’s hegemonic ambition since its emergence as an economic power in the global system due to its industrial revolution. This is reemphasised with Samuel Huntington 1993 remarks on his monograph “The Clash of Civilization” in Foreign Affairs and which Huntington sees China as a civilisation pretending to be a country, people indulged in mock retorts, and at present, standing on a global lockdown with deserted streets and hunger struck people all over the places is like a great wartime landscape, which is not different from what have been experienced during the time of the World Wars. In a nutshell, Huntington’s prediction unarguably holds the truth about China’s civilisation and its implications in our world today. This study therefore, is set out to examine the long-term implications of Beijing alleged recent myopic policy to eradicate perceived undesirable rivals from the West through Bio-terrorism.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to highlight the long-term consequences of the application of Covid-19 pandemic and similar viruses for the purpose of pursuit of policy and hegemonic objectives through clandestine motive and adoption of bioterrorism strategy, while the specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain whether Covid-19 outbreak is natural epidemic or a bioterrorism,
2. Attempt to discourage China and other great powers from further conspiracies to pursue policy objectives through bio-weapons now and in the future.

Research Questions

The following questions are raised to give direction to the study:

1. Is the outbreak of Covid-19 a natural epidemic or bioterrorism?
2. What can be done to discourage China and other great economic powers from proliferating bio-weapons in the future?

Method of the Study

The study adopted historical design which is qualitative and explorative in nature to ascertain and examine whether the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic is a conspiracy by China to pursue its policy and hegemonic objective in global affair. And to ascertain if the outbreak is a bio-weapon adopted by Chinese Communist Party to pursue Beijing’s ambition of becoming a sole super power in the global system. In other words, the study relied extensively on secondary sources of data, such as textbooks, journal articles, magazines, newspapers, official documents and internet materials.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Wuhan Covid-19 (Coronavirus Pandemic):

Following the controversies surrounding the origin or rather the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus or what is also known as Covid-19 pandemic, an in-depth conceptual analysis of the phenomenon has become necessary. However, despite the polemic or complex nature of the virus, there is a consensus statement about the virus. Medically, it has been classified among the family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from common cold to acute or severe diseases such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Although, it is a new strain that has not been previously identified in human beings but a detailed scientific investigations found that this new form of SARS-CoV was actually transmitted either from civet cats to humans in China in the year 2002 or from MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to human beings in Saudi Arabia in the year 2012. Common symptoms associated with the virus infections include: respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties, and in severe cases infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and death (W.H.O. 2020).

According to Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir and Siddique (2020:92), the virus has been identified alongside other similar diseases as a highly transmittable and pathogenic infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which emerged in Wuhan, China and since then, unleashed havoc to humans all over the world. Further investigation about the source of the disease revealed that it is phylogenetically related to severe acute respiratory syndrome-like (SARS-like) bat viruses, which means that bats are possible transmitters of the virus, although, mode of transfer to humans is not clear at the moment. They, thus, argued that, the only known source of transmission medically at the moment is human to human transfer, and has no clinically approved antiviral drugs or vaccine available for its prevention and cure. Shereen et al. opine that “coronaviruses belong to the Coronaviridae family in the Nidovirale order and represents crown-like spikes on the outer surface of the virus, hence, named Coronavirus”.

With this mindset, Shereen et al., posit that medically, the virus is minute in size, i.e. about 65-125nm in diameter, and contains a single-strand RNA as a nucleic material of sizes ranges from 26 to 32kbs in length. By implication, the coronaviruses belong to the subgroups or family of alpha (α), beta (β), gamma (γ) and delta (δ) coronavirus. In its severe forms, i.e. severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV), H5N1 influenza A, H1N1 2009 and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), it can possibly cause acute lung injury (ALI) and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) which can cause pulmonary failure or result in fatality. Further investigation revealed that before the outbreak of the Wuhan coronavirus, this group of viruses are common animal infectious diseases, though, there was a
similar outbreak caused by SARS-CoV in 2002 in Guangdong, China.

Extant literature revealed that several known coronaviruses have been circulating in animals but never infected humans until the Wuhan outbreak in 2019. The same cannot be said about this vicious Covid-19 pandemic unleashing havoc to humans all over the world, alleged to be cultivated and spread by the Communist Party of China and its viciousness first recorded in Wuhan in December 2019. Razu (2020) argued that the outbreak of the vicious Covid-19 that first recorded its viciousness in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province in the Peoples’ Republic of China (PRC) in 2019, and now unleashing havoc to the whole world has changed the contours of globalisation. Moreover, the hallmarks of globalisation which are unregulated market economies and free movement of labour and goods across national borders have been distorted since the outbreak of Wuhan virus. Domestic affairs of states affected most by the outbreak of novel virus have been distorted to the extent that national governments and their citizens are now struggling to familiarised themselves with the lockdown precipitated by the outbreak of the epidemic. The consequence of this development is that, “globalisation is on the edge and that the W.H.O. on the other hand is now marginalised”.

While commenting on the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, Shkrudnev (2020) and Heather (2020) reiterated the fact that the Wuhan coronavirus infection is through close contact with already infected persons and occurs in neural way (involving nervous system) through the par-psychological psychic phenomena, psi (or power) fields of individual with the same level of brain development. Investigations revealed that incubation period of the virus lasts for maximum of 10 to 14 days after which its viciousness dies off. Symptom is not noticeable during incubation period of the virus until it develops into a full blown virus. From the time of incubation to the time of maturity, the virus is transmitted from one person to another making it very difficult to control. Taming the outbreak of the virus since its birth in Wuhan in December 2019 has not been easy. Without doubt the virus has spread faster than expected thereby making it difficult for W.H.O and national governments to control.

Following several researches conducted privately and independently by institutions, national governments, and private individual, to mention but a few, Madagascar become the first nation to have declare that they have a cure. On April 20 this year, President Andry Rajoelina in a press conference announced a breakthrough in the fight against Covid-19. He urges school children and the entire citizens to take daily drop of the Covid-19 organic. To prove the safety of the herbal tea remedy labelled Covid-organics he picked up a bottle placed on the table and took a sip from it. In spite of its demonstrated effects in the country, W.H.O has declared that there is no specific cure for the Covid-19 yet (Baker, 2020; Salem, 2020). It was revealed that a German biotechnology company, BioTech, have the vaccine for Covid-19 and will be ready in a year. A recent development reported that the authorities have approved the first human text of the vaccine on volunteers (Simsek, 2020). Until such a discovery, health experts all over the world have been treating patients with the virus with anti-malaria drugs, including hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine, both of which have shown positive results.

2.2 An Over View of Bioterrorism and Bioweapons

Extant literatures revealed that certain forms of bioweapons or bio-warfare have been in existence since the ancient times, especially during the Middle Ages when cases relating to the adoption of biological substances were recorded and were used to cause harms to lives, although, the incidences were not as frightening as it is in recent times when state and non-state actors have consistently employed this strategy to cause harms to humans. Bhalla and Warheit (2004) opined that bioterrorism or biological warfare or bio-weapons (BW) has a very long historical pertinence and has progressed from crude forms in Early and Middle ages to more sophisticated forms in modern times; as was witnessed during and after the Second World War (WWII). In the affirmative, Mayor and Andrienne (2003) cited in Pal et al. (2017:25) opined that, “rudimentary forms of biological warfare have been practiced since antiquity, evidenced in the 6th century BC attack when the Assyrians poisoned enemy wells with a fungus that rendered the enemy delirious”.

Christopher, Cieslak, Psilvin and Eitzen (1997) and Derbes (1966) opined that biological weapons have been used during warfare in the 14th century, though, in a limited number of cases when Tartars allegedly catapulted dead bodies over the fortified walls of Kaffa (Feodossia, Ukraine) in an attempt to introduce plague. During the French and Indian war in 1754-1767, the commander of the British forces in North America, Sir Jeffrey Archer, purportedly used contaminated blackest to introduce Smallpox into Native American populations that were sympathetic to France. During World War I, Germany was alleged to have used biological weapons (WWI) to infect livestock, such as horses and mules in a number of countries, particularly those destined for United States. Japan too was accused of attacking eleven Chinese cities with biological agents during WWII, contaminating air, water, and food with Bacillus anthracis, Vibrio cholera, shigella spp, Salmonella spp, and Yersinia pestis-infected fleas (Atlas, 1999). Considering these incidences, conspiracy theorists and commentators on the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic have no options than to believing that Beijing adopted the Covid-19 pandemic for bioterrorism in order to achieve its conspiracy against the United States and the rest of the world. This, no doubt, has caused considerable damages and deaths all over the world.

With this mindset, Pal, Tsegaye, Girzaw, Bedada, Godishala and Kandi (2017) opined that, “the advent of the germ theory of disease and advances in microbiological techniques, inarguably, introduced a new dimension to sophistication in
the theoretical adoption of bio-agents in wars, as was witnessed in the biological sabotage in the form of Antrax and Glanders (highly contagious life threatening disease of cattle, sheep and horses, etc) undertaken on behalf of the Imperial German government during the World War I that occurred between 1914 to 1918. Furthermore, they opined that, bio-agents as weapons during wars predates antiquity, as evidenced in the pre-Christian era around 300 BC when the Greeks indiscriminately use animal Cadavers (dead animals) to contaminate water wells of enemies to cause harms, and significant others.

Riedel (2004) cited in Al-Agamy (2011) opines that between 1320 and 1000 B.C one of the earliest documented incidence of the intention to use bioweapon was recorded among the Philistines in which plague was disseminated, although, this seem to be primitive in nature and less effective, but it is an indication that bioterrorism existed even in the ancient time and will continue to exist in our contemporary lives, as in the case of the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. Dasgupta (2020:6) sounding a word of warming to national government health agencies and the W.H.O., opines that the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 has an eerie similarities with Bubonic plague of 1307 and 1347CE and which unleashed harvest of havoc in Europe; the consequence of which was a centuries wars and the birth of nationalism, as well as the birth of Industrial revolution and the demise of Feudalism. This incidence was succeeded by the 1450-1550CE three stadials–Sporar Minimum, 1650-1730CE Maunder Minimum and 1770-1850CE Dalton Minimum. However, the same can be said about the recent outbreak of coronavirus; in short, the world is the same again with the Covid-19 outbreak.

In recent times, the world is consumed by misconstruction of natural epidemics for alleged biological attacks and vice versa. Indisputably, this has made it difficult for scholars to provide a succinct definition and classification of the concept of bioterrorism or bioweapons, although, attempts by scholars to define the concept was based on its societal level of disruption and the panic caused to mankind. Notwithstanding, institutions and scholars, some of which conceived the concept as a potential weapon of mass destruction (WMD), have provided several workable definitions. Pal et al. (2017) see bioterrorism as a deliberate or threatened use of biological agents, such as viruses, bacterium, and toxins to cause illness in people, animals and plants. It is also the use of microorganism, such as bacteria(s), viruses or fungi or toxins by state and non-state actors alike, to produce weapons to cause death and diseases among humans, animals and plants.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC (2014) defined bioterrorism as the use of biological agents to create casualties, terror, societal disruption, or economic loss, and most importantly to inspire ideological, religious or political beliefs by some state and non-state actors. DaSilva (1999) cited in Cenciarelli et al. (2013) defines biological warfare as the use of microorganism and toxins of microbial to produce diseases and virus purposely to cause death among humans, livestock and crops. Ali, Murat and Ahmet (2018) see bioterrorism as a term used to describe the intentional use of pathogenic strains of microbes to cause disease or death in living thing, including animals and plants or to cause harm to an environment. For Roffeyet, Lantorp, Tegneil and Elgh (2002), bio-weapons are micro organisms such as bacteria, virus, fungi and other organisms that can be dispersed deliberately to cause disease infections and death of humans, animals and plants.

The US Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture describe biological agents as those substances such as toxins that have the potential of causing serious threats to human health and safety. In this end, the U.S CDC in 2014 categorised biological agents among the highest priority agents that can easily be disseminated or transmitted from person-to-person, and capable of causing secondary and tertiary cases. They are substances that can also cause high mortality cases and capable of causing major public health implication. Those agents are also capable of causing panic and social disruptions, and those that require special action for public health preparedness (CDC, 2014). In fact, most of these toxins are found in antrax (a disease that is sometimes found in cattle and sheep), salmonellosis (a bacteria sometimes found in foods that make people sick), tularemia (rabbits or rodents or some domestic animals fever), plague (a disease that causes death and spreads quickly), smallpox, botulin toxin (botulism) and ricin (a poisonous protein). Most of these have been used as bioweapon. The consequence of the use of pathogenic organism or toxin to cause death, however, is “better imagined than experienced”.

III. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

3.1 Covid-19: A Bioterrorism or a Natural Pandemic?

The indiscriminate adoptions and uses of biological agents by some obstinate and non conformist state and non-state actors in recent years to cause harms to humans in particular, indisputably, has constantly threatened our existence and safety, as seen in the Wuhan, China outbreak of the novel Covid-19 pandemic that is currently unleashing menace to humans all over the world. The world may not be interested in China as a recalculating nation compare to some of the terrorist prone nation-states in the Middle East, but the outbreak of novel Covid-19 shows that China is interested in the world. The peril of the outbreak is better imagined than experienced, its devastation to human race since the outbreak is indescribable. There is never a day without accounts for deaths cause by the virus across the world, especially in USA, Italy, Spain, Korea, France, and Iran.

Jansen et al (2014), thus, argued that, “the very special category of man-made outbreaks of disease is in the manipulations and intentional distributions and spreads of pathogens in the form of bioweapon, purposely to cause disruptions or deaths in societies, often used in the pursuit of government clandestine policy agenda or by terrorist and
criminal groups to perpetrate evil against human beings. Also, recalcitrant nation-states carry out such bioterrorism purposely to undermine the will and abilities of opponents or to kill or make ill large numbers of opponents’ armed forces, population, crops and livestock by releasing of biological agents. This is done by simply obtaining a pathogenic organism or toxin, multiplies it in such a way that the agent retains its viability and pathogenic attributes and finally devising a clandestine means or method to transfer the agent to infect human beings, either by inhaling or swallowing or through aeroionisation or covert distribution in food or water, or through contact with an infected person. These agents do not doubt can occur naturally, but there is also the possibility that they could be altered to increase their abilities to cause outbreak of diseases, enhanced their resistance to current medicines and their ability to spread into the environment, by state and non-state actors (Pinto, 2013).

After the Gulf War it was alleged that Iraq stored a large quantity of biological weapons, and that its government had a programme to access and cultivate dangerous pathogens for bioterrorism. In 1995 precisely, Iraq was said to have cultivated biological weapons, bombs, rockets, and aircraft spray tanks that contained Bacillus anthracis and balulinum toxin (Henderson, 1998:488). To this end, pundits or experts in the field of laboratory sciences or virologists argued that pathogenic organism or toxins are likely to be extracted or cultivated for sinister use. In short, adoption of these pathogens or toxins as weapon often regarded as biological weapon or bioweapon is becoming common in our civilised world. What we do not understand is that any outbreak of epidemics such the Coronavirus and other similar viruses is that, if the outbreak is not well managed it could wipe out an entire region because of its high infection rate. This same is said about the recent outbreak which informs the suspicions that the Wuhan virus outbreak is not a natural epidemic. This is also one of the reasons that informed conspiratorial theory of the outbreak of the disease.

The conception of the outbreak as a means by Beijing to destabilise the existing world economic order in order to indirectly blackjack the world to accept medical equipment and other forms of aids from China, hence, orchestrating its well planned clandestine motives of re-colonising the world through its super technological development in which America and Europe have been barriers. This is a credible argument by the conspiracy theorists considering the manners in which the epidemic started, the rate at which it spread to other parts of the world on the hand, and the temporary setback in terms of insufficient knowledge, specialisation and equipment required to effectively control the outbreak in humans all over the world on the other hand.

In the past, study conducted by the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) shows that similar virus could be transmitted in an aerosolised form which was tested by administering pathogenic organism on rhesus monkeys that were made to inhale large quantities of droplets via a breathing apparatus containing the virus (Johnson, Jaax, White & Jahrling, 1995). In another development, the W.H.O studies of the effects of aerosolised Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in 1970 complements the USAMRIID experiment. The W.H.O experiment was used to investigate the extent to which viruses can be used to infect a larger proportion of the population. This was illustrated by an experiment in which 50 kilograms of aerosolised RVF is released to a municipality of 500,000 people. It was observed that it causes over 35,000 casualties with a mortality rate of 0.5%. Since Ebola has a higher mortality rate than RVF, 50 kilograms of the virus will be enough for state and non-state actors to use the strain to cause harm and danger to the targeted population (Hummel, 2014). In short, the same can be said in the case of the recent outbreak of Wuhan coronavirus that is currently unleashing menace to the entire world, and that which has confused the W.H.O and domestic health agencies all over the world.

In the recent past, the Soviets were alleged to have attempted to cultivate smallpox, anthrax, tularemia and other forms of hemorrhagic fevers for potential use in bioterrorism. During the Cold War era the Soviet Union was accused of attempting to weaponised Ebola virus (Hummel, 2014), if this is true, then the Communist Party of China or Beijing has also weaponised Coronavirus in the form of Covid-19 to cause harms to humans and destabilise global economies for selfish gains since investigations have revealed that a large amount of microbes can be grown for potential use as bioterrorism. The question now is that, if Covid-19, a similar pathogen, virus or bacteria is applied, what would be its effects to humans? This question is very simple considering the rate of spread and the level of damages the virus, Covid-19, have caused since the outbreak in late September 2019 in Wuhan in the Hubei Province, China to both human beings, and the global economies, leading to another artificial regime of global economic recession.

Joachim (2014) argued that it is no longer strange that pathogens or viruses are possibly extracted and spread by some state actors and state sponsored terrorist organisations by getting their members or agents infected with contagious diseases such as Ebola, Smallpox, among others. Since suicide bombing has been one of the major tactics or skills adopted by the leading terrorist organisations to perpetrate evil orchestrations, there is also the possibility that Chinese government adopted well patterned and coordinated, and similar method to spreading of Covid-19 pandemic to unsuspecting population in Wuhan in Hubei Prince, the ground zero of the pandemic, and which the virus spread to the rest of the world.

Of recent concern is the convincing argument put forward by conspiracy theorists, pundits, experts and commentators all over the world. Some have channeled blame of the outbreak of the epidemic and its spread on Xi Jinping whom they said lied to the world and the W.H.O after the outbreak in Wuhan. His arrogance and insincerity was perceived as a deliberate
attempt to concealed Beijing’s clandestine motive of weaponising Covid-19. In affirmative, Rubin (2020) channelled the blame to Xi Jinping when he opines that, “had it not for Xi Jinping’s venality and incompetence, Zhao Lijian’s (Chinese Foreign Minister official) dishonesty, and the complicity of thousands of senior members of the Communist Party of China, the world would not have been in recession and millions of people who have died of the virus, and those that are likely to die from the Wuhan coronavirus would have been alive, and escape death respectively”.

According to Meotti (2020) what seems like unlawful arrest and forceful disappearance of Chinese whistleblowers have further informed suspicions that the virus is not a natural epidemic but a conspiracy orchestrated by China for selfish gains. The unanswered questions concerning the disappearance of alleged Chinese dissidents who were only worried about the outbreak of the virus that began in Wuhan but now a global pandemic has confirmed the suspicion of a conspiracy. Subsequently, those purportedly arrested and those that disappeared were listed to include: Chen Mei, Cai Wei and Cai’s girl friend on April 19 charged for preserving articles that were removed by a China’s online censor; disappearance of a retired professor, Chen Zhaozhi accused of picking quarrels and provoking trouble in his speech about the pandemic and for accusing the Chinese Communist Party of concocting the Wuhan pneumonia; arrest of a human rights lawyer, Wang Quanzhang; arrest of citizen journalist, Li Zehua; disappearance of a doctor from Wuhan and the head of the Emergency Room at Wuhan Central Hospital, among others.

Dasgupta (2020) commenting on the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic revealed a pertinent incident that would have served as premonition of what was about to overwhelm or submerge the whole world, unfortunately, intelligence failure of the US Federal officers of Logan International Airport could not avert the conspiracy of what is now linked to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Between October 2017 and April 2019, a 29 year old, Miss. Yanquing Ye, a former student of Columbia University, USA under the J–1 visa was said to have compiled information on US Military and Defense Strategy during her stay in USA. Further investigation revealed that she was constantly in touched with two Harvard University professors of biotechnology from China and on her trip back home on 29 April 2019, she was caught with vital informations on her device by the Federal officers of Logan airport, and while she was interrogated Ye admitted she was a lieutenant of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) at the National University of Defense Technology (NUDT) China, and also a member of the Chinese Communist Party, yet, she was allowed to go and never to return to the States.

Ye’s confrontation with officers of Logan International Airport was succeeded by other similar incidences that one would have no option believing all comes in a series and have link with the outbreak of the Wuhan coronavirus that has brought the world into imperil. On 10th December 2019, FBI officials from the Logan International Airport arrested one Dr. Zaosong Zheng, a Cancer Researcher with Boston University on board of a flight from the United States to China with 21 Vials of Cells (containers of cells) in his luggage discovered to be stolen from a laboratory of Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Boston, USA. He was later charged for falsification, espionage and conspiracy against the United States. Another incident that provoked suspicions and raised a question that is yet to be answered by the USA on the one hand, and UN and W.H.O on the other hand, occurred. Precisely on the 31st of December 2019, exactly 44 days after the first detection of the outbreak of a strange disease in Wuhan there was unbelievable silence from the USA, UN and W.H.O. It was therefore argued that it took the W.H.O 72 days to declare the Wuhan outbreak and 102 days after the virus was identified as coronavirus to earmark Covid-19 a pandemic (Dasgupta, 2020:3-4). It was, however, obvious that there was a foul play, unfair and dishonest acts after the Wuhan outbreak that provoked conspiracy theorists and commentators to believing that the outbreak is not a natural pandemic but concocted in a Laboratory to unleash threat to life by Beijing. 

If not so, why did Beijing refused to declare the virus as such and why did Xi Jinping lie to the world and allowed the virus to spread out of control?

Considering all the characteristics of the new disease or virus as the case may be, including its very high contagious rates, the secrecy surrounding its outbreak, significant mortality, and most importantly, a tendency of mutation, as well as the suspicious complexity of its origin, then, it is a sign of Biological Weapon. Considering also the complexity surrounding its entirety, it becomes obvious that Malthusian prognosis or Malthusianism is at work, justifying the need for force reduction of the world population through this obnoxious tactics by the super powers, but this time, Beijing is the culprit. Why is it now in 2020, with our increased civilisation, human capital development, and advanced technical and scientific development; and now that we have lot of experiences in handling of stage epidemics that the death rate exceeded that of the traditional outbreak of diseases? There is a very strong impression that the world is fighting a biological warfare. In short, the Golden Million is now switching to the use of biological warfare (Shkrudnev, 2020), to settle scores and define superiority and stampede hegemonic policies over the rest of the world.

3.2 Measures to Discourage State and Non-State Actors for the use Bioweapons in Pursuit of Policy Objectives

Considering the historical incidences of attempted and successful cases of the use of biological agents or pathogens, such as viruses, bacteria and toxins for bioterrorism by some state actors to cause diseases and death to unsuspecting individuals and governments, it has become imperative for the UN General Assembly through the UN Security Council to invoke the relevant sections its Biological Weapon Conventions to impose sanction on any defaulting state party to the Convention and other international efforts that prevent
state parties and terrorist organisations from adoption of biological agents for sinister motives. Subsequently, national governments should as a matter of urgency promote the development of global public health infrastructures.

Specifically, it is expected that the emerging super powers in the Southern hemisphere including China should respect the sanctities of other countries by pursuing policies that are likely to promote international peace and security, and adhere to the Sections of the Geneva Convention. It is, therefore, pertinent to note that the Geneva Convention of 1925 signed by 108 nations was the first multilateral agreement that extended prohibition of chemical agents to biological agents. In 1972, the United States signed the biological and toxic weapons convention, which banned the development, production and stockpiling of microbes or their poisonous products, except in amounts necessary for protective and peaceful research. By 1996, over 137 countries had signed the treaty (Onyenekenwa, 2012).

In 1967, the United States ended its biological weapons programme by adopting President Nixon’s Unilateral Declaration which later became the foundation of the international agreement enacted in 1972, popularly known today as the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention (BWC), and which prohibits the production, retention and stockpiling of biological weapons (Atlas, 1999). Unfortunately, in 1995 Libya, North Korea, South Korea, Iraq, Taiwan, Syria, Israel, Iran, China, Egypt, Vietnam, Cuba, Bulgaria, India, Sao, South Africa, and Russia were suspected to possess biological weapons. Now, it is China’s turn to retain and stockpile pathogens for the purpose of using same for bioterrorism as alleged by conspiracy theorists all over the world. Accordingly, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 ratified and signed by 66 states to prohibit the development and production of biological substances should be revitalised to effectively prevent terrorist and recalcitrant state actors, including China from putting pathogens or viruses to use as biological weapon. And stop future use of Coronavirus for the purpose of bioterrorism by sanctioning China for its recklessness and complexity over the outbreak of the Wuhan coronavirus or Covid-19.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
Over the years there are several measures put in place to regulate states’ development, possession and use of biological weapons for sinister motives under the International Legal Instruments against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Terrorism which entered into force in 2007. Like other related International Legal Instruments such as the Convention on the Physical Prevention of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM), International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT), International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (ICSTB), and significant others, the CBRN terrorism identified the following features: the establishment of unlawful proliferation of CBRN act as an offence; it requires all state parties to criminalise such acts under the domestic laws; establish jurisdictional grounds for state parties to prosecute the described offences; to extradite or prosecute offenders; and provide legal grounds for cooperation between state parties for extradition and mutual legal assistance regarding the offences established.

Article 7 requires States parties to make the following offences punishable under National Laws: an act without lawful authority which constitutes the receipt, possession, use, transfer, alteration, disposal or dispersal on nuclear materials and which causes or is likely to cause death or serious injury to person or substantial damage to property; a theft or robbery of nuclear material; an embezzlement or fraudulent obtaining of nuclear material; an act constituting a demand for nuclear material by threat or use or by any form of intimidation such as to use nuclear materials to cause death or serious injury to any person, etc. (UNODC, 2016). Unfortunately, international law only criminalised the use of CBRN when they are used for sinister motives. However, the lacunars in the provisions of the use of CBRN and other related international legal provisions gave rooms for recalcitrant or rogue states and terrorist organisations to covert these materials for sinister motives. In recent times, their interests in the proliferation and development of these materials for sinister motives remain one of the major concerns of the UN.

Findings, thus, revealed that the efforts of the W.H.O in bringing the world’s scientists and global health professionals together to accelerate research development to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Attempts have also been strengthened to activate, most importantly, accelerated diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics for the novel Covid-19 pandemic. According to W.H.O reports on the pandemic, the war with the virus or disease is not yet won until the virus is eradicated all over the world. Weighing the outbreak of the virus, pertinent facts have begun to emerge that have the utmost benefits to the W.H.O and researchers all over the world. First, research so far revealed that the outbreak began in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and lastly, the virus has been categorised as SARS-CoV-2, a virus that causes a respiratory illness called Covid-19. Recent development provides a glimmer of hope that the pandemic will soon be eradicated. This follows the declarations made by the President of Madagascar about the Madagascar’s Covid-19 Organic that its effectiveness is currently under laboratory investigations by some countries, especially those of African continent, and the recent declarations from Italy that claimed to have discovered the vaccines and treatment for the novel Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Medical News Today (2020), a team of Chinese-based researchers have found a new candidate drug against SARS-CoV-2, that is, the coronavirus that causes Covid-19 pandemic that has taken thousands of lives all over the world. The research revealed that the so-called protease of the virus, that is, a type of enzyme without which the virus cannot survive was the starting point of their efforts so far. Using two
compounds which they labelled 11a and 11b, the group of researchers inhibit the protease and then, monitored the antiviral effect or activity of both compounds and later discovered that that the substances successfully fought the virus infection. Subsequently, the finally experiments in mice shows that medical scientists could satisfactorily and safely administer both compounds through several means, including IV drip, etc. However, the same can be said about further experiments on animal tests, especially in rats and Beagle dogs, although, the experiment shows that the 11a substance is less toxic, hence, the concentration on the 11a compound (Ana, 2020). Unfortunately, it was declared later that it has no human equivalent to the enzyme that the compound targets to unveil. Nevertheless, several researches are ongoing all over the world as to the appropriate vaccines and treatment for called Covid-19.

However, more dangers are imminent considering the rate at which state and non-state actors have resorted to adoption of biological substances in the form of bioweapon and WMD to orchestrate evil against their rivals or enemy state in recent times. Most worrisome of all is the extent to which the emergent Imperial power and the new globalist China driven by greed, hatred for the rivals USA and Europe, as well as egoism has resorted to adoption of iniquitous acts to induced war on the global system through the alleged concocted Wuhan coronavirus disease called Covid-19 to reduce USA and Europeans economic strengths in order to stampede them and the rest of the world to be perpetually depended on Chinese economy to strive. And since it is difficult to differentiate natural pandemic diseases from biological attacks or bioterrorism, the task to detect and prevent the attack becomes difficult too, especially now that the disease is a strange one that has in some instances defiles treatment.

This is attributed to the deceptive interpretation that every pandemic occurs through natural causes, thus the suspicion of artificial spread of viruses such as yellow fever, smallpox, Lassa fever, Hemorrhagic fever Ebola viruses, and most especially Covid-19 pandemic. In short, it is difficult to establish natural epidemic from artificial epidemic following the conspiracy theory surrounding the outbreak of Covid-19 and the event following the outbreak and spread of the disease. Nonetheless, the plethora of issues raised in this study is clear indications that Wuhan coronavirus outbreak and other similar viruses are potential biological weapons aimed at causing death, and also achieving complex economic gains. We therefore agree with conspiracy theorists that there is a foul play in the outbreak of Covid-19.

We also agree with the assumption of the conspiracy theorists and commentators alike, that the outbreak of the novel Covid-19 is not natural but artificially cultivated by Beijing and spreading same to cause massive pandemic so as to reduce the alleged over blown population of the world, as well as provide the world with vaccines while demanding reciprocity in kind, cash or respect. The researchers also agree with this school of thought that the pandemic is more or less a deliberate means to sustain the already established China’s hegemony in the world, especially in the peripheral nations of Third World which it also belong, although, they are not the most affected but are the most vulnerable in the global system.

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