

Wuhan lab leak or wet market outbreak? Biden calls for US intelligence agencies to 'redouble' investigative efforts into COVID origins

President Biden ordered a U.S. intelligence inquiry into the origins of Covid-19, following [renewed scrutiny](#) on the possibility that the outbreak of the virus might have started with a [laboratory leak in China](#).

The White House has come under pressure to carry out its own investigation after China told the World Health Organization that it considered Beijing's part of the investigation complete.

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Mr. Biden, who wants a report within 90 days, said that U.S. intelligence has focused on two scenarios—whether the coronavirus came from human contact with an infected animal or from a laboratory accident. He said that there is a split among officials in the American intelligence community, or IC, on how the virus might have emerged.

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The Wall Street Journal reported [May 23] on a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report that three [researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick](#) enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care.

The first officially documented case of a Covid-19 infection was in early December in the central Chinese city of Wuhan. So the timing of the intelligence about the sick researchers, if fully corroborated by the new investigation, is deemed by current and former U.S. officials to be significant.

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