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Facebook's COVID-19 'fact checker' who dismissed reports of Wuhan lab as source of pandemic worked in same lab

The revelation has not just raised fresh suspicion over China's activities but also brought the social media giant's credibility under question

By Shubham Ghosh

Updated On : 03:35 PST, Apr 19, 2020



Tags : [New York](#)



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emerged that could dent those very platforms' credibility even more. It has been reported that a Facebook fact-checker, who rubbished articles suggesting that COVID-19 may have leaked from a lab in Wuhan, worked in that very lab.

The common belief is that the coronavirus causing the pandemic originated from a wet market in Wuhan and the theory that it all started from a lab was seen more as a conspiracy. Even the US military chief has said that there is not enough evidence to suggest that the point of origin was a lab.

Danielle Anderson, who works at NUS Medical School lab at Duke University, Singapore, also contributes to Science Feedback that Facebook uses to identify articles claiming that COVID-19 may have originated at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) and label them as "false". Her publications reveal that she has had many collaborations with a Wuhan scientist experimenting on bat coronaviruses. The overlapping nature of Anderson's work has understandably raised a big question mark over the authenticity of the social media giant's fact-checking mechanisms.

Investigative journalist Sharyl Attkisson pointed out the fact in a tweet saying: "If you follow the info, you will find the Facebook fake fact-checker on the China Wuhan lab is a scientist who works/worked at China's Wuhan lab the past two years and says it is impossible that they would be sloppy because they are very careful!".

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Danielle Anderson (YouTube)

Also mentioning a Washington Post tweet that negated [Arkansas Republican Senator Tom Cotton](#) claims on the Wuhan-lab angle, Attkisson said [one should start believing the opposite of what the media is saying](#). Anderson has been immovable over her stand that the Wuhan lab maintains the best safety practices and there could not have been an instance where the coronavirus could have been leaked by her colleagues.

Anderson called NY Post lab theory 'infuriating'

In her negative assessment of a February article in the [New York Post](#) that claimed the coronavirus may have leaked from a lab in China, [she said](#), "I have worked in this exact laboratory at various times for the past two years. I can personally attest to the strict control and containment measures implemented while working there." She called the article "infuriating" both on personal and professional levels and said it was "simply false" to call the Wuhan lab as a bioweapons research center.

Science Feedback rated the article as one with credibility of minus 1.5 -- between "low" and "very low".

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President Donald Trump has repeatedly called the coronavirus as 'Chinese Virus' and accused the World Health Organization as 'China-centric' (Getty Images)

Earlier in February, Anderson co-penned an article in the Lancet in which she aired the wet market theory as the cause of origin of the pandemic. “While recognising the tremendous effort by the China CDC team in the early response to the 2019-nCoV outbreak, the small number of team members trained in animal health was probably one of the reasons for the delay in identifying an intermediate animal(s), which is likely to have caused the spread of the virus in a region of the market where wildlife animals were traded and subsequently found to be heavily contaminated,” she said in the piece.

“Unfortunately, what animal(s) was involved in transmission remains unknown. There is an urgent need to know the risks associated with the presumed animal to human transmission of 2019-nCoV, and the measures that can be taken to prevent such transmission in the future. For example, should the sale of wild animals be restricted in Chinese wet markets? We recommend that a comprehensive One Health team be involved in all future EZV investigations,” she said further.



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the US amounting to \$3.7 million. A few days before that, the [Wall Street Journal](#) said in a report that COVID-19 is genetically identical to a coronavirus which is found in a horseshoe bat that scientists in protective gear collected from WIV.

On Wednesday, April 15, [Fox News](#) claimed that the pandemic indeed leaked from WIV and “patient zero” was an employee which was infected before the community got infected. Fox cited ‘multiple sources who have been briefed on the details’ while presenting the report.



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