

The wrong virus

Does history truly rhyme?

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Picture this scene: Cruise ship. Three dead. Contact tracing across twelve countries. Passengers ordered to their cabins, two ports refusing to let the ship dock, masks onboard, PCR running flat out, first patient possibly asymptomatic on boarding and infecting others before anyone noticed. Critical cases medevaced to European hospitals.

Diamond Princess vibes...
Strong oncs.

Just to confirm we're not in 2020: this is May '26.
The boat is the MV Hondius.
The virus is hantavirus, Andes strain.

So obviously we'll handle this with the calm and rigour of five years of accumulated lessons. Right?

Lockdown shapetics vindicated. PCR cycle threshold gaming exposed for what it was. Pharmaceutical industry permanently chastened. Centuries of accumulated medical wisdom about endemic pathogens dusted off the shelf and put back to work.

Yeah. Not so fast...



So what did actually happen?

Three Dutch birdwatchers spent four months overlanding through Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, visiting rural areas where the rodent that carries Andes hantavirus is endemic. They inhaled rodent excreta somewhere along the way, almost certainly before they boarded the ship in Ushuaia on April 1. The first one was dead by April 11. His body sat in cold storage on the vessel for two weeks until they reached Saint Helena, where about thirty passengers disembarked and dispersed home before anyone had the slightest idea what was actually going around onboard.

By the time the WHO was running press conferences, three were dead. Eight confirmed or suspected. Health authorities in the US, Canada, Singapore, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Germany tracking contacts.

OK. So what'd you say? That's just the WHO earning its keep, right?

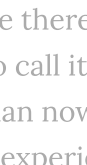


So I went digging... Looks like biology has something to say about hantavirus CAN NOT do what COVID did. Not as in "probable" just can not...

Andes is the only one of about fifty hantavirus species that is human, and it does so badly. Incubation runs up to eight days. Patients collapse into respiratory failure over a few days. Contagious you're already on a ventilator, which is the exact pandemic spread. You're either in the ICU when you're coughing or dead.

The largest historical person-to-person Andes cluster, Epizootic 34 people. Over months. That's the historical ceiling we're working with...

This past week I've been checking, and about every infectious disease expert and their cousins have been falling over themselves to tell you exactly that. This is not the next COVID. "Stand down", "Nothing to see here", "return to your homes", etc. etc.



Ok, fine by me. Nothingburger. Got it...

But then why does this response feel so much like 2020?

Within 48 hours of the WHO press conference, every major outlet was running essentially the same article with the same expert quotes synchronised inside a single news cycle. CNN, NPR, NBC, the Washington Post, Newsweek. Lockstep.

When in the past five years has the legacy machine ever worked this hard to tell you NOT to panic?

In 2020 they were screaming death counts at us by the fourth week of March. Now three Dutch birdwatchers die on a cruise and the entire apparatus activates inside days to deliver, in perfect unison, the words "this is not the next COVID".

The reassurance is medically correct.

That's not the point of this article.

The point is that the propaganda apparatus that can synchronise their messaging within hours, is an apparatus that is on standby.

Talking points probably pre-drafted.

Somebody had this on the shelf, waiting.



So what else is on the shelf? (here comes rabbit holes!)

May 2021. GAVI - the Bill Gates vaccine alliance, in case you don't track these things - publishes "The Next Pandemic: Hantavirus?". The piece outlines the scenario almost verbatim. Symptoms that mimic flu and COVID. Cases that get missed. PCR-only detection. It even includes a helpful example about a Colorado camper who thought she had COVID but turned out to be infected with the hantavirus.

(Charmingly prescient, pure coincidence of course.)

Now, let's keep it on the level: that year, GAVI ran a whole "next pandemic" series covering Ebola, Nipah and others. So this hantavirus wasn't singled out alone. Just to stay fair.

But.

The WHO did classify it as a Disease X candidate pathogen, which is a much narrower list. And in 2023, Moderna - same Moderna that pocketed multiple billions on COVID mRNA shots - quietly began developing an mRNA-based hantavirus vaccine with Korea University. Agreement formalised September 2024. Antigen sequences exchanged. Mouse trials successfully completed by February 2025.

The whole thing was happily proceeding through the clinical pipeline. Those things happen you know? Pure scientific research for a disease that kills roughly 150 Americans per decade. The CDC has better-funded programmes for bee stings.

To me: there's no money to be made there. Not enough deaths, the countries experiencing it (sorry, don't want to call it suffering for those ridiculous low numbers - and I'm being a statistician now, not a human being, yeah, those 2 don't match). So the countries that experience it, they're generally poor. So there's no money, no volume.

Now comes along this rarest of cruise-ship-borne hantavirus outbreaks in recorded history.

Funny how that works.

Six hours after the outbreak hit global news on May 4 - six hours - the BBC published "Scientists working to create hantavirus vaccine".

I think I vaguely remember that the bat came from a Chinese flea market? Right?

So why even bother publishing that nonsense? Ok, getting ahead of myself. It's the BBC. That's answer enough.



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But that's not where this story ends... There's this soothsayer post. ?he? posted exactly four times in its entire existence, all in a single week of June 2022, and never posted again.

Probably nothing. Probably one of those infinite-monkey moments where a random anonymous account just happened to predict the exact year of a previously obscure rodent virus erupting into global news, with the precision of someone who maybe overheard something interesting at a conference.

But probably nothing.

- A 2021 GAVI piece naming the virus.
- A WHO Disease X classification.
- An mRNA vaccine in development since 2023.
- A 2022 social media post naming the exact year.
- A BBC vaccine article in the same news cycle as the outbreak.
- Synchronised legacy reassurance across every major outlet within hours.

Whatever this is, it almost feels insulting.

The virus itself can't deliver what the response is built for. The response however, is the actual story.

I'm not ready yet!

Europe is in the middle of its second energy crisis in four years. Strait of Hormuz disrupted since late February after the Iran war. The IEA called it "the largest energy crisis we have ever faced" - which is a kind of phrase that would normally dominate every front page for a month but is currently being upstaged by, of all things, a rare rodent virus on a Dutch sightseeing boat.

Jet fuel reserves down to weeks. Dutch TTF gas nearly doubled. EU storage depleted heading into winter. The European Commission announcing fuel observations, demand reduction frameworks, emergency state aid for energy-intensive sectors.

Households are looking at a winter where they will be cold, or broke, or both.

Now imagine what would make that political picture more manageable.

A public health emergency. Stay-at-home guidance. Precisely during peak energy demand.

Fewer commuters. Fewer flights. Reduced industrial throughput. Lower household consumption right when supply is constrained and prices are spiralling. Pandemic-era infrastructure dusted off. A pre-existing mRNA candidate ready for accelerated authorisation. Five years of practiced messaging discipline.

Wouldn't that be convenient?



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Meanwhile, Newsweek has already run a piece framing the skeptical reaction as a regression into anti-vax thinking, complete with academics quoted complaining that millions of Americans no longer trust the architecture.

Lying to people erodes trust... Who knew?

The Overton window is being shifted before the actual response is even announced.

The framing is that these people are dangerous conspiracists who need to be re-educated for their own good - not, you know, people who watched the last show and would rather not buy tickets to the sequel.

Except this time the playbook is in plain view on every newsstand. And a meaningful chunk of the population has read it once already.

For what it's worth, I don't think this outbreak itself is being manufactured. I think those birdwatchers really went birdwatching, and really did sniff rodent excreta, and they're really dead, RIP.

But the architecture surrounding the outbreak was already in place. Just waiting for a trigger. A vaccine in development. Talking points drafted. The coordination rehearsed.

They don't have to engineer outbreaks. They just need to be ready to flip the switch on any half-suitable one that washes up at a politically convenient moment.

Problem is that this virus won't cooperate. The biology rules it out.

Somewhere in the WHO offices, someone pulled the short straw and has to explain to the committee that their pandemic candidate peaked at 34 people. Over months. In a village in Patagonia.

But the choreography is too fluid. Every player knows their cue. The moment that something marginally more transmissible washes up - flu strain, novel coronavirus, anything at all - the production will run. Again.

This event - for better or worse - is a statistical anomaly. And by extraordinary cosmic coincidence, found a prepared vaccine candidate, a extra-ordinary propaganda machinery, and a continent badly in need of a reason to suppress winter energy demand.

All at once. Right on schedule.

We learned valuable lessons during the plandemic.

Right?

PS (thanks **Franc M**): [\[link to Reuters\]](#) On May 1, three days before the cruise outbreak hit global news, Tedros told WHO member states that the next pandemic was "a matter of when, not if". He was pushing member states to finalise the pathogen-sharing rules on the stalled pandemic treaty, which has been deadlocked since adoption last year.

3 days later they were as surprised as anyone.

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Deskpoet 3h
 A casefire is recommended
 Given how hard they went to the hoop (and are STILL going, at least here in France) with this one—WITHOUT a backstory of a possibly engineered but officially-denied engineered virus sweeping across the globe (yeah, we actually lived through that: AMAZING, looking back...), it seems more likely this non-event is to give Donnie cover for the defeat in Iran no longer being able to be talked around than it is to explain/cover for the economy that will fail regardless in 90 to 120 days. You know they're not expecting much when even the neocons (Kagan in the Atlantic) are calling this the worst defeat in US history (does this mean we're FINALLY over Vietnam Syndrome, having moved on to Persian Perplexity?), so I'm guessing the Opinion Managers employed by POTUS believed there's nothing wrong with running out a re-tread that gives the last of the Maskers something to hope for while Trump can still sorta kinda look Presidential when he declares—AGAIN—a WIN over another non-existent viral threat.

This isn't even cynical to consider anymore. It's like they've thrown up their hands and said, "Let's just let This do it. If even the Great MAGA hope can't cope, it's obvious we need to just sit everyone down, get them to shut up, and let the Techno-Feudalists engineer their Dark Enlightenment. The slogan for 28: An Optimus in every garage!"

As someone who feels a HUGE measure of sadness at seeing what the greatest political experiment in the last 250 years has come to, this rant doesn't begin to capture my anger and dismay at what was and what now is.

3 replies by No1 and others

Franc M 6h
 One thing you missed as well is the conspicuous timing of this "outbreak" to coincide with the procedural deadlock of the WHO's pandemic treaty—
<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-delays-pandemic-treaty-and-pathogen-sharing-dispute-2026-05-01/>

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