Ad Tech + Brands on Coronavirus Disinfo Sites: 30 March - 3 April
GDI has studied a selection of conspiracy stories and sites spreading disinformation about the coronavirus

Conspiracy theories:
- Vitamin C cures coronavirus.
- Handwashing does not work against virus.
- Number of actual deaths overblown.
- Environmentalists celebrating spread of virus.

All stories officially debunked by EUvs.Disinfo.eu
Ad tech serving & funding these sites & stories:

- Google
- Taboola
- Criteo
Brands funding these sites & stories:
Brand Advertisements

- All of these brands were found on the sites queried.
- Brand ads will vary by anyone’s data footprint & geolocation.
- Screenshots taken from locations in US, UK and Germany
- Given EU data protections, most ads provide clickable information on the company providing ad.
- This is what has been used to map these specific ads to the ad providers.
Debunked coronavirus story: Vitamin C cure

DISINFO: CORONAVIRUS: WESTERN MEDIA IN CAHOOTS WITH BIG PHARMA IGNORE SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT WITH VITAMIN C IN CHINA

SUMMARY

The Western media ignores the fact that the usage of high dosage of vitamin C saved lives in China.

The mainstream media in cahoots with governments and the medical establishment are suppressing any news regarding the use of a cheap, safe and easy to produce treatment for coronavirus patients. Maybe it’s because this treatment is being used in Chinese hospitals to save lives.

[—]

As the global death toll soars higher we can only hope that more and more doctors will follow in the footsteps of their Chinese colleagues and have the courage to use a safe and cheap treatment that is totally at odds with the big pharma approach currently followed by the World Health Organisation and most governments. The current approach used by many Western Governments has been slow, clumsy and ill informed putting the interests of big business above saving the lives of ordinary people.

DISPROOF

Conspiracy theory.

International media have reported extensively on the attempts to treat COVID-19 with high...
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Criteo

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Criteo
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Start a paralegal career.
Learn current processes while becoming familiar with essential legal fields.

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Taboola

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Taboola
Debunked coronavirus story: Handwashing not useful

DISINFO: COVID-19: “WASHING HANDS IS USELESS”

SUMMARY

Hygienist criticises measures to protect against COVID-19 and states “Washing your hands is useless”.

DISPROOF

There is no medical evidence to support the claim that hand washing is useless.

The WHO, as well as all major international health organisations, the EU and its national health ministries, clearly emphasise that “regularly and thoroughly cleaning your hands or washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub demonstrably kills viruses on hands”, which helps to contain the spreading of COVID-19.

The German Ministry for Health lays out in its protective-guidelines for patients, “to disinfect hands regularly” and in its current information on COVID-19, the German Ministry further states to protect from COVID-19 with “washing hands regularly and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water”. The same recommendations are formulated by the French Ministry for Health at its COVID-19 information page.

The WHO additionally states, that washing bare hands regularly offers more protection against COVID-19 than wearing rubber gloves.

Read more about the EU’s response here and information from the EU about fighting disinformation.

PUBLICATION/MEDIA

→ Sputnik Germany (Archived)

REPORTED IN:
Issue190

DATE OF PUBLICATION:
28/03/2020

LANGUAGE/TARGET AUDIENCE:
German

COUNTRY:
EU, Germany

KEYWORDS:
coronavirus, health
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story - ads by Google & Taboola

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story: Coronavirus deaths minor

**DISINFO: CORONAVIRUS MORTALITY FIGURES ARE INSIGNIFICANT**

**SUMMARY**

Without wanting to downplay COVID-19, in terms of the global population, the mortality figures are insignificant. The data from China corresponds to natural processes, we should not think that man is immortal.

**DISPROOF**

This is a recurring pro-Kremlin disinformation attempt to downplay the severity and urgency of the COVID-19 outbreak, which has been classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Pro-Kremlin media have spread a variety of false claims to push this message, for example that COVID-19 is fake and a political move to install hegemony, that the outbreak is only an attempt to distract the world from real issues, that the virus is safe, and that the reason behind coronavirus scaremongering is a Western effort to weaken China.

The novel coronavirus, which causes the COVID-19 disease, belongs to a family of viruses originating in animals that include others such as SARS and MERS. It was first reported in the city of Wuhan in central China in late 2019 and has been rapidly spreading across the world, with cases being reported in 190 countries, territories and areas. The number of COVID-19 cases has surpassed 777,000 globally with over 37,000 deaths as of 31 March 2020.

There are major challenges associated with accurately calculating the COVID-19 death rate, including insufficient data about the denominator (i.e., the number of people who are infected with the virus). Currently, the research consensus indicates that COVID-19 is less deadly than SARS (9.5% mortality) but more deadly than influenza (0.1% mortality).

However, the death rate varies from strain to strain with the COVID-19 pandemic is quite.

**PUBLICATION/MEDIA**

→ Sputnik Czech (Archived)

**REPORTED IN:**

Issue190

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:**

30/03/2020

**LANGUAGE/TARGET AUDIENCE:**

Czech

**COUNTRY:**

China, Czech Republic

**KEYWORDS:**

coronavirus
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Ročně umírá v ČR cca 100 000 lidí. Na koronavirus v březnu dvě desítky osob.
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchanges on site supplying these specific ads: Google
Debunked coronavirus story: Deaths overestimated

**DISINFO: IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER ANY EXTRA PEOPLE WILL DIE BECAUSE OF COVID-19**

**SUMMARY**

It is definitely too early to accurately gauge how many – if any – extra people will die because of coronavirus.

It is hard to believe that when this all blows over, the damage that will have been done by the shutdown measures – to businesses, to civil liberties, to individual lives and, of course, to the global economy – could have been for nothing. Nonetheless, it seems entirely possible based on the present data.

**DISPROOF**

This is a recurring pro-Kremlin disinformation attempt to downplay the severity and urgency of the COVID-19 outbreak, which has been classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Pro-Kremlin media have spread a variety of false claims to push this message, for example that coronavirus mortality figures are insignificant, that COVID-19 is fake and a political move to install hegemony, and that the virus is safe.

The novel coronavirus, which causes the COVID-19 disease, belongs to a family of viruses originating in animals that includes others such as SARS and MERS. It was first reported in the city of Wuhan in central China in late 2019 and has been rapidly spreading across the world, with cases being reported in 190 countries, territories and areas. The number of COVID-19 cases has surpassed 777,000 globally with over 37,000 deaths as at 31 March 2020.

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Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Covid-19's meant to be a new Black Death, but in Britain no more people are dying than NORMAL. What does this say about the virus?

31 Mar, 2020 09:07 / Updated 3 days ago

Medical staff take a patient off an ambulance in London © REUTERS/Hannah McKay

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
**Debunked coronavirus story: Virus for repression**

**DISINFO: COVID-19: A LARGE-SCALE SOCIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT TO SEE HOW MUCH REPRESSION THE PEOPLE WILL ACCEPT**

**SUMMARY**

The severe measures, justified or not, are a sort of large-scale "sociological experiment" which aims to see how much repression would people be willing to accept, for a vague justification, and how politicized could the entire situation be. It could potentially also show how far people can be pushed before there's riots on the streets, and the lack of "entertainment" leads to people finding ways to "entertain" themselves. As it has been proven time and again, mob mentality dictates that "entertainment" usually means decapitating the elite.

**DISPROOF**

An unfounded conspiracy theory, sharing a recurrent pro-Kremlin narrative about "secret elites" controlling world leaders.

COVID-19 comes from a family of viruses originating in animals that include other viruses such as SARS and MERS. It was first reported in the Chinese city of Wuhan in central China and has been rapidly spreading across the world, with cases being reported in 190 countries, territories and areas. The number of COVID-19 cases is closing up on 700,000 globally with over 33,000 deaths by 30 March 2020.

See more examples of pro-Kremlin disinformation about the coronavirus [here](#).

**PUBLICATION/MEDIA**

→ [southfront.org](https://southfront.org) (Archived)

**REPORTED IN:**

Issue190

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:**

31/03/2020

**LANGUAGE/TARGET AUDIENCE:**

English

**COUNTRY:**

EU, US

**KEYWORDS:**

coronavirus, Conspiracy theory
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story: Virus for repression

DISINFO: AUTHORITARIAN TRENDS IN THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN ARE A HARBINGER OF THE FUTURE

SUMMARY

What will 6 months of Covid-19 do to our society? Only certain thing is we'll be in a state... and the STATE will be IN CONTROL.

What Covid-19 has already accomplished is the final nail in the coffin of the phoney post-war ideological battle between free-marketeers and state 'socialists'.

There has been no argument. There has been no political debate. But the state has won, and everything else will follow. If we thought yesterday's tendency towards technocracy was strong, we haven't seen anything yet. The authoritarian trends already on display in the current lockdown are perhaps a harbinger of a future society run along managerial principles.

DISPROOF

PUBLICATION/MEDIA

→ RT.English (Archived)

REPORTED IN:
Issue190

DATE OF PUBLICATION:
01/04/2020

LANGUAGE/TARGET AUDIENCE:
English

COUNTRY:
UK

KEYWORDS:
coronavirus, Conspiracy theory
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google
Debunked coronavirus story: Environmental celebration

DISINFO: ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE OVERJOYED BY THE FEAR AROUND COVID-19; THEY SEE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY

SUMMARY

Many hardline environmentalists are overjoyed at the atmosphere of fear that Covid-19 has created; for them, it is an instrument for realising the dream of a society that runs according to climate alarmists’ dogma.

Back in the 17th century, the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes anticipated the green politics of fear in his classic text, The Leviathan. Hobbes claimed that it is good when people are scared and frightened. Why? Because in their state of fear people will readily subject themselves to an absolutist ruler in exchange for his protection. One does not need a PhD in philosophy to understand that climate alarmist politics leads straight to the doorstep of the Leviathan.

DISPROOF

Recurring pro-Kremlin conspiracy theory about the allegedly malicious intentions behind environmental activism, exploiting the coronavirus crisis in a bid delegitimise climate activism as hysteria and an effort to impose “absolutist rule” over society. Pro-Kremlin disinformation often engages in climate change denialism, suggesting for example that climate change is a Western hoax to prevent Russia’s economic development and that climate activists want to destroy progress in the name of green faith.

This case is another example of how pro-Kremlin disinformation outlets exploit crisis situations like the current COVID-19 pandemic to spread disinformation about other topics and opportunistically adapt existing pro-Kremlin narratives to new contexts.
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story: Italy abandoned by EU

DISINFO: UNLIKE THE EU, RUSSIA PROVIDED ITALY WITH CONCRETE HELP

SUMMARY

Unlike the EU, Russia provided Italy with concrete help. The Russian assistance to Italy is a perfect example of solidarity. Meanwhile, the European Parliament decided that there is an increasing number of people with depression living in Europe, so it declared May 27th as the European Day of Optimism (so far, it is a proposition from MEPs). The EU does not offer [to Italy] any specific solutions, while the Russian help to Italy, and its citizens, is concrete.

DISPROOF

This message is part of the Kremlin’s disinformation campaign around the Coronavirus epidemic. It promotes a narrative of the EU’s failing efforts in its fight with the epidemic as opposed to the successful Russian ones.
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story with ads by Google

Opinia: W odróżnieniu od UE Rosja udziela Włochom konkretnej pomocy

Exchange on site supplying this specific ad: Google
Debunked coronavirus story - ads by Google & Taboola

Exchange on site supplying this specific ads: Google and Taboola
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