

Headlines:

- **War Games Continue**
- **Pandemic Simulation Showed US was Ill Prepared for Coronavirus**
- **Western Health Systems Struggle with Virus Fallout**

Details:

War Games Continue

The spread of coronavirus has delayed a lot of wargames, but the US and UAE but 4,000 US troops and combined Emirati fighters have conducted the biennial Native Fury exercise. The exercise took place primarily at al-Hamra Base, where a fictional Iranian city was constructed, mosques and all, for the troops to pretend to invade and conquer. Troops rampaged through the narrow streets looking for "enemy fighters." US troops took part in the UAE and Kuwait, along with Diego Garcia. The US Ambassador Rakolta described the exercise as "defensive in nature" despite it being an overtly practiced invasion and occupation of a model Iranian city. Rakolta added he doesn't think it is "provocative" to tell the Iranians "we're coming." It's hard to imagine Iran, or anyone else thusly targeted by a large wargame, not seeing it that way. Whilst many are dying in the US from the virus, the US has prioritised a war game.

Pandemic Simulation Showed US was Ill Prepared for Coronavirus

The Trump administration ran a government exercise last year simulating a severe influenza pandemic for which there is no vaccine that showed the country was ill prepared, according to *The New York Times*. The results laid out in a draft report showed that the US was underprepared and disorganized for a pandemic scenario similar to coronavirus, which has spread to all 50 states and has yet to peak in the US, the Times reported. Last January to August, the Department of Health and Human Services ran a scenario named "Crimson Contagion" that included participation from 19 federal agencies, a dozen states, tribal nations, hospitals and nongovernmental organizations, according to the HHS draft report obtained by the Times. The fictional outbreak involved a group of tourists visiting China who then become infected and fly home to various countries, including the US, the draft report said. In this scenario, the virus is first detected in Chicago, according to the report. The report also highlighted that states experienced "multiple challenges" requesting resources from the federal government "due to a lack of standardized, well-understood, and properly executed resource request processes," the report said.

Western Health Systems Struggle with Virus Fallout

Italy is struggling to meet the demands of a long-term lockdown. Though the number of new coronavirus cases has slowed, essential workers are expressing concern for their well-being. Gas stations across the country have started to close citing health risks to workers. Bankers are considering going on strike if protective measures are not taken. Italy's economy and industry ministers will talk to the country's top three unions, which have called on the government to expand the list of non-essential jobs. To help Italy fill the gaps of its crisis management, Russia has increased its assistance efforts by deploying more military specialists and equipment, particularly for diagnostics and disinfection. Russia has also sent eight mobile brigades of medics and about 100 military virologists and epidemiologists. Germany has also expressed a willingness to support Italy by floating the idea of an enhanced credit line through the European Stability Mechanism. The details are still up for discussion; Germany is pushing for minimal conditionality while Italy argues for none. Italy is not unique, although its bene affected the most from the crisis, many of the developed worlds health systems are struggling with the outbreak after decades of cuts and after the last decade of austerity.