

Bio-terrorism could kill 30 million in a year

21st February, 2017



The former head of Microsoft, Bill Gates, has warned that the world could be in great danger from bio-terrorism. He said the world could face a catastrophe from a virus made by terrorists that could kill 30 million

people in less than a year. Mr Gates, the richest person in the world, was speaking at the Munich Security Conference in Germany. He said there was a "reasonable" chance that a bio-terrorist could act in the next 10 to 15 years. He added that world leaders are not prepared for such an attack. He expressed his surprise that very few leaders were even aware of it. He asked for global "health security" to become a major part of government discussions and policies.

Mr Gates explained that: "The next epidemic has a good chance of originating on a computer screen." He said a genetically engineered virus was easier to make and could kill more people than nuclear weapons, but no country on Earth is ready for this threat. He asked governments, "to prepare for these epidemics in the same way we prepare for war". Gates asked governments to start "germ games" activities to prepare for a bio-terrorist attack, like many countries engage in war games. He said we needed better monitoring to spot outbreaks early, and systems to quickly develop vaccines - within weeks rather than years. "We need a new arsenal of weapons, anti-viral drugs, antibodies, vaccines and new diagnostics," he said.

Sources: *forbes.com* / *washingtonpost.com* / *mashable.com*

Writing

Bio-terrorism is a bigger threat than nuclear weapons. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

head / Microsoft / danger / bioterrorism / catastrophe / reasonable / chance / security / epidemic / genetically engineered / nuclear weapon / prepare / terror attack / vaccine

True / False

- The ex-boss of Microsoft has said the world is in great danger. T / F
- The ex-boss said an attack could take in the next 10-15 months. T / F
- The ex-boss is happy that world leaders are prepared for an attack. T / F
- The ex-boss wants to be part of government discussions and policies. T / F
- A virus may be created by computer by terrorists. T / F
- The ex-boss said nuclear weapons were still deadlier than a viruses. T / F
- The ex-boss wants countries to take part in germ games. T / F
- The ex-boss says the world needs an arsenal of weapons and vaccines. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. former | a. starting |
| 2. catastrophe | b. participate |
| 3. reasonable | c. conscious |
| 4. aware | d. disaster |
| 5. policies | e. instead of |
| 6. originating | f. previous |
| 7. threat | g. strategies |
| 8. engage | h. see |
| 9. spot | i. fairly good |
| 10. rather than | j. danger |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How much are you worried about genetic engineering?
- Are viruses more dangerous than nuclear weapons?
- What do you know about past epidemics?
- What might happen during 'germ games' activities?
- What happens when agencies spot a viral outbreak?
- Will world leaders ever spend the money on combatting viruses?
- What questions would you like to ask Bill Gates?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. The former
 2. the world could face
 3. a "reasonable" chance that
 4. very few leaders were
 5. become a major part
 6. a good chance of originating
 7. prepare for these
 8. many countries engage
 9. quickly develop vaccines - within
 10. anti-viral drugs, antibodies,
- a. a bio-terrorist could act
 - b. weeks rather than years
 - c. in war games
 - d. head of Microsoft
 - e. vaccines and new diagnostics
 - f. even aware of it
 - g. on a computer screen
 - h. a catastrophe
 - i. of government discussions
 - j. epidemics

Discussion – Student B

- a) How much of what you read do you believe?
- b) What do you think are the biggest dangers to this world?
- c) What would happen to the world if what Bill Gates said comes true?
- d) How can we stop bio-terrorist attacks?
- e) Why aren't world leaders prepared for such an attack?
- f) How big a threat is terrorism in your country?
- g) How much do you worry about terrorism?
- h) What do you understand by the term "global health security"?

Spelling

1. face a ocatstephra
2. there was a senleaarob chance
3. He sdepkseer his surprise
4. few leaders were even wraea of it
5. global health sueiytrc
6. government discussions and osicplie
7. The next cideemip
8. a ctnielgeyal engineered virus
9. eulranc weapons
10. spot obrskeuat early
11. quickly develop cscvneai
12. new ntodsaiiscg

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. c	5. g
6. a	7. j	8. b	9. h	10. e

Role Play

Role A – World leaders

You think world leaders are the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their dangers aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): viruses, alien attacks or water wars.

Role B – Viruses

You think viruses are the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their dangers aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): world leaders, alien attacks or water wars.

Role C – Alien attacks

You think alien attacks are the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their dangers aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): viruses, world leaders or water wars.

Role D – Water wars

You think water wars are the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their dangers aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): viruses, alien attacks or world leaders.

Speaking – World dangers

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest dangers to the world at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Overpopulation
- Water wars
- Internet meltdown
- Overconsumption
- World leaders
- Viruses
- Global warming
- Alien attack

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.