



AS IT IS

WHO: China's COVID Policy Not Sustainable

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The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) says China's zero-**tolerance** policy toward COVID-19 is not sustainable – or unable to last for very long.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Tuesday, “When we talk about the ‘zero-COVID,’ we don’t think that it’s sustainable, considering the behavior of the virus now and what we **anticipate** in the future.”

His remarks came shortly after the country announced additional restrictions in Shanghai and Beijing to prevent the spread of the virus.

China quickly defended its policy, calling the remarks from Tedros “irresponsible.”

On Wednesday, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said, “The Chinese government's policy of **epidemic** prevention and control can stand the test of history, and our prevention and control measures are scientific and effective.”

Officials in Shanghai tightened restrictions further on its 26 million residents, even though the city is seeing a decrease in new COVID-19 infections.

Residents in some Shanghai neighborhoods have been informed in writing that they are not permitted to leave their homes as part of a “quiet period” that would last for at least three days. The new restrictions come after a brief period in which residents were able to move about their neighborhoods.

There have also been reports on Chinese social media of residents being forcibly removed from their homes and placed in hotels or quarantine centers if their neighbors tested positive for the coronavirus.

Nearly all of Shanghai's residents have been under severe restrictions for the past six weeks. City officials are struggling to control a large **outbreak** of new cases largely driven by the omicron version of the virus. The lockdown measures have led to angry complaints of a lack of fresh food and medicine in China's biggest city.

Beijing officials also tightened COVID-19 restrictions on residents this week, with more mass testing and road closures. The Chinese capital is dealing with its worst outbreak since 2020.

I'm Ashley Thompson.

VOA News reported this story. Ashley Thompson adapted it for Learning English, with additional materials from The Associated Press.

Words in This Story

tolerance - n. the ability to accept, experience, or survive something harmful or unpleasant

anticipate - v. to think of (something that will or might happen in the future)

epidemic - n. an occurrence in which a disease spreads very quickly and affects a large number of people

resident - n. someone who lives in a particular place

outbreak - n. a sudden start or increase of fighting or disease