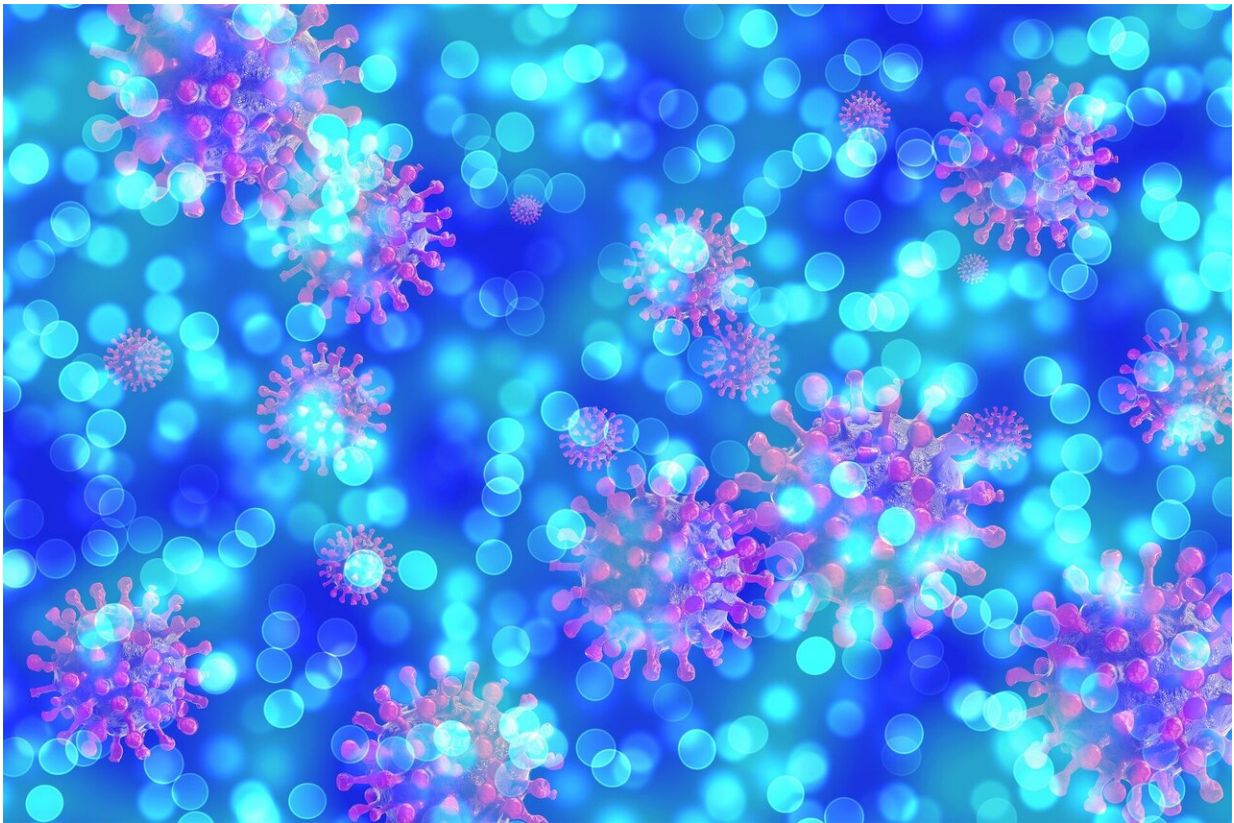


Two more parts of China report COVID outbreaks

July 31 2021



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China raced Saturday to contain its worst coronavirus outbreak in months as fresh cases were reported in two more parts of the country including the sprawling megacity of Chongqing.

The highly contagious Delta variant has already been confirmed in the capital Beijing and four other provinces, prompting mass testing and putting more than one million people under lockdown.

More than 200 infections nationwide have been linked to a Delta cluster in eastern Jiangsu province, where cleaners at an airport in the [city](#) of Nanjing first tested positive on July 20.

The outbreak is geographically the largest in several months, challenging China's aggressive containment efforts, which have relied on mass testing, lockdowns and swift contact tracing.

The new cases reported Saturday in Fujian province and Chongqing included one patient who visited the tourist city of Xi'an, Shaanxi province, and an international cargo crew member at Xiamen Airlines who recently travelled from abroad, authorities said.

State media footage broadcast Saturday showed residents of Chongqing, a municipality that is home to more than 30 million people, queueing up for virus tests.

Authorities in one city district ordered emergency mass testing late Friday for people who had visited venues linked to confirmed cases.

Nanjing city authorities ordered all tourist attractions and cultural venues not to open on Saturday, prompted by the spike in domestic transmissions.

Hundreds of thousands have already been locked down in Jiangsu province, while Nanjing has tested all 9.2 million residents twice.

China has previously boasted of its success in snuffing out the pandemic within its borders after imposing the world's first virus lockdown in early

2020 as COVID-19 seeped out of Wuhan in the centre of the country.

But an outbreak this month driven by the fast-spreading Delta variant has thrown that record into jeopardy, potentially dampening China's summer tourist season and holiday consumption.

The tourist city of Zhangjiajie in Hunan [province](#), where a handful of cases attended a single theatre performance, locked down all 1.5 million residents and shut all [tourist attractions](#) Friday, according to an official notice.

At least 18 cases have been traced back to the city, the state tabloid Global Times reported. Famed for its striking rock formations, the city is where part of the "Avatar" blockbuster was filmed.

In Beijing's Changping district, where two locally transmitted cases have been found, 41,000 people in nine housing communities were placed under lockdown Thursday.

China's top disciplinary watchdog has blamed Nanjing airport officials for "poor supervision and unprofessional management" including not separating cleaning staff who worked on [international flights](#) from those on domestic flights.

Most of the early Nanjing patients had been vaccinated, a senior doctor in the city was quoted as saying by local media last week, leading online users to question the efficacy of domestic vaccines.

More than 1.6 billion vaccine doses have so far been administered nationwide as of Friday, the National Health Commission said. It does not provide figures of how many people have been fully vaccinated.

Health officials have said they are aiming for 80 percent of the

population to be fully vaccinated by year-end.

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