

Shanghai to reopen subways in easing of COVID restrictions

May 19 2022



A man wearing a face mask stands on a bridge over an expressway in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein

The locked-down Chinese metropolis of Shanghai will reopen four of its 20 subway lines Sunday as it slowly eases pandemic restrictions that have kept most residents in their housing complexes for more than six weeks.

The city will also restart 273 bus lines connecting major urban centers, airports, [train stations](#) and hospitals as it resumes cross-district public transit, Yu Fulin, director of the Shanghai Transport Commission, said at a daily pandemic briefing Thursday.

It wasn't immediately clear how frequent the service would be. Bus service resumed on a trial basis within three outlying districts this week, with buses running every 30 to 90 minutes during daylight hours.

The lockdown of China's largest city has dealt a blow to the economy and frustrated residents, particularly as many countries elsewhere in the world move away from such harsh measures as they try to live with the virus. But officials have stuck to a 'zero-COVID' approach, saying that lifting restrictions could strain the public health system and lead to more deaths, particularly among the not fully vaccinated elderly.

The outbreak in Shanghai has taken 580 lives, according to official statistics, making it the deadliest one since the initial outbreak in the city of Wuhan in early 2020.



A woman helps a child cross a barrier near a site for mass COVID test on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



A worker wearing a mask disinfects a canal on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



A worker wearing a mask disinfects a canal on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



Residents wearing mask are seen on the street on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



A child looks at a volunteer wearing a face mask who patrols the green space barricaded with fences and tapes to prevent residents from gathering due to pandemic measures on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



A worker wearing a protective suit administers a COVID-19 test at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



People wearing face masks walk along a street in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



Workers wearing protective suits handle a bag of waste at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



A worker wearing a protective suit administers a COVID-19 test at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



A worker wearing a protective suit registers people for COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



People stand in line for COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



People stand in line for COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Thursday, May 19, 2022. Parts of Beijing on Thursday halted daily mass testing that had been conducted over the past several weeks, but many testing sites remained busy due to requirements for a negative COVID test in the last 48 hours to enter some buildings in China's capital. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



A woman wearing a face mask rests on a bench at the green space barricaded with fences and tapes to prevent residents from gathering due to pandemic measures on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



A resident rests after exercising near the green space barricaded to prevent residents from gathering due to pandemic measures on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Beijing. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong

Even as the number of new cases plummets, authorities are [relaxing restrictions in a slow and deliberate](#) manner as they try to ensure that the virus no longer spreads anywhere outside of quarantine facilities and areas with known infections.

The city of 25 million people recorded about 700 new cases on Wednesday, accounting for most of the about 1,000 cases nationwide.

Authorities in Beijing, which reported 55 new cases, closed some subway stations and bus lines, banned dining in restaurants and strongly

encouraged residents to work from home as they try to prevent a Shanghai-scale outbreak in the Chinese capital.

Elsewhere in China, the city of Guang'an in in China's southwestern Sichuan province was locked down on Wednesday. The province recorded about 150 new cases.

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Citation: Shanghai to reopen subways in easing of COVID restrictions (2022, May 19) retrieved 17 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-05-shanghai-reopen-subways-easing-covid.html>

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