

In 'zero-COVID' China, 1 case locks down Peking University

November 16 2022, by Ken Moritsugu



Residents have their throat swabbed for a COVID-19 test at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent.

Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong

Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they [stick to a "zero-COVID" approach](#) despite growing public discontent.

Peking University students and faculty were not allowed to leave the grounds unless necessary and classes on the main campus—where the case was found—were moved online through Friday, a university notice said. Still, some people could be seen entering and leaving the main campus Wednesday in the Chinese capital's Haidian district.

Beijing reported more than 350 new cases in the latest 24-hour period, a small fraction of its 21-million population but enough to trigger localized lockdowns and quarantines under China's "zero-COVID" strategy. Nationwide, China reported about 20,000 cases, up from about 8,000 a week ago.

Authorities are steering away from citywide lockdowns to try to minimize the impact on freedom of movement and a sagging economy. They want to avoid a repeat of the Shanghai lockdown earlier this year that paralyzed shipping and prompted neighborhood protests. [Revised national guidelines](#) issued last week called on local governments to follow a targeted and scientific approach that avoids unnecessary measures.



A man wearing a face mask walks across a street in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong

Peking University has more than 40,000 students on multiple campuses, most in Beijing. It was unclear how many were affected by the lockdown. The 124-year-old institution is one of China's top universities and was a center of student protest in earlier decades. Its graduates include leading intellectuals, writers, politicians and businesspeople.

Lockdowns elsewhere have sparked scattered protests. Earlier this week, videos posted online showed crowds pulling down barriers in the southern city of Guangzhou in a densely built area that is home to

migrant workers in the clothing industry.

Guangzhou, an industrial export hub near Hong Kong, reported more than 6,000 new cases in what is the nation's largest ongoing outbreak. The pandemic led the Badminton World Federation to move next month's HSBC World Tour Finals from Guangzhou to Bangkok, the federation announced this week.



A woman wearing a face mask stretches her arms as she and masked residents wait in line for their routine COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



People stand in line for their routine COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site at a tunnel in the central business district of Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



A woman wearing mask pushes a child in pram as she visits a shopping district in Beijing, Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2022. China's ruling party called for strict adherence to the hard-line "zero-COVID" policy Tuesday in an apparent attempt to guide public perceptions after regulations were eased slightly in places. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



People line up for their routine COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site at the central business district in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



A security guard talks to people as they stand in line for COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



People wearing face masks stand in line for their routine COVID-19 tests at a coronavirus testing site setup at a tunnel in the central business district of Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Andy Wong



Residents wearing masks line up for COVID tests in Beijing, Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2022. China's ruling party called for strict adherence to the hard-line "zero-COVID" policy Tuesday in an apparent attempt to guide public perceptions after regulations were eased slightly in places. Credit: AP Photo/Ng Han Guan



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Commuters wearing face masks walk through a pedestrian underpass in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein



Commuters wearing face masks ride along a street in Beijing, Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2022. Chinese authorities locked down a major university in Beijing on Wednesday after finding one COVID-19 case as they stick to a "zero-COVID" approach despite growing public discontent. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein

Other cities with major outbreaks include Chongqing in the southwest, Zhengzhou in Henan province and Hohhot, the capital of the Inner Mongolia region in the north.

In Zhengzhou late last month, workers fled their dormitories at a sprawling iPhone factory, some climbing over fences to get out. Apple subsequently warned that [customers would face delays](#) in deliveries of iPhone14 Pro models.

Chinese officials and state media have stressed that the government is fine-tuning but not abandoning what it calls a "dynamic" zero-COVID policy, after rumors of an easing sparked a stock market rally earlier this month.

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Citation: In 'zero-COVID' China, 1 case locks down Peking University (2022, November 16) retrieved 28 April 2024 from

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