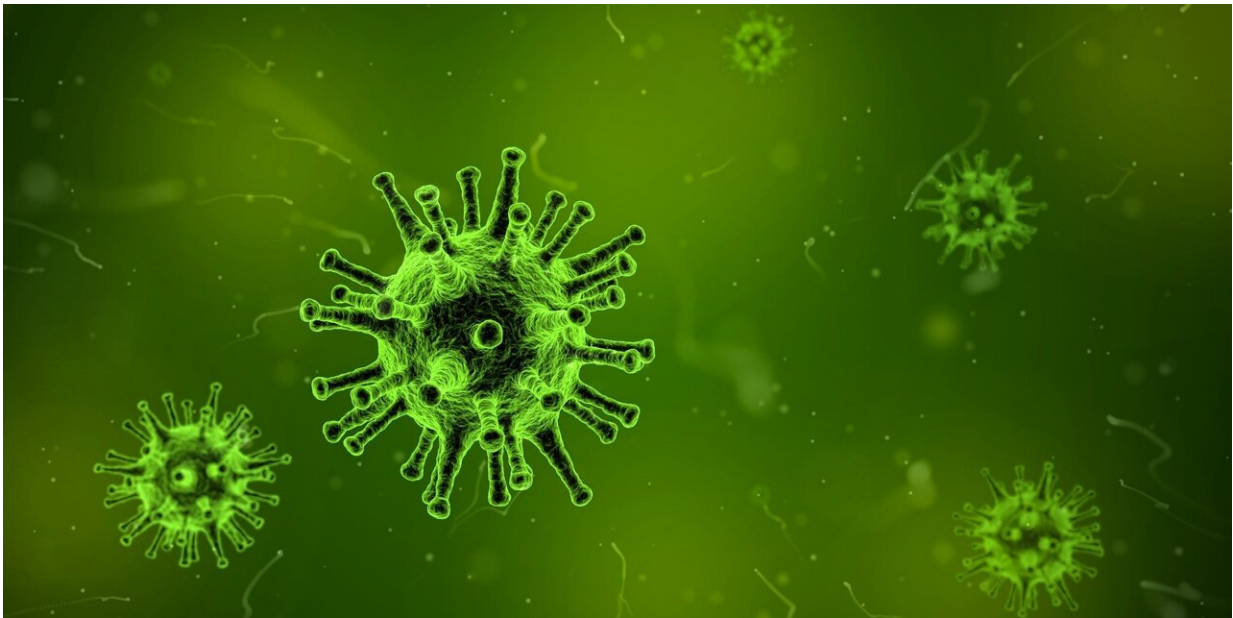


China says COVID deaths down by nearly 80 percent

January 26 2023



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The number of daily COVID-19 deaths in China has fallen by nearly 80 percent since the start of the month, authorities have said, in a sign that the country's unprecedented infection surge may have started to abate.

A wave of virus cases has washed over the world's most populous nation since Beijing abruptly ended its zero-COVID policy last month.

Beijing's figures are believed to only represent a fraction of the true toll, given China's narrow definition of a COVID death and official estimates that swathes of the population have been infected.

The CDC last week said nearly 13,000 people had died from COVID-related illnesses between January 13 and 19, adding to a previous announcement that around 60,000 people had succumbed to the virus in hospitals in just over a month.

But recent local government announcements and [media reports](#) have indicated that the wave may have started to recede since peaking in late December and early January when hospitals and crematoriums were packed.

There were 896 deaths attributable to the virus in hospitals on Monday, a decline of 79 percent from January 4, China's Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in a statement on Wednesday.

Severe cases in hospitals also dwindled to 36,000 by Monday, representing a 72 percent drop from a high of 128,000 on January 5, the CDC said.

The announcement came during China's biggest public holiday, the Lunar New Year, with authorities previously warning that the period of mass travel and social gatherings may trigger a renewed spike in infections.

As of Tuesday, around 664 million trips had been taken nationwide during the Lunar New Year travel period, state broadcaster CCTV reported, citing official figures.

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