

China Staggers Under Huge Pandemic Losses

 [visiontimes.com/2023/01/26/china-true-pandemic-losses.html](https://www.visiontimes.com/2023/01/26/china-true-pandemic-losses.html)

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People line up for nucleic acid tests to detect COVID-19 at a public testing site on November 17, 2022 in Beijing, China. (Image: Kevin Frayer/Getty Images)

News analysis

Millions are dying throughout China with the novel coronavirus infecting 1 billion people per the latest estimates — a tremendous blow to the country that is already grappling with severe economic downturn and population decline.

The decimation is apparent from rural communities, where people passed the Chinese lunar new year by struggling to bury or cremate the dead, to the top echelons of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which now has elderly and retired cadres “going to see Marx” at more than a dozen times the normal rate.

Currently available information suggests that the pandemic has taken an astronomically greater toll upon China than official figures claim — and that the Communist Party has spared no cost to cover up the true extent of the disaster.

For three years, the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, has been spreading across China and around the world after emerging from Wuhan in late 2019.

Despite years of exorbitant mass testing and brutal lockdowns enforced under the CCP's "zero-COVID" policy, the regime proved unable to contain the pathogen, and lifted nearly all pandemic restrictions last December.

As Chinese welcomed the lunar new year on Jan. 22, the atmosphere for many was anything but celebratory, with blue and white wreaths of mourning lining the deserted streets in many locales. News about infections and deaths continue to flood around China and beyond as nearly every family encounters tragedy.

Sending off the dead

Symbolic of the massive surge in pandemic deaths is the difficulty many Chinese now face in making funerary arrangements for their loved ones, as described in a recent article by The Epoch Times.



A mourner carries the cremated remains of a loved one as he and others wear traditional white funeral clothing, during a funeral on January 14, 2023 in Shanghai, China. (image: Kevin Frayer/Getty Images)

A "review of 10 provinces and major cities found that more than 30 funeral homes published tenders for cremation ovens, ash urns, vans to transport bodies, and refrigerators over the past three weeks alone," writes reporter Eva Fu in the Jan. 24 piece, noting that China's famous ceramic producers have been unable to meet demand due to the crushing amount of deaths.

In Beijing and other major cities, permanent traffic jams have developed around crematoriums. Making an appointment can take months or in some cases years, according to internet posts and those with family living in China.

A woman living in eastern China who recently had three family members die on the same day waited until midnight on Jan. 5 for the online booking schedule at a funeral parlor to reset. Despite clicking to book an appointment less than half a minute after 12:00 a.m, she found herself in roughly the 160th of 400 total slots allotted for the day.

On Jan. 22, a Chinese man living in New York surnamed Cheng told overseas Chinese-language outlet Apollo Net that according to a friend of his living in Beijing's Fangshan district, one elite family saw five deaths recently. One of the deceased was a deputy director of the Beijing Public Security Bureau.

Even so, the family has been unable to cremate any of the dead. According to Mr. Cheng's friend, whose relative works in a funeral parlor, even pulling connections can do little to expedite the procedure.

"This is a deputy head of the police, and even he [has to wait for three months], to say nothing of ordinary folk. It also indicates that there are even more powerful higher-ups waiting [to be cremated,]" Cheng said.

Doctors and ordinary residents in China's countryside have described the catastrophic toll the virus has taken on their communities. Mr. Zou, living in a southern Chinese town of 20,000, told The Epoch Times on Jan. 23 that 200 or 300 locals had died over the previous four days alone. Many people in the town, located in rural Hunan Province, were unable to arrange cremations, so they buried the deceased in ditches and along hills around the town.

In northern China's Shanxi Province, a doctor with the family name Li said that 90 percent of the residents in his town had contracted COVID-19 and "more than 4,000 people have died." He noted that surrounding villages were each suffering dozens of deaths, and that both young and elderly people were succumbing to the disease, some of them suddenly.

Does the Pandemic Target the CCP? International COVID Stats Following Return of Mainland Travelers Sheds Some Light



Mourners gather outside the memorial halls for the deceased at a funeral home in Shanghai, China, on Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022. (Image: Qilai Shen/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

One family of four all perished after battling the infection for 20 days, Li said. Echoing this tragedy, a Chinese woman posted a tearful video online in which she said that her cousin's family of four died suddenly after weeks of infection.

On Jan. 17, the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics announced that the country's population had shrunk by nearly 1 million in 2022 — the first time since the famine of the 1960s that resulted from the communist Great Leap Forward campaign and claimed tens of millions of lives.

Despite this officially recognized population drop, which would indicate millions of excess deaths, the CCP has acknowledged less than 100,000 deaths from COVID-19 to date.

'Even if a few million die, so what?'

While maintaining impossibly low statistics about the pandemic, the Communist Party has kept up its propaganda narrative about prevailing over disaster and expertly governing the Chinese people.

Jiang Yunzhong, a Marxist scholar and Party official at Beijing's prestigious Tsinghua University, claimed that the COVID-19 death toll in China "still falls in an acceptable range."

"Even if a few million die, so what?" he wrote on Chinese social media on Jan. 14. "China had 10 million deaths in 2021; even if there are 5 million more deaths, it's just a 50 percent increase — a difference between two deaths versus three deaths."



Workers set up beds at an exhibition centre that was converted into a hospital in Wuhan in China's central Hubei province on February 4, 2020. (Image: STR/AFP via Getty Images)

Jiang's statements echo those made by communist leader Mao Zedong during the Great Leap Forward famine (1959–1962), who told fellow Party officials that “even if one finger were cut off, there would still be nine left.”

Estimates of starvation deaths following the Great Leap Forward range from 30 to 50 million — roughly two or three times the number of Chinese who died in the Japanese invasion during World War II.

Those familiar with the history of Communist China are aware that the regime minimizes disasters by not only covering up or ignoring the scale of the damage, but also by spinning calamity into “victory” for propaganda purposes to maintain the Party's image of being “great, glorious, and correct.”

The director of Beijing's Center for Disease Prevention and Control, Huang Chun, recently attended a conference where he praised the Center and its personnel for the three years of “zero-COVID” work, saying that they “lived up to their mission.”

Unveiling the shroud

Various observers have called the CCP's narratives into question, including Western data analysis agencies who estimate that millions, not thousands, have died from SARS-CoV-2; as well as those in the overseas Chinese community.

Yi Fuxian, a noted Chinese demographer at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, believes that the CCP has long covered up the truth about China's population decline. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, he estimated that the actual population of China is not 1.4 billion as officially claimed, but closer to 1.28 billion — making India (now with nearly 1.4 billion people itself) the world's largest country by population.

Breaking down available data about cremations, burials, and the normal death rate in China, New York-based political risk consultancy SinoInsider estimates that the pandemic could be having a far outsized impact on the country.



Employees wear the protective clothing disinfection in a cinema in Wuhan on July 20, 2020 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.(Image: Getty Images)

In a newsletter analysis published Jan. 19, SinoInsider estimated the possible rate of death during the peak of the latest wave of infections tearing across the country. They pointed to a heavy backlog of scheduled cremations, and extrapolated the number of people being buried as opposed to cremated at about 40 percent, the figure under normal conditions.

“About 10 million people die in China each year on average, or 27,400 people per day. The cremation data and rate above suggest that the daily average death toll during the peak of the latest pandemic wave in China could be in excess of 3.06 million people ... or 111.7 times the normal daily average deaths,” the newsletter concludes.

Previously, SinoInsider had scrutinized Chinese flu data from 2019, and found significant discrepancies as compared with previous years. This led SinoInsider to suspect that SARS-CoV-2 could have been spreading in China months prior to November 2019, when the Wuhan pneumonia is normally believed to have begun.

In July 2022, hackers leaked a national database belonging to the Shanghai Public Security Bureau. The police files include biometric and identification data for about 970 million Chinese citizens, or several hundred million less than the official tally of 1.4 billion people.



A policewoman (R) speaks with a woman on a blocked street in a neighbourhood under a Covid-19 lockdown in the Jing'an district of Shanghai on June 2, 2022. (Image: HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP via Getty Images)

According to [a recent technical analysis](#) by the Chinese-language Vision Times, the 23 gigabytes of data contain the entirety of the Shanghai PSB's search backup database stored on Alibaba Cloud — that is, information on the whole Chinese population for whom the CCP has records.

All Chinese citizens are required to apply for official identification by the age of 16, and such documents are required for many aspects of academic and professional life.

- **Chinese Reject the Party Line as Pandemic Resurges Nationwide**
- **Communist Politics Are Bringing Disaster to China—And Xi Jinping**

Political and economic pressure

Don Tse, SinoInsider's lead researcher, believes that the calamity could far outstrip the death toll of the Great Leap Forward famine, with major repercussions for the Chinese economy and regime politics.

“During the three years of famine, most of those who died were in the countryside, and very few people starved in the cities,” Tse told Vision Times in a written exchange. “Even so, Mao Zedong had to issue a self-criticism and retreat to the second line [accept a diminished role in the CCP leadership].”

According to Tse, the fact that the pandemic is killing many well-connected CCP elites and retired cadres puts tremendous pressure on regime head Xi Jinping, despite his having taken a norm-breaking third term as Party leader last October.

“The anger that the relatives of these deceased elites feel towards Xi no doubt far exceeds the opposition Mao faced during the great famine. Xi will lose supporters and make new enemies,” he told Vision Times on Jan. 26.

In addition, the massive losses from the pandemic will hamstring China’s economy and the supply chains that run through it. “It’s likely that the CCP’s mantra about it having a huge consumer market of 1.4 billion will be revealed for the fraud that it is, and foreign investors will abandon the Chinese market in ever greater numbers,” Tse said.

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Mr. Cheng, the Chinese man residing in New York with official connections in Beijing, told Apollo Net that he was acquainted with a cadre in the Chinese Health Commission, who described to him the true level of devastation meted out by the pandemic.

According to the Health Commission official, 10 percent of the CCP’s membership had already succumbed to the virus, but the causes of death are not given as COVID-19 — known as “novel coronavirus pneumonia” in Chinese — and instead attributed to other ailments.

The official, who is tasked with helping boost China’s fertility rate, said that the CCP leadership is aware of the grim situation. “They have population monitoring models, which shows that the top level of the central government knows,” Mr. Cheng said.

Revelation

Master Li Hongzhi, founder of the traditional Chinese spiritual practice Falun Gong, said in a Jan. 15 statement that 400 million people had died of the pandemic in China over the last three years. He added that another 100 million would perish by the end of the disaster, the scale of which the CCP has been desperately attempting to conceal from the world.

Additionally, Master Li said that the SARS pandemic beginning in 2003 claimed the lives of 200 million Chinese over the years.

This, he said, prompted the CCP to relax its one-child policy to allow two and then three children per couple once the authorities realized that the population was in severe decline.

Falun Gong, also called Falun Dafa (法輪大法), is a traditional Chinese meditation discipline. Master Li teaches that through mind-body cultivation, practitioners can elevate in levels and reach spiritual perfection.



Falun Gong practitioners perform the exercises at a rally commemorating the 20th anniversary of the persecution of Falun Gong in China, on the West Lawn of Capitol Hill on July 18, 2019.
(Image: Samira Bouaou/The Epoch Times)

From 1992 to 1999, tens of millions of Chinese took up practice in Falun Gong, but it was suppressed and subject to harrowing persecution by then-leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Jiang Zemin. A vast yet still-indeterminate number of Falun Gong practitioners have been killed by the regime, many of them murdered in Chinese state-run hospitals to fuel the Party's profitable organ transplant industry.

Though reliable statistics are hard to get out of Communist China, scholars agree that the CCP is the deadliest regime in human history.

In addition to the Great Leap Forward famine, the Party's land reform and "anti-rightist" campaigns killed millions of "counterrevolutionaries," while the decade-long Cultural Revolution — launched by Mao in 1966 to regain the authority he lost due to the famine — is estimated to have caused millions more deaths from terrorism, factional conflict, and suicides.

While Falun Gong is harshly persecuted in mainland China, millions of adherents continue to raise awareness about the persecution, tell people about their faith, and encourage their compatriots to distance themselves from the CCP.

Since 2004, more than 400 million Chinese have made statements disavowing the Communist Party and its affiliated youth organizations. Every day, thousands of people post messages and declarations explaining their reasons for quitting the Party.

Rejecting the CCP

In March 2020, as COVID-19 was spreading worldwide, Master Li wrote:

“A pandemic like the current ‘CCP Virus’ (Wuhan Pneumonia) has come with a purpose and with a target. It has come to eliminate the followers of the evil Party and those who go along with the evil CCP.”

“So, what can be done? Stay far away from the evil CCP and don’t align with the evil Party because what lies behind it is the red demon. Its behavior and actions are thuggish, and it stops at no evil.”



A protester holds a sign with the slogan ‘Heaven will destroy the Chinese Communist Party’ in Hong Kong on Jan. 1, 2020. (Image: The Epoch Times)

Since last November, Chinese have been protesting the CCP’s rule en masse. Many prominent Party members and retired communist officials have died in past weeks, among them Jiang Zemin, the architect of the anti-Falun Gong campaign. His Nov. 30 death in Shanghai was given as multiple organ failure caused by leukemia.

In his 2020 article, Master Li added: “People must sincerely repent to the Gods and look for where they have gone wrong in the hopes that they may be given a chance to mend their ways—only this is the solution.”

According to many personal accounts, the majority of which are published on Falun Gong website Minghui.org, increasing numbers of Chinese have experienced miraculous recovery in the pandemic through heartfelt recitation of the “nine true words” — 法輪大法好，真善忍好, which translates to “Falun Dafa is good, *zhen-shan-ren* are good.”

Usually rendered as truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance, Zhen, Shan, and Ren are the core principles taught in Falun Dafa.

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