

## COVID SURGE IN CHINA

# Elderly patients fill hospitals in Shanghai

AFP, Shanghai

Coughing, groaning, and gasping for breath, elderly Covid patients crammed hospital corridors in Shanghai yesterday as a wave of Covid-19 cases raged through the Chinese megacity.

At two hospitals in the city, AFP journalists saw hundreds of mostly elderly patients lying on gurneys in public areas as emergency wards filled beyond capacity.

Swaddled in blankets, coats and woollen hats, many were attached to intravenous drips, heart monitors or oxygen tanks, and were visibly struggling to breathe. A few appeared not fully responsive.

In one hospital, AFP witnessed an exchange between a woman and an older man, both jostling for a drip.

"I was here first," she said. "I'm here to get a needle too."

Beijing last month rapidly demolished key pillars of its zero-Covid policy, doing away with snap lockdowns, mass testing and state quarantines in a matter of days.

The reversal of three years of hardline curbs sparked relief nationwide, but has unleashed a torrent of infections on the country's patchy healthcare system and overloaded funeral homes and crematoriums.

Even in Shanghai, one of China's richest cities, the crisis is acute. Around 70 percent of the megacity's population -- equivalent

to around 18 million people -- may have caught Covid since last month, according to state media reports.

In a waiting area at Huashan Hospital -- located a stone's throw from the site of anti-lockdown protests in November -- a woman bent over a sickened man of around 80, a profusion of tubes springing from his emaciated hand.

Nearby, a young man stood sentry beside the bed of another elderly patient, shielding him from the crowds of people walking past.

At Tongren Hospital in the west of the city, a middle-aged woman in a facial mask gently lifted a flask to the parched lips of a man hooked up to an oxygen cylinder.

Nearby, a medical worker wearing blue scrubs and a face visor attended to a grey-haired woman in a red jumper as she shivered under a thick blanket.

Doctors and nurses at hospitals in multiple cities have told AFP they have continued to treat patients despite testing positive for the virus themselves.

In Shanghai, many also soldiered on, letting out the occasional dry cough as they flitted from patient to patient.

China's National Health Commission last month announced that it would no longer publish daily case figures, and a separate tally kept by the country's disease control body is widely considered inaccurate now that testing mandates have been scrapped.



A woman helps a patient at Tongren hospital in Shanghai, China, yesterday. A senior doctor at Shanghai's Ruijin Hospital has said 70 percent of the megacity's population may have been infected with Covid-19 during China's huge surge in cases, state media reported.

PHOTO: AFP

## I want my father, brother back

### Says Prince Harry

REUTERS, London

Britain's Prince Harry said his troubled relationship with the royal family "never needed to be this way" and he wants to get his father King Charles and his brother "back", in an excerpt from an interview with broadcaster ITV released on Monday.

"It never needed to be this way," he said in the clip. "They've shown absolutely no willingness to reconcile," he said. "I would like to get my father back; I would like to have my brother back."

Harry and his wife Meghan stepped down from royal duties in March 2020, saying they wanted to forge new lives in the United States away from media harassment.

They have since criticised how they were treated as members of the royal family, including an accusation by Harry that his brother William, Prince of Wales, screamed at him during a meeting to discuss his future. The interview will be broadcast on Jan 8, two days before publication of Harry's autobiography titled "Spare".



## ISRAEL MINISTER'S VISIT TO AL-AQSA COMPOUND

# ME powers condemn visit

AFP, Jerusalem

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were among nations to condemn a visit by Israel's extreme-right new national security minister to Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound.

The move by firebrand Itamar Ben-Gvir has enraged Palestinians, while the United States warned of steps which may harm the status quo.

"Our government will not surrender to the threats of Hamas," Ben-Gvir vowed in a statement published by his spokesman, after the Palestinian militant group warned such a step was a "red line".

Ben-Gvir's visit comes days after he took office as national security minister, with powers over the police, giving his decision to enter the highly sensitive site considerable weight.

Al-Aqsa mosque is the third-holiest place in Islam and the most sacred site to Jews, who refer to the compound as the Temple Mount.

Under a historic status quo, non-Muslims can visit the site at specific times but are not allowed to pray there. But in recent years a growing number of Jews, mostly Israeli nationalists, have covertly

prayed on the compound, a development decried by Palestinians.

The UAE, which launched diplomatic ties with Israel in 2020, "strongly condemned the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard by an Israeli minister", in a foreign ministry statement.

The US ambassador to Israel, Tom



Nides, said Washington "has made it clear to the Israeli government it opposes any steps that could harm the status quo in the holy sites".

After his visit, Ben-Gvir vowed to "maintain the freedom of movement for Muslims and Christians, but Jews will also go up to the mount, and those who make threats must be dealt with -- with an iron hand".

The politician has lobbied to allow Jewish prayer there, a move opposed by mainstream rabbinical authorities.

Israel's chief Sephardi rabbi, Yitzhak Yosef, wrote to Ben-Gvir yesterday.

"What will people say when they see a minister, an observant Jew, who flouts the position of the rabbinate," he said in a letter.

Jordan's foreign ministry spokesman Sinan Majali slammed the Israeli politician for "breaking into the blessed Al-Aqsa mosque and violating its sanctity".

Saudi Arabia condemned the "provocative practices" of Ben-Gvir in a foreign ministry statement.

The visit was also criticised by the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

While Ben-Gvir has visited the compound numerous times since entering parliament in April 2021, his presence as a top minister is highly significant.

A controversial visit in 2000 by then opposition leader Ariel Sharon was one of the main triggers for the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising, which lasted until 2005.

The Palestinian foreign ministry called Ben-Gvir's visit a "serious threat".

## South Korea's lunar orbiter sends photos of Earth, Moon

AFP, Seoul

South Korea's first-ever lunar orbiter Danuri has sent black-and-white photos of the Moon's surface and Earth, the national space centre said yesterday.

Danuri -- a portmanteau of the Korean words for "Moon" and "enjoy" -- was launched on a SpaceX rocket from the United States in August 2022 and entered lunar orbit last month.

Its images -- taken between December 24 and January 1 -- show the lunar surface and Earth, and were shot from less than 120 kilometres (75 miles) over the Moon, the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) said in a statement.

The images and videos will be "used to select potential sites for a Moon landing in 2032," it added.

Danuri is circling the Moon every two hours, the centre said.

The orbiter will begin its scientific mission next month, which includes mapping and analysing lunar terrain, and measuring magnetic strength and gamma rays. It will also test experimental "space internet" technology by transmitting photos and videos to Earth.

President Yoon Suk-yeol has hailed Danuri's achievements as a "historical moment" in the country's space programme.



"Our government will not surrender to the threats of Hamas."

Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel's minister for national security after his controversial visit to Al-Aqsa mosque compound



BE THE  
CHANGEMAKER

WE ARE  
LOOKING FOR A DYNAMIC  
CHIEF INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER (CISO)

To apply, visit: [bracbank.com/career](https://bracbank.com/career)

Deadline: 12 January 2023

BRAC Bank is a values-driven organization and believes in protecting all its stakeholders, including the coworkers and the community we work in, from all forms of harassment, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination. As an equal opportunity enabler, BRAC Bank encourages applications from any gender-diverse individuals and persons living with disability. We consider personal persuasion as a disqualification of candidature.

WE ARE  
LOOKING FOR  
EXECUTIVES

VACANCY  
ANNOUNCEMENT

**Pubali Bank Limited** is a leading largest private commercial bank with 498 online Branches, 17 Islamic Banking Windows and 125 Sub-branches with a diverse and motivated workforce is seeking highly qualified and experienced professionals (FCA/FCMA/FCCA/CGMA/CPA/CFA) in the rank of **DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER** for the following Divisions:

1. <b>Audit and Inspection Division</b>	<b>No. of Posts: 02 (two)</b>
2. <b>Risk Management Division</b>	<b>No. of Post: 01 (one)</b>
3. <b>Central Accounts Division (CAD)</b>	<b>No. of Post: 01 (one)</b>

For details, please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/career.asp>

Interested candidates who fulfill the requirements should apply by **31 January 2023**.

Only short-listed candidates will be called for the interview.

No TA/DA will be applicable for this purpose.

Management of the Bank reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**  
Human Resources Division  
Head Office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka



পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**