

# Chinese State Media Exposes True Purpose of 'Zero-COVID': A Battle of Systems and National Power



## *Commentary*

Xinhua News Agency, the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) official media outlet, said in an April 13 article that the CCP demonstrated the advantages of its leadership and the socialist system in fighting the novel coronavirus and accomplished what other countries wanted to achieve but could not.

It has been more than two years since the outbreak of the CCP virus. Some Western countries have chosen to "live with the virus," with epidemic controls gradually being lifted and people returning to normal

life. The CCP however, vehemently opposes “living with the virus” domestically, and instead implemented a draconian dynamic “zero-COVID” policy and elevated events into a battle of ideology and political system.

Shenzhen Special Zone Daily, a state media, said on March 20 that whether the government adhered to “dynamic zero-COVID” or chose to “live with the virus” was actually a contest of “system, national strength, governance capacity, and even civilization” between the CCP and Western countries.

China.org.cn, another state media, also said on April 6 that zero-COVID was a decisive battle that would determine the fate of the regime.

Commentator Chao Jie told The Epoch Times: “The CCP is playing politics. To be more specific, the CCP wants to prove its brilliance and greatness by achieving zero-COVID. It will do so at any cost.”

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Chao believes the CCP has made a political campaign of zero-COVID, resorting to all sorts of extreme means.

“It often puts a certain indicator, a certain issue, in the most prominent, overriding position” during its political campaigns, he said.

As of April 14, 30 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities in China have been affected by the pandemic. Chinese society has already paid a huge price for the CCP’s insistence on implementing its draconian dynamic zero-COVID policy.

In early April, during the Shanghai zero-COVID campaign, the CCP

authorities forcibly took infected children from their families and isolated them in separate facilities. More than 200 children were isolated at the Shanghai Jinshan Public Health Clinical Center, with only 10 nurses to take care of them. In some of the details that have come to light, multiple children have been placed in one bed, while the skin of others has festered because it took so long for their diapers to be changed.



Footage of babies left crying at the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center emerged on the Chinese internet in early April. (Screenshot via Weibo)

In order to reach “zero-COVID,” Shanghai continued the lockdown, resulting in a shortage of basic supplies and many Shanghai residents being in a constant state of hunger.

The zero-COVID policy has made China’s economy more vulnerable. The Caixin Manufacturing Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) fell 2.3 percentage points to 48.1 in March, the lowest since March 2020. The

CSI 300 index and the Shenzhen component index (SZI) fell about 15 percent and 18 percent, respectively, in the first quarter, their biggest quarterly declines since the third quarter of 2015.

Meanwhile, the CCP is shifting the cost of zero-COVID internationally. The policy has disrupted Chinese companies' production plans and expectations. Production cuts and shutdowns have reduced supply, while production uncertainties are driving up the cost of made-in-China products and fueling global inflation.

"The CCP has gone to great lengths for zero-COVID. It wants to prove that its socialist system is superior to the Western capitalist system," Ji Da, a U.S.-based China expert told The Epoch Times. "It also wants to establish the so-called 'credibility of a great power' and prove its national power. It's actually a deceptive attempt to save the Party."

"The CCP wants to establish the credibility of a great power in order to give investors an expectation so that the outside world will have an impression and psychological expectation that 'the CCP is strong,'" Katherine Jiang, a financial analyst in Hong Kong, told The Epoch Times.

"Expectations are important because people's behavior and decisions are often based on expectations. This is especially true in the economic sphere and in the capital markets."

"This is why one of the 'six stable' economic policies proposed at the Political Bureau meeting of the CCP Central Committee on July 31, 2018, is 'stabilizing expectations,'" Ji said.

For the first time since the outbreak in 2020, disobedience has been seen at the social level during the ongoing zero-COVID campaign in

Shanghai.

After the lockdown of Shanghai, the extreme shortage of supplies triggered a series of protests for material resources and food: Some citizens shouted from the balconies and windows of residential buildings; some came out of their homes and gathered in protest; some, after being hungry for days, asked the police to let them out to get food on their own; and others have kicked out street workers, the lowest administrative unit of the CCP, and set up their own service management systems to distribute food.

Commentator Li Yiming told The Epoch Times that in the narrative of the CCP's propaganda system, the zero-COVID campaign is for "the people," but it's the people who actually suffer.

"The CCP's claim of 'serving the people' does not include the people. They only serve the powerful and the rich. The people are just the price of sacrifice for the CCP," he said.

*Epoch Times reporter Ellen Wan contributed to this report.*

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*



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