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Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Shanghai widens COVID testing as other Chinese cities impose curbs

SHANGHAI, April 8 (Reuters) - Shanghai on Friday announced a record 21,000 new cases and a third consecutive day of COVID testing as a lockdown of its 26 million people showed no sign of easing and other Chinese cities tightened curbs - even in places with no recent infections.

Beijing authorities intervened in Shanghai after its failure to isolate COVID by locking the city down in stages, and insists that the country stick to its zero-tolerance policy to prevent its medical system from breaking down.

Authorities across China, which have mostly managed to keep COVID at bay for the last two years, are stepping up coronavirus control measures, including movement restrictions, mass testing and new quarantine centres.

Cities that sprang into action this week include Zhengzhou, in central Henan province, which on Thursday said it would test all 12.6 million residents after finding a few asymptomatic cases.

Beijing has strengthened regular screening for employees in the city's key sectors, requiring all staff at elderly care agencies, schools and institutions handling imported goods to take tests at least once a week.

In Shizong county in southwest China's Yunnan province, shops were shut, transport suspended and residents barred from leaving their towns or villages.

Nomura this week estimated that 23 Chinese cities have implemented either full or partial lockdowns. The cities collectively are home to an estimated 193 million people and contribute 22% of China's GDP. These include Changchun, a major manufacturing hub that has been locked down for 28 days.

Ernan Cui, an analyst at Gavekal Dragonomics who studied COVID policies announced by China's 100 largest cities, said most were choosing to keep restrictions in place even after case numbers returned to zero.

The curbs "suggest that the economic impact of the various lockdowns will not ease in a matter of days or even weeks", she said in a note.

If Shanghai's lockdown continues throughout April the city will suffer a 6% loss in GDP, amounting to a 2% GDP loss for China as a whole, ING Chief Economist for Greater China Iris Pang said in a note.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said in a briefing on Friday that the Biden administration



was closely monitoring the lockdown in Shanghai, noting that it could cause delays for air cargo. W1N2VE032

'THUNDEROUS' ACTION

Shanghai's outbreak has surpassed 130,000 cases in total, far exceeding the approximately 50,000 symptomatic cases recorded in the original outbreak in the central city of Wuhan, where the virus was first detected in late 2019, although Chinese authorities did not start reporting asymptomatic cases until after Wuhan's peak.

Stories of crowded and unsanitary central quarantine centres and fears of family separation have driven calls for home quarantine in Shanghai.

The Shanghai government has started allowing some close contacts to isolate at home and on Wednesday eased its policy of separating infected children from their parents.

However, food supply remains a con-



cern with residents, due to a shortage of couriers.

On Friday afternoon results for hashtag "Shanghai buy food" were blocked on the Twitter-like social media site Weibo.

Weibo did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Shanghai has not indicated when it may lift its lockdown.

Late on Thursday, Wu Zunyou, chief epidemiologist at the China Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said on its Weibo account that action taken in Shanghai had to be "thunderous" to cut off the chain of transmission.

In theory, he said, if multiple rounds of PCR testing were conducted in mega-cities with populations as large as 27 million within 2-3 days, they could reach zero cases "on the community level" within 10 days to two weeks.

Of Shanghai's cases, just one is suffering severe symptoms and is under treatment, a health official said on Friday.



美南電視 15.3

每周一至周五每晚7點專題節目

每晚7點播出
專題節目

每天一至五下午6:30播出《美南新聞聯播》

每周一晚7點：主持人：黃梅子，《生活》節目（《生活故事會》、《丁師傅私房菜》和《修車師姐》三個單元輪流播出）
每周二晚7點：主持人：陳鐵梅，《美南時事通》
每周三晚7點，主持人：王潔，《美南時事通》、《美南名人堂》
每周四晚7點，主持人：Sky，《子天訪談錄》或馬健《J&J論壇》
每周五晚7點，主持人：蓋軍，《美南時事通》

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

04/18/2022



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The World Economy Faces Serious Challenges

More than fifty-five Chinese cities with a combined population of 400 million people are now living under implementation of zero-tolerance isolation ("lockdown"). The world ' s second largest economic body is facing a great challenge.

Experts said that due to the war between Russia and Ukraine, we have not paid enough attention to all the other problems

currently facing the world. In fact, we have been suffering from major difficulties for decades.

Shanghai, with a population of more than 25 million and China ' s largest city, has been closed down for nearly a month. Last year 20% of China ' s exports were exported by Shanghai. Presently, Shanghai lacks food and medicine. The whole city ' s population is restricted and staying at

home. The whole city is on edge and the government already has sent an emergency team to assist in the reopening of industry to solve the problem of factory shutdowns.

The World Trade Organization said in a report that because of the war in Ukraine, the world ' s GDP will be reduced by 5% and globalization will gradually disappear.



China also has recently lost at least \$460 billion in output value per month due to the impact of epidemic control. It was originally estimated that 5% would be a difficult target to achieve.

powers, the U.S. and China, are still locked into a trade war status. The war between Russia and Ukraine is still uncertain and we are not seeing any bright spot for the world economy in the near future.

Today the two major



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Mechelle Meyer, dressed in a Handmaid's Tale costume, takes part in a pro-abortion rights protest outside of the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, October 4, 2021. REUTERS/Leah Millis



A reveller participates in the annual block party known as "Cordao de Boitata", ahead of carnival festivities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil April 17, 2022. REUTERS/Pilar Olivares



A figure with images of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, Mayor of Caracas Carmen Melendez and Venezuelan Minister of Electric Power Nestor Reverol is prepared to be burned during the traditional burning of Judas as part of the Holy Week celebrations in Caracas, Venezuela. REUTERS/Leonardo Fernandez Viloria



Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas celebrates, kissing the trophy after winning the final Monte Carlo Masters match against Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, at Monte-Carlo Country Club, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, France. REUTERS/Denis Balibouse



Real Madrid's Karim Benzema celebrates scoring their third goal with teammates during Sevilla v Real Madrid LaLiga match, Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan, Seville, Spain. REUTERS/Marcelo Del Pozo



People take belongings out of a residential building, which was destroyed during Ukraine-Russia conflict in the southern port city of Mariupol, Ukraine. REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko

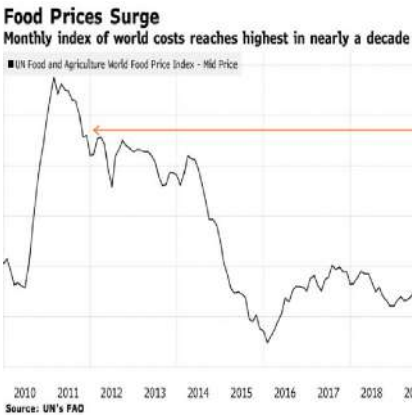
Drought Parches Crops Global Food Costs Surge To Decade High



Global food prices have extended their rally to the highest in almost a decade, heightening concerns over bulging grocery bills at a time when economies are still struggling to overcome the Covid-19 crisis.

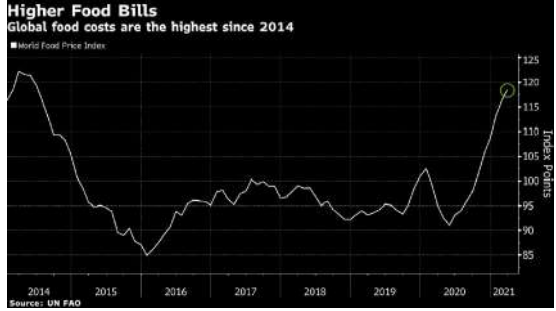
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

A United Nations gauge of world food costs climbed for a 12th straight month in May, its longest stretch in a decade. The relentless advance risks accelerating broader inflation, complicating central banks efforts to provide more stimulus. Drought in South America has withered crops from corn and soybeans to coffee and sugar. Record purchases by China are worsening the supply crunch in grains and boosting costs for global livestock producers. Cooking oils have soared too on demand for biofuel. The surge in food costs has revived memories of 2008 and 2011, when spikes led to riots in more than 30 nations. “We have very little room for any production shock. We have very little room for any unexpected surge in demand in any country,” Abdolreza Abbassian, senior economist at the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization, said by phone. “Any of those things could push prices up further than they are now, and then we could start getting worried.”



The prolonged gains across the staple commodities are trickling through to store shelves, with countries from Kenya to Mexico reporting higher costs for food items. The pain could be particularly pronounced in some of the poorest import-dependent nations, which have limited purchasing power and social safety nets, at a time when they are grappling with the ongoing pandemic

Breakdown of last month’s food costs: The FAO’s food price index rose 2.1% from February. Vegetable oil prices jumped 8% to the highest since June 2011. Meat and dairy costs rose, boosted by Asian demand. Grains and sugar prices fell. Grains prices recently climbed to multiyear highs as China imports massive amounts to feed its hog herds that are recovering from a deadly virus. “We are not in the situation we were back in 2008-10 when inventories were really low and a lot of things were going on,” Abbassian said. “However, we are in sort of a borderline. It’s a borderline that needs to be monitored very closely over the next few weeks, because weather is either going to really make it or create really big problems.” The UN index has reached its highest since September 2011, climbing almost 5% last month. All five components of the index rose during the month, with gains led by vegetable oils, grains and sugar. The Bloomberg Agriculture Spot Index, measuring prices from grains to sugar and coffee, is up 70% in the past year.



There were other elements that exacerbated skyrocketing food costs a decade ago. For example, oil prices neared \$150 a barrel -- double current levels -- and there was a wave of trade restrictions by major grain shippers. Meanwhile, the cost of rice, one of the world’s food staples, has remained relatively subdued this time round amidst the surge in other agricultural prices. Gains in the past year have been fueled by China’s “unpredictably huge” purchases of foreign grain, and world reserves may hold relatively flat in the coming season, Abbassian said. Summer weather across the Northern Hemisphere will be crucial in determining if U.S. and European harvests can make up for crop shortfalls elsewhere.

Across the Board
All food categories tracked by FAO climbed in the past 12 months
Price Gains in the past year
Meat 10%
Dairy 28%

Cereals	37%
Overall food index	40%
Sugar	57%
Vegetable oil	124%

(Source: UN’s FAO)
(Courtesy <https://www.bloomberg.com/>)

Related

Food Fears Are Rising

Global food prices aren’t leaving any wiggle room for the realities of today’s bad harvests or demand spikes. **The state of play:** A UN index of food prices “has reached its highest since September 2011, climbing almost 5% last month,” reports Bloomberg. Another tracker of “prices from grains to sugar and coffee is up 70% in the past year.” **Why it matters:** The real threat comes in countries where large portions of the population live close to the edge of hunger, Axios’ Bryan Walsh wrote. •Even in the U.S., rising prices hit the poorest Americans, who spend more than one-third of their income on food.



A sales assistant arranges fruit in a supermarket in the Philippines. (Photo/Veejay Villafranca/Bloomberg via Getty Images) •“The pain could be particularly pronounced in some of the poorest import-dependent nations,” Bloomberg reports. **The big picture:** COVID-related labor disruptions probably aren’t helping, but climate change-related shifts in precipitation and temperatures are expected to lead to more volatile food production in the coming years, Axios’ Andrew Freedman tells me. •That volatility can destabilize fragile countries. This already played out, studies show, with the Syrian Civil War, which began during a severe drought. •A study found that rising temperatures in countries of origin increased the number of people seeking asylum in the EU, Axios Science editor Alison Snyder noted. (Courtesy axios.com)
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COMMUNITY

(Article Continues From C7-1)

Global Food Costs Surge To Decade High



Global food prices have extended their rally to the highest in almost a decade, heightening concerns over bulging grocery bills at a time when economies are still struggling to overcome the Covid-19 crisis.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Countries Feel Food Price Squeeze - A Closer Look

The world is racing to vaccinate its way out of the coronavirus pandemic, but another challenge has already emerged for some more vulnerable governments and economies. Global food prices are at the highest in more than six years, driven by a jump in the cost of everything from soybeans to palm oil because of the large demand from China, vulnerable supply chains and adverse weather. Some banks warn the world is heading into a commodities “supercycle.” Inflation is putting another squeeze on consumers hurting from pandemic-induced recession and—in some places—falling currencies.



Russia: History Lesson
Memories of soaring prices and empty shelves in the aftermath of the Soviet Union’s collapse are still vivid for many Russians. With his popularity barely back from nadirs and protests demanding the

release of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny, President Vladimir Putin is wary of the political impact of food costs. “Russia may see some real political mobilization around food prices,” said Hendrix. “Authoritarian governments tend to be somewhat more permissive of these types of “kitchen table issue” protests than they are of more general campaigns against corruption and authoritarian rule.

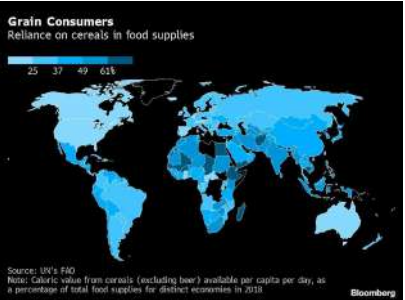


In recent weeks, the world’s No. 1 wheat exporter imposed tariffs and quotas designed to curb sales abroad and drive domestic prices lower. Russia’s largest retailers were also ordered to freeze some food prices, with potatoes and carrots up by more than a third

from last year. Though, as the Arab Spring demonstrated, the former can become the latter—sometimes very quickly.” Russia and Argentina have restricted crop shipments to suppress prices at home. **Nigeria: Perfect Storm** Food prices in Africa’s biggest economy make up for more than half the country’s inflation index and rose at the fastest pace in more than 12 years in January.



An average Nigerian household spends more than 50% of its budget on food. The costs are adding to a perfect storm of food security challenges that have haunted Nigeria throughout the pandemic. Foreign currency reserves needed to import goods dried up after a plunge in oil prices. Supply bottlenecks and attacks on farmers have also weighed on supply of agricultural goods. There were also shortages of staples such as rice after the authorities restricted imports and closed land borders for 16 months. They reopened in December, but that has done little to ease inflation.



Turkey: Angry Leader
Turkey: Angry Leader As the world’s biggest per-capita consumer of bread and its top flour exporter, Turkey is particularly exposed to a rally in commodity markets. Food prices rose 18% in January from a year earlier, with sharp jumps in staples from grains to vegetables. Turkey has grappled with a double-digit

food inflation for years, but the political implications for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are increasing as food costs hit his core support base along with the plunge in the value of the lira.



Erdogan ordered an investigation into the increase in food prices. He said oil, pulses, vegetables and fruits were the “primary concern.” The Trade Ministry may impose fines on businesses that sell food products at high prices, the president warned in January. The trouble is that government threats and financial penalties in 2019 barely moved the needle. **India: Balancing Act** Home to the most arable land after the U.S., India is the world’s biggest exporter of rice and the second-largest producer of wheat. At the same time millions of people cannot access affordable food and the country has some of highest rates of child malnutrition.



While costs for staples rose more slowly in recent weeks, food remains at the center of political tensions that have been dominating India. Protests by farmers escalated over a move by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government to liberalize the market for crops. Growers are concerned the new law will push down prices. Modi is pushing with reforms that many

believe are designed ultimately to cut India’s food subsidy bill, the biggest in the world. The government said in January it was becoming “unmanageably” large. Cuts to food and fuel subsidies have often translated into unrest and projections aren’t looking good in the next two years, according to Verisk Maplecroft. **Brazil: Populist Pressure** Populist Pressure Latin America’s biggest economy stands out among emerging markets for having the fastest increase in food prices in the past year relative to overall inflation because of a sustained decline in the currency, according to Oxford Economics Ltd. Meanwhile, President Jair Bolsonaro’s popularity is falling to near record lows and he’s trying to find new ways to mollify the electorate. On Feb. 19, he abruptly removed the head of the state-controlled oil company after a row over fuel prices. He also has been pushing for a new round of coronavirus aid to the poor after cash handouts ended in December.



The trouble is that the money served to push up food prices, according to Maria Andreia Lameiras, a researcher at the economics research institute Ipea. Rice jumped 76% last year, while milk and beef soared by more than 20%. “The government dispensed money to the population with the highest expenditures on food,” Lameiras said. The cost of securing vital nutrition threatens to widen inequality in a country with the biggest income gap in the region, a situation that’s only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Even if the aid returns, the monthly payment would be lower and reach fewer people, limiting its scope to mitigate extreme poverty. (Courtesy bloomberg.com)