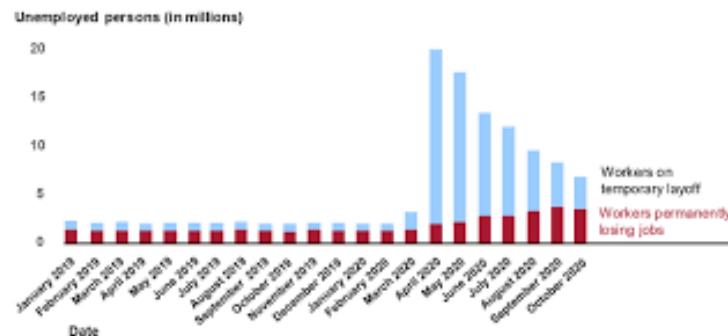


China reaffirms commitment to COVID-19 data transparency amid WHO Calls



Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. | GAO-21-191

Published on January 1, 2025

Document Date: Fri, Jan 23 2026 10:58:18 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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Anadolu Agency

BEIJING – China has reiterated its adherence to “scientific transparency” regarding COVID-19 data after the World Health Organization (WHO) urged Beijing to share data for understanding the origins of the pandemic.

“China has always adhered to the spirit of scientific openness and actively participated in global traceability efforts,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Tuesday.

The WHO's request on Monday emphasized the importance of transparency and international cooperation to prevent future pandemics. "Without data sharing, the world cannot adequately prepare for future epidemics," the organization said, calling it a "moral and scientific imperative."

The pandemic, which emerged in December 2019 in Wuhan, China, has caused over 7.1 million deaths globally, according to the WHO. While Beijing maintains that it promptly shared information about the virus and its genetic sequence with the global community, the WHO continues to advocate for unrestricted access to data.

Australia's recent COVID-19 surge, with an average of 258 patients hospitalized daily in Queensland earlier this month, underscores the ongoing threat of the virus.

China, however, dismissed claims of withholding information, rejecting what it termed "political manipulation." Mao highlighted that China has shared its experiences in prevention, control, and treatment with the international community.

As global calls for transparency grow, the debate over the pandemic's origins and data sharing remains a critical point of contention in the international health landscape.

