This epidemiological bulletin aims to provide the situation of key infectious diseases in the WHO South-East Asia region to inform risk assessment and response by countries. The bulletin uses information from publicly available sources and will be published every two weeks. For feedback or suggestions, please write to seoutbreak@who.int.

Table of Contents

Key events................................................................................................................................. 2
  Dengue in the WHO South-East Asia Region................................................................................. 2
  Global situation of mpox ........................................................................................................... 2

COVID-19................................................................................................................................... 3

mpox......................................................................................................................................... 8

Dengue......................................................................................................................................... 9
  Bangladesh ................................................................................................................................. 9
  Maldives .................................................................................................................................. 9
  Nepal ....................................................................................................................................... 10
  Sri Lanka ................................................................................................................................. 10
  Thailand ...................................................................................................................................... 11

Influenza....................................................................................................................................... 12
Key events

Dengue in the WHO South-East Asia Region

- This year, an early increase in the number of new cases of dengue is observed in some countries in the Region.
  - **Bangladesh**: The increase in the number of new cases of dengue has started earlier in 2023 compared to previous years. A total of 7,238 dengue cases including 45 deaths have been reported between 1 January and 25 June 2023 with a case fatality rate of 0.6%, compared to 1,089 cases and one death between January and June 2022 and 2,208 cases including eight deaths from January to June in 2019.¹
  - **Sri Lanka**: As of week 24, a total of 45,612 cases of dengue have been reported in 2023 compared to 30,229 cases in 2022 (a 51% increase). The current situation has been reviewed by the expert committee appointed to provide guidance on the control and spread of COVID-19 and dengue in the country. Special Mosquito Control Campaigns are being conducted in selected high-risk Medical Officer of Health (MOH) areas.²
  - **Thailand**: On May 26, 2023, the Department of Disease Control reported that the number of dengue cases from the beginning of the year to the week 19 of the year was 15,399 cases, which was 5.4 times higher than the number reported in the same period in 2022. An Incident Command Center was opened in May 2023 with the aim of reducing the number of cases of and mortality from dengue by eliminating the mosquito larvae breeding sites, investigating sources of disease transmission, providing control measures in provinces with outbreaks and communicating the risk of dengue to the public.³

- There is high probability that 2023 and 2024 will be marked by an El Niño event, which could increase the transmission of dengue virus and other arboviruses such as Zika and chikungunya viruses. The effects of climate change also are fueling mosquito breeding and transmission events as sexual (94.0%) and sexual contact was reported as the most common route of transmission (68.7%), with the European Region reporting the highest percentage of likely transmission events as sexual (94.0%).

Global situation of mpox

- An analysis of the global surveillance data on the current mpox outbreak was published in the Lancet Global Health this week. Below is a summary of the key findings from the paper:⁴
  - Between 1 January 2022 and 29 January 2023, 110 countries in all six WHO Regions reported a total of 85,473 confirmed cases of mpox, including 89 deaths. Data from 82,807 confirmed cases of mpox reported through the global surveillance system were analyzed.
  - Of the cases for whom demographic data were available, the majority were male (96.4%). The majority also self-identified as men who have sex with men (86.9%) and sexual contact was reported as the most common route of transmission (68.7%), with the European Region reporting the highest percentage of likely transmission events as sexual (94.0%).
  - The most commonly reported symptom was any rash (82.6%). Genital rash was more common in males aged 15 years and over (47.1%) compared to females of the same age (27.0%).
  - Analysis found that there was an increased odds of hospitalization among those who were aged less than five years (adjusted odds ratio 2.12 (95% confidence interval 1.32-3.4)) or 65 years and over (1.54 (1.05-2.25)), female (1.61 (1.35-1.91)), immunosuppressed and living with HIV ((2.00 (1.68-2.37)) or with other immunosuppressing conditions (3.47 (1.84-6.54)).

¹ [https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20230625_dengue_all.pdf](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20230625_dengue_all.pdf)
⁴ [https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2022/03/31/default-calendar/global-arbovirus-initiative](https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2022/03/31/default-calendar/global-arbovirus-initiative)
COVID-19
Status as of 25 June 2023

The WHO South-East Asia Region has recorded a cumulative total of 61,188,565 COVID-19 cases, including 806,434 deaths. In the WHO South-East Asia Region, during the week from 19 to 25 June 2023, 3,827 new cases and 69 new deaths were reported (a decrease of 27.4% and 26.6% respectively, compared to the previous week).

During the week 19 to 25 June 2023, Thailand (1,653 new cases, -23.4%), Bangladesh (783 new cases, -21.8%), Indonesia (652 new cases, -35.4%), India (472 new cases, -31.8%), Myanmar (253 new cases, -34.6%), Sri Lanka (seven new cases, -46.2%) and Nepal (six new cases, -25.0%) reported a decrease in the number of new cases compared to the previous seven days. Bhutan and Timor-Leste each reported one new case. Data from Maldives are not available for this period.

For the same period, only India reported an increase in the number of new deaths (eight new deaths, +100%) while four countries, namely Thailand (36 new deaths, -40.0%), Bangladesh (4 new deaths, -33.3%), Indonesia (21 new deaths, -8.7%) and Sri Lanka (0 new deaths, -100%) reported a decrease in the number of new deaths compared to the previous week. The remaining countries reported no new deaths (no change from the previous week). Data from Maldives are not available for this period.

Please refer to the WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard for further information.

Table 1. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the weekly change in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week from 19 to 25 June 2023.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cumulative cases</th>
<th>New cases (last 7 days)</th>
<th>% change in new cases</th>
<th>New cases per 1M pop</th>
<th>Cumulative deaths</th>
<th>New deaths (last 7 days)</th>
<th>% change in new deaths</th>
<th>New deaths per 1M pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>4,751,563</td>
<td>1,653</td>
<td>-23.4</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>34,328</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-40.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2,042,252</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>-21.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>29,461</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>6,811,780</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>-30.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>161,865</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-8.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>44,993,952</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>-31.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>531,903</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>640,302</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>-34.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>19,494</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>672,534</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-66.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>16,877</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1,003,367</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-25.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>12,031</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>62,673</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>23,457</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR Korea</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>198,685</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAR total</td>
<td>61,188,565</td>
<td>3,827</td>
<td>-27.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>806,434</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>-26.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percent change in the number of newly confirmed cases/deaths in past seven days, compared to previous week. NA = data not available. Thailand data were for the period from 18 to 24 Jun 2023 in comparison to the preceding week. Maldives data for the period from 18 to 24 June were not available as of 12:00 noon on 28 June 2023.
Figure 1. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the previous eight weeks (1 May – 25 June 2023) in the WHO South-East Asia Region

* Maldives data as of 17 June 2023.

Figure 2: Weekly number of SARS-CoV-2 positive samples and test positivity from integrated influenza-SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance systems in the previous seven weeks (1 May – 18 June 2023) in selected counties* (as of 25 June 2023)

* Countries conducting SARS-CoV-2 testing of the samples collected through influenza sentinel surveillance sites (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Timor-Leste).
Figure 3. Number of weekly new COVID-19 cases per 100 000 population in the previous eight weeks (11 May – 25 Jun 2023) in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region *

* DPR Korea has reported no confirmed COVID-19 case.
SARS-CoV-2 variants in the South-East Asia Region

As of 22 June 2023, based on data downloaded from GISAID (Figures 4a and 4b):

- In **India**, XBB.1.16 and its sub-lineages XBB.1.16.1 and FU* (XBB.1.16*) remain predominant accounting for 70.7% (n=1 579) of the sequences submitted in the last 30 days. XBB.2.3 and its sub-lineages (XBB.2.3*) accounted for 17.0% (n=379). Of the 156 sequences classified as ‘other’, 67 (42.9%) were unassigned.

- In **Indonesia**, XBB.1.9 and its sub-lineages continue to remain predominant accounting for 65.8% (n=1 158) of the sequences submitted in the last 30 days of which, 42.3% (n=322) were XBB.1.9.1* (including FL*) and 57.7% (n=440) were XBB.1.9.2* (including EG*). XBB.1.6*, accounted for 10.6% (n=123) of the sequences.

- In **Thailand**, in the last 30 days, the most prevalent sequences submitted were: XBB.1.16* (32.8%, n=306), XBB.1.9 and its sub-lineages (25.4%, n=237) and XBB.1.5* (12.4%, n=116).
  - In the last 60 days, Bangladesh submitted 27 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (37.0%, n=10) and 10 (37.0%) were ‘other’ of which three were BA.5*, three were BE* and the remaining were other variants. Myanmar submitted 29 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.9* (31.0%, n=9), XBB.1.6* (27.6%, n=8) and ‘other’ (24.1%, n=7) of which four were BA.5* and three were BA.2.75*. Nepal submitted 39 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (71.8%, n=28). Sri Lanka submitted 24 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (50.0%, n=12).
  - In the last 60 days, Bangladesh submitted 27 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (37.0%, n=10) and 10 (37.0%) were ‘other’ of which three were BA.5*, three were BE* and the remaining were other variants.
  - Myanmar submitted 29 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.9* (31.0, n=9), XBB.1.6* (27.6%, n=8) and ‘other’ (24.1%, n=7) of which four were BA.5* and three were BA.2.75*.
  - Nepal submitted 39 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (71.8%, n=28).
  - Sri Lanka submitted 24 sequences of which the majority were XBB.1.16* (50.0%, n=12).
- Other countries have not submitted sequences recently to GISAID.

Circulation of SARS-CoV-2 variants globally

Currently, WHO is closely tracking two variants of interest (VOI) and six variants under monitoring (VUMs) and their descendant lineages (* includes their descendant lineages).

- The VOIs are XBB.1.5 and XBB.1.16.
- The VUMs are BA.2.75*, CH.1.1*, XBB* (excluding XBB.1.5*, XBB.1.16* and XBB.1.9.1*), XBB.1.9.1*, XBB.1.9.2* and XBB.2.3*.
- BQ.1* was removed as a VUM due to its low global prevalence (below 1% over the past month).
- From epidemiological week 18 (1 to 7 May 2023) to week 22 (29 May to 4 June 2023), the prevalence of XBB.1.16 increased from 14.11% to 21.92%; XBB* from 5.01% to 5.89%; XBB.1.9.2* from 8.20% to 12.05% and XBB.2.3* from 2.37% to 5.02%. The other VOIs and VUMs decreased in prevalence.

On 5 June 2023, WHO updated its risk assessment for XBB.1.16. As of 5 June 2023, 19 847 sequences of the Omicron XBB.1.16 variant had been made available from 66 countries of which, 40.7% (n=8 086) were from India.
- The global risk assessment for XBB.1.16 is comparable with other currently co-circulating XBB variants with available evidence.
- While growth advantage and immune escape properties have been observed in different countries, no change in severity have been reported in countries where XBB.1.16 is reported to be circulating.
- Available information does not suggest that XBB.1.16 has additional public health risk relative to the other currently co-circulating Omicron descendant lineages. However, XBB.1.16 may continue to dominate in some countries and cause a rise in case incidence due to its growth advantage and immune escape characteristics.

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7 https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update-on-covid-19---22-june-2023
8 https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/05062023xbb.1.16.pdf?sfvrsn=f1845468_3
Figure 4a. Number of Omicron sub-lineage sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 22 June 2023 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions)

Figure 4b. Proportion of Omicron sub-lineage sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 22 June 2023 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions)

*: indicates the sub-lineage of each variant
XBB.* excludes XBB.1.11*, XBB.1.16*, XBB.1.16.1, XBB.1.22*, XBB.1.5*, XBB.1.9*, XBB.1.9.1, XBB.1.9.2 and XBB.2.3*.
XBB.1* excludes XBB.1.11*, XBB.1.16*, XBB.1.16.1, XBB.1.22*, XBB.1.5*, XBB.1.9*, XBB.1.9.1 and XBB.1.9.2
XBB.1.16* excludes XBB.1.16.1
XBB.1.9* excludes XBB.1.9.1 and XBB.1.9.2
FL* is a sub-lineage of XBB.1.9.1
EG* is a sub-lineage of XBB.1.9.2
FU* is a sub-lineage of XBB.1.16

The date next to the country name indicates the latest date of sample collection for sequence submission to GISAID.

**mpox**

**Status as of 25 June 2023**

In the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 84 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases including one death have been verified since 14 July 2022 (Figure 5). Table 2 summarizes the basic epidemiological profile of the reported mpox cases in the Region.

**Figure 5. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification* (14 July 2022 – 25 June 2023)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>22 (26.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>4 (4.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>56 (66.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Profile of 84 confirmed mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region since July 2022 (as of 25 June 2023)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Sexual orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0-17</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>MSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td>40 and over</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-17</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>MSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td>40 and over</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on the global situation of mpox outbreak, please visit the [global dashboard](http://example.com/).
Dengue

**Bangladesh**

A total of 1,036 cases of dengue were reported in Bangladesh during May 2023, 7.2 times higher than the number of cases reported in April 2023 (n=143) and 7.8 times higher than the mean number of cases reported in May between 2019 and 2022 (n = 133). From 1 to 25 June 2023, 5,216 cases have been reported compared to a total of 737 cases reported for the entirety of June, 2022 (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to 25 June 2023***

![Graph showing the number of new cases of dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to 25 June 2023.](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/index.php/bd/home/5200-daily-dengue-status-report)


**Maldives**

A total of 263 new cases of dengue were reported in May 2023, a 17.8% decrease compared to April 2023 (n=320) and a 24.1% increase compared to May 2022 (n=212) (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Maldives from January 2022 to May 2023***

![Graph showing the number of new cases of dengue by month in Maldives from January 2022 to May 2023.](https://health.gov.mv/en/publications/roagaage-gothugai-fethuremundhaa-balithah-mei-2023-1)

**Nepal**

In 2023, a total of 61 cases of dengue were reported in Nepal in week 24 (19 to 25 June), a 60.5% increase compared to week 23 (12 to 18 June, n=38) (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Number of new cases of dengue by week in Nepal from January 2018 to 25 June 2023 (week 24)**


**Sri Lanka**

In 2023, a total of 2,477 cases of dengue were reported in Sri Lanka in week 24 (12 to 18 June 2023), a 9.3% decrease compared to week 23 (5 to 11 June, n=2,730) and 54.4% higher than the mean number of cases reported during week 24 from 2017 to 2022, (n=1,768) (Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Number of new cases of dengue by week in Sri Lanka from January 2018 to 18 June 2023 (Week 24)*

Thailand

A total of 3,985 cases of dengue were reported in Thailand in May 2023, a 41.8% increase compared to April (n=2,811) and a 25.2% increase compared to the mean number of cases in May between 2017 and 2022 (n=3,182). From 1 to 26 June 2023, a total of 2,778 new cases were reported compared to 4,977 new cases for entirety of June 2022 (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Thailand from January 2017 to June 2023.

Influenza

Figure 11: Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the test positivity in WHO South-East Asia Region (as of 25 June 2023)

Data sources and information on influenza, please refer to the WHO SEARO Influenza dashboard.