This epidemiological bulletin aims to provide the situation of key infectious diseases in the WHO South-East Asia region to inform risk assessments and responses. 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.

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Key events and updates

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**Situation as of 30 October 2023**

- As of 30 October 2023, the Ministry of Health of Indonesia reported a cumulative total of 27 mpox cases. Except one case reported in August 2022, the remaining cases were reported between 13 and 30 October 2023.
- Forty-two percent of the total cases were aged 25 to 39 years. Of the total, 18 cases were known to have HIV. Most cases reported themselves as men who have sex with men. Twenty-two active cases are in Jakarta, four active cases in Banten, and one active case in Bandung, West Java.

**Response**

- The Indonesian Ministry of Health conducted a risk assessment for mpox on 17 October 2023. The risk of additional mpox cases to be reported in the general community in DKI Jakarta and nationally in Indonesia was assessed as low, while the risk of additional mpox cases to be reported among MSM community in DKI Jakarta was assessed as high.
- The Indonesian Ministry of Health strengthened surveillance, including active case detection in health facilities but also working with communities and volunteers to find cases and close contacts in specific groups.
- Cases are requested to isolate themselves, primarily in the hospital where supportive treatment can be provided.
- Whole genome sequencing of the confirmed cases is awaited.
- The Ministry of Health carries out vaccinations. The JYNNEOS® vaccine has been prepared since the last year. There are currently only 1000 doses available in vaccine stock for a target number of 477 people with 2 doses administered 4 weeks apart.
- Risk communication and community engagement includes: the delivery of circulars for health facilities and laboratories, delivery of communication media such as frequently asked questions and videos, and engagement of non-government organizations working with people living with HIV and key populations for raising awareness and provision of information.

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COVID-19

Status as of 29 October 2023

- The WHO South-East Asia Region has recorded a cumulative total of 61 208 962 COVID-19 cases, including 808 058 deaths. In the WHO South-East Asia Region, from 23 to 29 October 2023, 437 new cases, a decrease of 6.8% and five new deaths, an increase of 25.0% were reported compared to the previous week.

- Between 23 to 29 October 2023, only Thailand (206 new cases, +7.9%) reported an increase in the number of new cases compared to the previous week while India (193 new cases, -8.5%), Bangladesh (31 new cases, -36.7%), Myanmar (six new cases, -45.5%) and Sri Lanka (one new case, -75.0%) reported a decrease in the number of new cases. Data were not available from Bhutan, Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal and Timor-Leste for this period.

- Globally, 771 549 718 COVID-19 cases, including 6 974 473 deaths have been cumulatively reported, as of 25 October 2023.

- Please refer to the WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard for further information of COVID-19 in WHO South-East Asia Region.

Table 1. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the weekly change in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week from 23 to 29 October 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>4,758,125</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>34,487</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>45,001,245</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>-8.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>533,293</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2,045,923</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-36.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>29,477</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>641,341</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-45.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>19,494</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>672,508</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-75.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16,683</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>62,697</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>6,813,429</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>161,916</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>186,694</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>Nepal</td>
<td>1,003,450</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12,031</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>25,460</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAR total</td>
<td>61,208,962</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>-6.8</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>808,056</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0</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.

DPR Korea has not reported confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Thailand data were for the period from 22 to 28 October 2023 in comparison to the preceding week.

As for cumulative numbers, Maldives data are as of 5 August, Timor-Leste data as of 11 August, Indonesia data as of 13 September, Bhutan data as of 8 October and Nepal data as of 20 October 2023,

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5 Data as of 5:57pm CEST, 25 October 2023 link: [https://covid19.who.int/](https://covid19.who.int/)
Figure 1. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the previous eight weeks (4 September to 29 October 2023) in the WHO South-East Asia Region *

* The number for India for the week ending 22 October includes 1253 cases reconciled in Punjab and Haryana released on 21 October 2023 by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare India (MoHFW). Maldives and Timor-Leste data are not available. Indonesia data are as of 13 September, Bhutan Data are as of 8 October and Nepal Data are as of 20 October 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 (3 September to 29 October 2023) in selected counties* (as of 29 October 2023)

* Countries routinely conducting SARS-COV-2 testing of the samples collected through influenza sentinel surveillance sites (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal and Timor-Leste).
Figure 3. Number of weekly new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the previous eight weeks (4 September to 29 October 2023) in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region *

* DPR Korea has reported no confirmed COVID-19 cases.
The number for India for the week ending on 22 October includes 1,253 cases reconciled in Punjab and Haryana released on 21 October 2023 by MoHFW India.
Circulation of SARS-CoV-2 variants globally

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

- The VOIs are XBB.1.5, XBB.1.16 and EG.5.
- The VUMs are BA.2.86, DV.7, XBB, XBB.1.9.1, XBB.1.9.2 and XBB.2.3.
- On 23 October 2023, BA.2.75 was removed from the list of VUMs due to its low global prevalence (<1%) over the past eight weeks. Similarly, CH.1.1 has been replaced on the list of VUMs by one of its descendent lineages, DV.7.
- Globally, EG.5* remains the most prevalent VOI, increasing from 38.8% in epidemiological week 36 (4 to 10 September 2023) to 45.8% in week 40 (2 to 8 October 2023). Among the other VOIs, XBB.1.16* and XBB.1.5* both declined in prevalence.
- Among the VUMs, the prevalence of BA.2.86* increased from 0.5% to 2.0% and DV.7* from 1.6% to 2.0%. The prevalence of XBB.1.9.1* remained stable and XBB*, XBB.1.9.2* and XBB.2.3* declined.

SARS-CoV-2 variants in the South-East Asia Region

- As of 28 October 2023, the sequence data submitted to GISAID in the last 60 days by date of collection are as follows (Figures 4a and 4b). Only a small number of sequences has been submitted from the Region and therefore the data should be interpreted with caution.
  - In India, 51 sequences were submitted. XBB.2.3* continues to account for the highest percentage of sequences submitted (68.6%, n=35) followed by XBB.1.16* (27.5%, n=14).
  - In Myanmar, two sequences were submitted, one of XBB.1.9.2* and one of XBB.2.3*.
  - In Thailand, 95 sequences were submitted. XBB.1.16* continued to account for the majority of sequences submitted (30.5%, n=29), followed by XBB.2.3* (23.2%, n=22) and XBB.1.9.1* (14.7%, n=14).
  - Other countries have not submitted sequences recently to GISAID.

6 https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/covid-19-epidemiological-update---27-october-2023
Figure 4a. Number of Omicron sub-lineage sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 28 October 2023 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions) 

Data source: GISAID 28 October 2023

India (05 October, 2023) [Number]
Myanmar (21 September, 2023) [Number]
Thailand (19 September, 2023) [Number]

Figure 4b. Proportion of Omicron sub-lineage sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 28 October 2023 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions) 

Data source: GISAID 28 October 2023

India (05 October, 2023) [Proportion] (Total Samples: 51)
Myanmar (21 September, 2023) [Proportion] (Total Samples: 2)
Thailand (19 September, 2023) [Proportion] (Total Samples: 95)

*indicates the sub-lineage of each variant.

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

XBB* excludes XBB.1.16*, XBB.1.5*, XBB.1.9.1, XBB.1.9.2 and XBB.2.3*

EG.5* is a sub-lineage of XBB.1.9.2

**mpox**

Status as of 29 October 2023

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 618 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases, including two deaths, have been reported since 14 July 2022 (Figure 5). In epidemiological week 43 (from 23 to 29 October 2023), 23 new mpox cases from Thailand and 19 new mpox cases were reported from Indonesia.
- Table 2 summarizes the basic epidemiological profile of the 606 mpox cases in the Region for which case-based information is available.
- For more information on the global situation of mpox outbreak, please visit the [global dashboard](#).

Figure 5. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification* (14 July 2022 – 29 October 2023)

*Cases are plotted per week of notification - the date on which the case is notified to the public health authority.
Table 2. Profile of the 606 confirmed mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region for which case-based information is available since July 2022 and since July 2023 (as of 29 October 2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Since July 2022 (n = 606)</th>
<th>Since July 2023 (n = 477)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>27 (4.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>15 (2.5%)</td>
<td>14 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1 (0.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>4 (0.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>559 (92.2%)</td>
<td>463 (97.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30 (5.0%)</td>
<td>8 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>575 (94.9%)</td>
<td>469 (98.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>1 (0.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 18</td>
<td>4 (0.7%)</td>
<td>3 (0.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>199 (32.8%)</td>
<td>160 (33.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>259 (42.7%)</td>
<td>204 (42.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>122 (20.1%)</td>
<td>97 (20.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 and over</td>
<td>22 (3.6%)</td>
<td>13 (2.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>53 (8.7%)</td>
<td>29 (6.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men who have sex with men (MSM)</td>
<td>490 (80.9%)</td>
<td>408 (85.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>9 (1.5%)</td>
<td>8 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3 (0.5%)</td>
<td>1 (0.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>51 (8.4%)</td>
<td>31 (6.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>41 (6.8%)</td>
<td>10 (2.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>557 (91.9%)</td>
<td>465 (97.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>8 (1.3%)</td>
<td>2 (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Dengue**

**Bangladesh**

- A total of 267,680 dengue cases (defined as dengue NS1 or anti-dengue virus IgM positive) including 1,333 deaths have been cumulatively reported between 1 January and 29 October 2023 with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.50%.

- During September 2023, a total of 79,598 cases including 396 deaths were reported. This was the highest number of monthly cases and deaths, compared with the available historical data from 2019 to 2023. Between 1 and 29 October at total of 64,274 cases including 344 deaths were reported (Figure 6).

- A total of 12,634 cases of dengue were reported in Bangladesh during week 43 (23 to 29 October 2023), an 18.1% decrease compared to the number of cases reported during week 42 (16 to 22 October 2023) (n=15,432).

- The number of new deaths also decreased to 78 in week 43 from 86 in week 42, a decrease by 9.3%.

**Figure 6. Number of new cases of, and deaths from dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to 29 October 2023**


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8 [https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231029_dengue_all.pdf](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231029_dengue_all.pdf)
Maldives

- Between January and September 2023, a total of 2,707 cases of dengue have been reported in Maldives compared to 1,548 cases reported during the same period in 2022, an increase of 75%.
- A total of 288 new cases of dengue were reported in September 2023, representing an 11.9% decrease compared to August 2023 (n=327) and a 10.8% increase compared to the number reported in September 2022 (n=260) (Figure 7).

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


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Nepal

- Between 1 January and 27 October 2023, 42 270 cases of dengue including 20 confirmed deaths (CFR=0.05%) have been reported from 76 districts in Nepal.
- The highest cumulative number of cases and case incidence has been reported from Sunsari district, Koshi province (16 105 cases (38.1% of the total), 1 812 cases per 100 000). The second highest number of cumulative cases and case incidence have been reported from Tanahun district, Gandaki province (6 116 cases (14.5% of the total), 1 784 cases per 100 000).
- Over time, the spatial distribution of cases has changed:
  - In August 2023, incidence was highest in districts in Koshi provinces (Sunsari, Sankhuwasabha and Morang) as well as Dhading in Bagmati province.
  - In October 2023, incidence has been highest in districts in Gandaki province (Tanahun, Gorkha, Kaski and Manang).
- A total of 1 251 cases of dengue were reported in Nepal during week 42 (15 to 21 October 2023) via the Early Warning Reporting System (EWARS), a 20.8% decrease compared to week 41 (8 to 14 October, n= 1 580) (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Number of new cases of dengue by week reported by the Early Warning Reporting System (EWARS) in Nepal from January 2018 to 21 October 2023


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Sri Lanka

- As of 20 October, a total of 66,476 cases of dengue have been reported in Sri Lanka in 2023, 1.1 times higher than the 61,492 cases reported until the end of week 42 in 2022.
- A total of 922 cases of dengue were reported in Sri Lanka in week 42 (16 – 22 October), a 22.8% increase compared to 751 cases reported in week 41 (9 to 15 October 2023) (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Number of new cases of dengue by week in Sri Lanka from January 2018 to 22 October 2023 (week 42)

Sources: Epidemiology Unit and National Dengue Control Unit, Ministry of Health.
https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB (2021 to 2023)
**Thailand**

- As of 25 October, a total of 119,465 dengue cases (inclusive of dengue (n=90,893), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) (n=27,557) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS) (n=1,015)) and 122 dengue deaths (inclusive of dengue (n=15), DHF (n=31) and DSS (n=76)) (CFR=0.1%) were reported in Thailand in 2023.
- In 2023, the number of cumulative cases between January and October is higher than that reported for the same period in previous years (2018 to 2022). The number of deaths is the second highest after 2019 (n=128).
- Between 1 and 25 October, a total of 7,936 dengue cases were reported compared to 19,799 for the entirety of September 2023.
- Of the 119,465 cases reported until 18 October in 2023, there were equal proportions of males and females (50.9% (n=60,752) were male and 49.1% (n=58,713) were females. Those aged five to 14 years comprised the 35.2% of cases (n=42,025) followed by those aged 15 to 24 years which comprised of 21.2% (n=25,361).

**Figure 10. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by month in Thailand from January 2018 to September 2023.**


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16 [https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/dfa7d4e2-b7f5-48ed-b40a-54f1cd4cbdfb/page/p_ortuohurpc](https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/dfa7d4e2-b7f5-48ed-b40a-54f1cd4cbdfb/page/p_ortuohurpc)
Influenza

Status as of 29 October 2023

- From the week starting on 26 June 2023, in the WHO South-East Asia Region, an increase in transmission of seasonal influenza has been observed. The percentage of specimens positive for influenza has remained between 18% and 23% from the week beginning on 24 July to the week beginning on 23 October 2023. During this period, the most frequently circulating strains were Influenza A/H3, A/H1N1pdm09 and B Victoria (Figure 11).
- The increases were primarily driven by Bangladesh, Nepal and Thailand.
- In Bangladesh, since the week starting 14 August there has been a declining trend with the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza virus decreasing from 35% (n=148) during the week beginning 14 August 2023 to 7% (n=8) during the week beginning 9 October 2023. The transmission in Bangladesh was primarily driven by influenza subtype B Victoria followed by Influenza A/H3 and influenza A/H1N1 pdm09.
- In Nepal, the percentage of specimens testing positive started to increase from the week beginning on 31 July and until 2 October 2023, remained between 6% and 28% (Figure 12). Starting from 2 October, it has shown a declining trend indicating 11% on 16 October.
- In Thailand, the percentage of specimens positive for influenza increased from 29% during the week starting on 14 August to 37% during the week starting on 25 September. Since then, the percentage ranged between 35% (week starting on 9 October) and 23% (week starting on 23 October). In the last month, the most frequently circulating strains have been the subtype influenza A/H3 followed by influenza A/H1N1 pdm09 and un-subtyped influenza B (Figure 13).
- From the week starting on 14 August to the week starting on 23 October, the proportion of respiratory samples collected at influenza sentinel surveillance sites in these countries that tested positive for COVID-19 varied from 2.2% to 1.7% (Figure 2).
- Data sources and information on influenza, including updates of integrated surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 using influenza sentinel surveillance systems, are available at WHO SEARO Influenza dashboard.

Figure 11. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in WHO South-East Asia Region (as of 23 October 2023)
Figure 12. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in Nepal 2023 (as of 22 October 2023)

Figure 13. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in Thailand 2023 (as of 29 October 2023)