

Situation Update #14- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHO Country Office for Nepal

22 July 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

Nepal

- Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has endorsed [Interim Standards for service management of Leprosy Control Program in the context of COVID-19 pandemic](#) (Nepali language) and [Interim Guidance for the Health-related Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy of persons with COVID-19 in Acute Care Settings](#) (English language).
- MoHP has endorsed [Home quarantine standards, 2077](#) (Nepali language).
- All 77 districts of seven provinces in Nepal are affected but no cases have been reported for last 14 days from 5 districts i.e. Bhojpur, Khotang, Manang, Mustang and Sankhuwasabha.
- A total of 28 designated COVID-19 testing laboratories are now functional in the country, including the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL). The three newly added laboratories are: (1) Lumbini Provincial Hospital Laboratory, Rupandehi, Province 5; (2) Nepal Police Hospital Laboratory and (3) Star Hospital Laboratory, Kathmandu, Bagmati province.
- Most of the lockdown restrictions have been lifted on 22 July 2020, with a few exceptions (see further in this Sitrep)

SITUATION OVERVIEW (Reported up to 21 July 2020)

NEPAL

17,992 confirmed cases

39 deaths

3,19,872 RT-PCR tests (As of 20 July 2020)

SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

14,78,141 confirmed cases

35,121 deaths

GLOBAL

1,45,62,550 confirmed cases

6,07,781 deaths

Regional/Global

- [WHO is supporting ongoing vaccination efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) by providing knowledge and assistance to immunization programs worldwide and helping countries as they balance the threat of COVID-19 with the threat of vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks and related deaths.
- WHO has published an interim checklist for local authorities on [Practical actions in cities to strengthen preparedness for the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond](#). The checklist accompanies the interim guidance on [Strengthening preparedness for COVID-19 in cities and urban settings](#).
- WHO updated its [Q & A page](#) to include information on Small public gatherings and COVID-19

NEPAL EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

- As of 22 July 2020, 07:00 hours, (Week no. 30), total 17,992 COVID-19 confirmed cases were reported in Nepal through polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and out of which 99% cases (17,882) were found only during the weeks from 20 to 30.
- Out of 7 provinces, 5 provinces (Provinces 1, 2, 5, Karnali and Sudurpaschim) are having transmission as clusters of cases and the remaining two provinces (Bagmati and Gandaki) are classified as having sporadic transmission of COVID-19.
- The reduction in daily reported SARS-Cov2 positive people parallels a reduction in the number of returning migrant workers (Fig5).
- About 72% cases, 13,004 out of total 17,992, are reported only from Provinces 2, 5 and Sudurpaschim. This data clearly indicates that the present case load is disproportionately higher in these three provinces as compared to rest of the provinces, and reflects the influx of positive returnees, mainly from India
- While less than 1% of the confirmed COVID-19 cases are symptomatic at diagnosis across all age groups, the proportion of symptomatic cases progressively increases beyond 55 years of age.
- The age sex distribution is highly skewed towards males, which constitutes 86% (15,443 cases out of total 17,992) of the confirmed cases and of the males again, 92% (14,260 cases out of total male 15,443) are in 15-54-years age group. This indicates that the confirmed case burden probably disproportionately affecting large groups of infected migrant workers, who are predominantly males in economically productive age group who have returned to Nepal.
- Thirty-nine persons (34 male and 5 female) who tested positive for COVID-19 have died, of which 24 persons (62% cases) had at least one or more co-morbid conditions. The overall case fatality ratio (CFR) across all ages is less than 1%. The CFR progressively increases with age beyond 55 years of age group from 2% to more than 6%.
- The spatial distribution of cases is still clustered within a few municipalities, rather than being widespread across the districts.
- For more detailed epidemiological updates please see – <http://edcd.gov.np/news/covid-19-situation-updates>
- As of 21 July 2020, 604 cases of influenza like illness (ILI) were tested for COVID-19 and eight cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 (all the positive cases are included in COVID-19 database).
- There is significant reduction in sample received for the influenza testing at the NPHL since 1st June 2020.
- The number of Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI) cases reported in Early Warning and Reporting System (EWARS) during this period is less as compared to the same period last year, for example 67 cases in epidemiological week 28 of 2020 and 161 cases in the same week of 2019.

Figure 1: Confirmed COVID-19 cases in South East Asia Region (Data updated on 21 July 2020 from global sitrep #183)

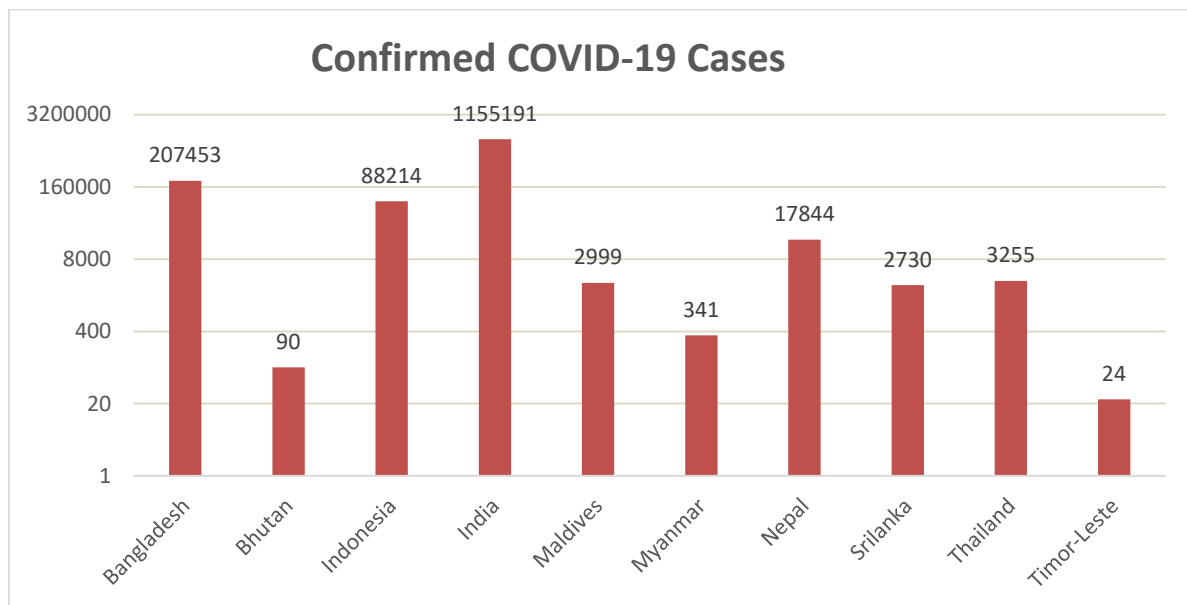


Figure 2 A: Laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases and average number of COVID-19 cases over the last seven days, by date of onset/sample/confirmation (N=17,992) (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

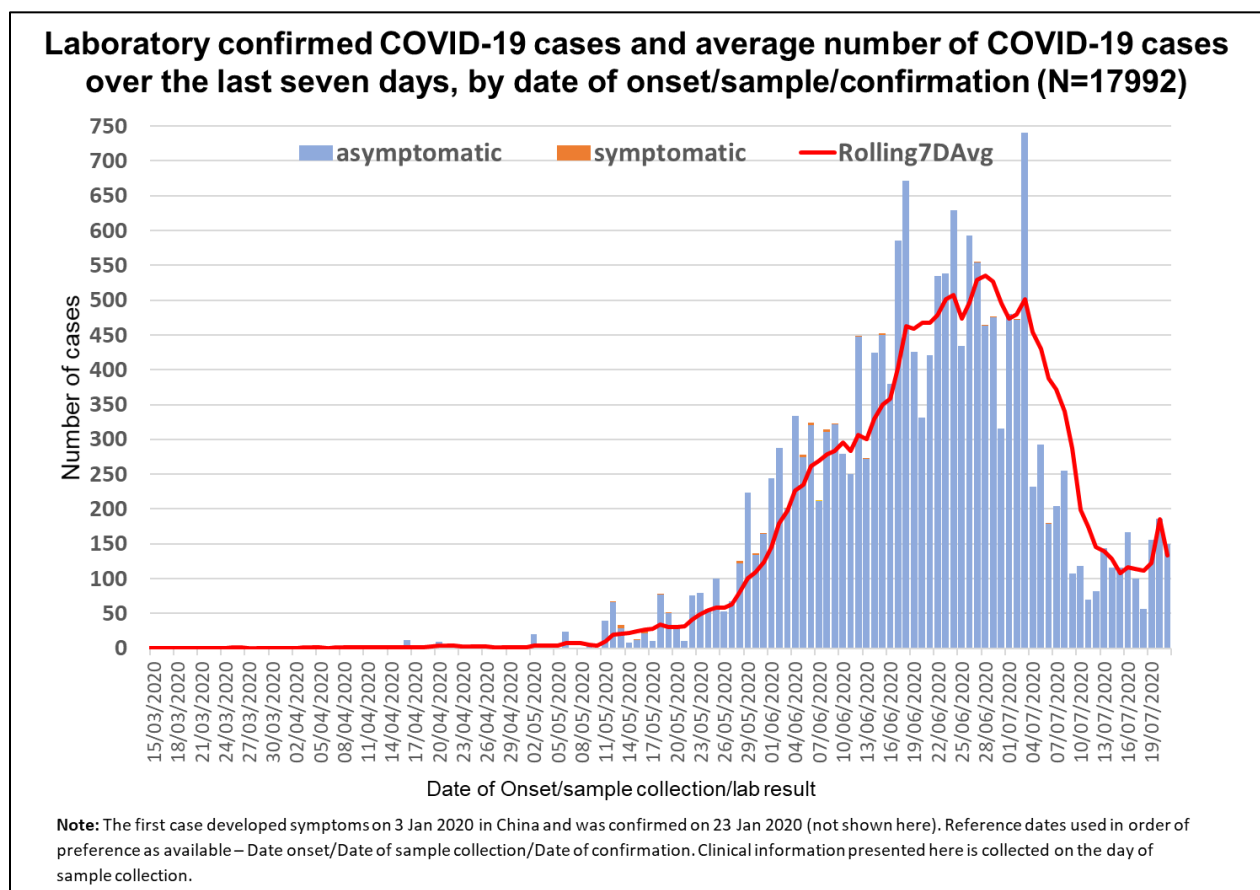


Figure 2B: Epidemic curve of laboratory confirmed COVID-19, by Provinces (N= 17,992) (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

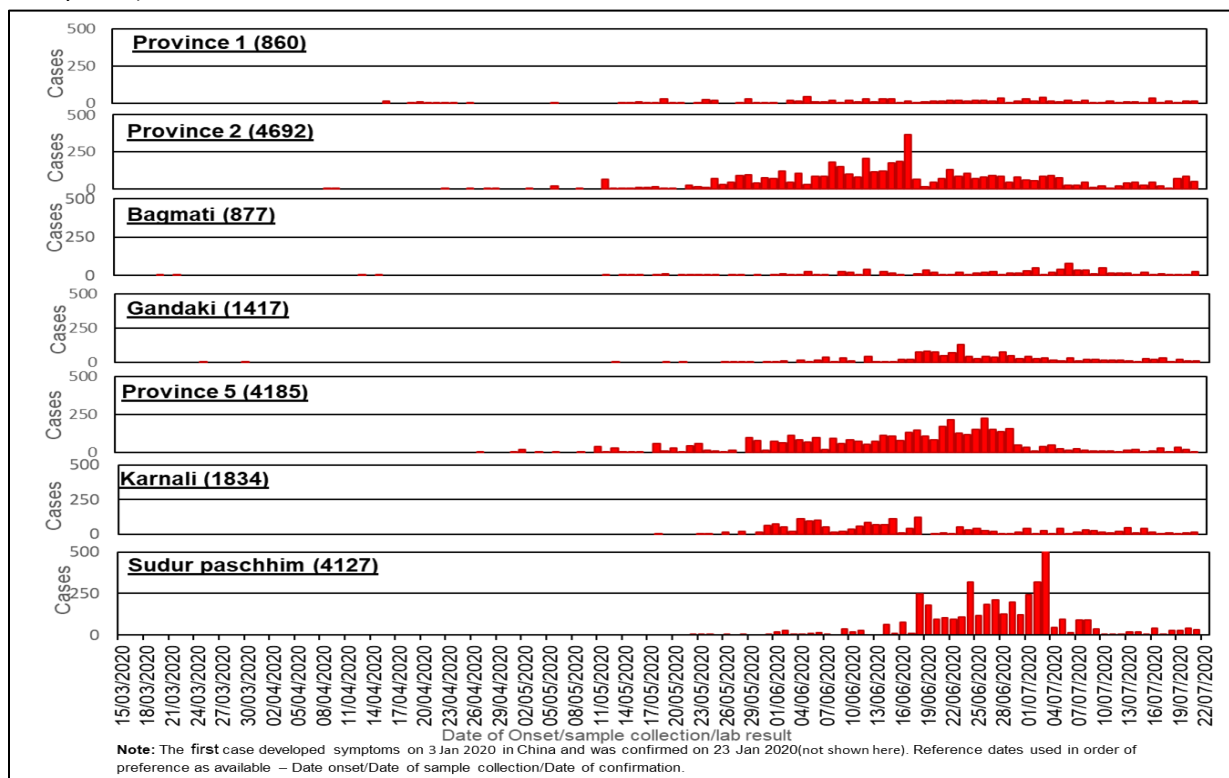


Figure 2C: Cumulative case count of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 by province (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

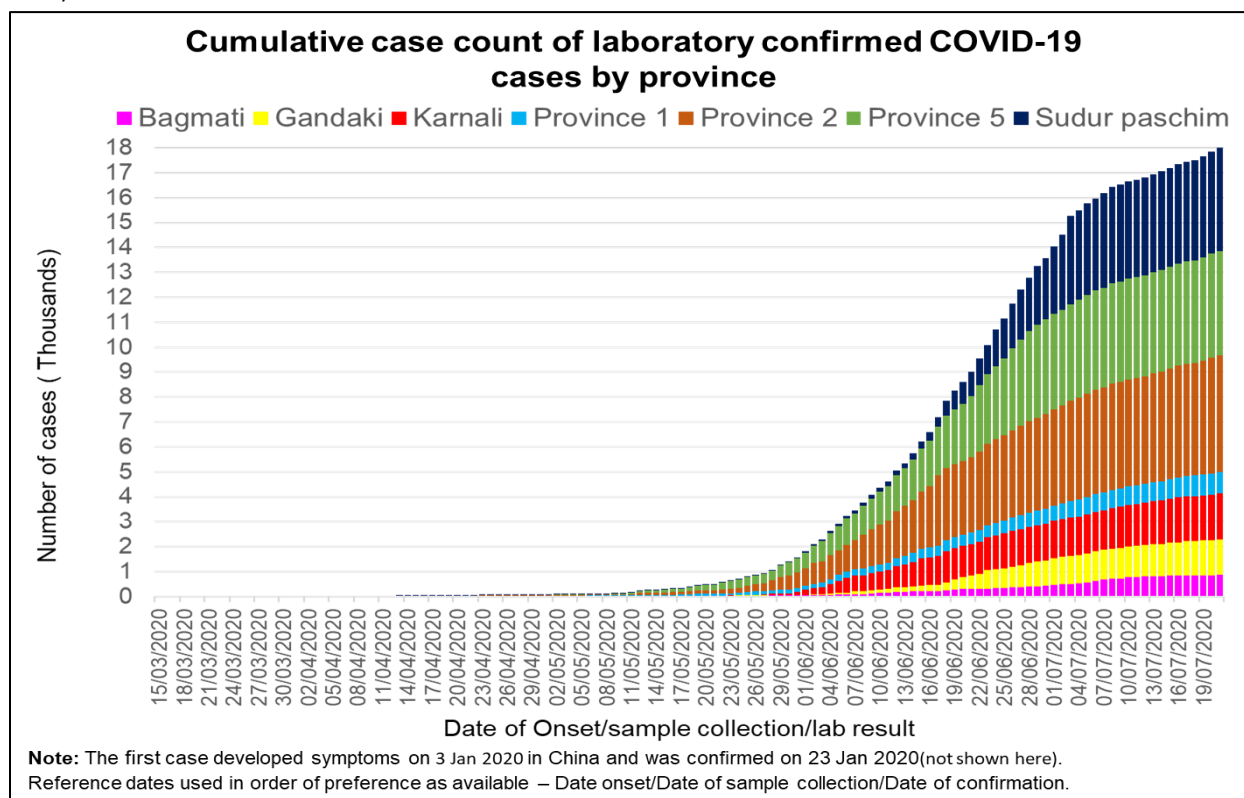


Figure 3: Municipalities (By domicile) with reported laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

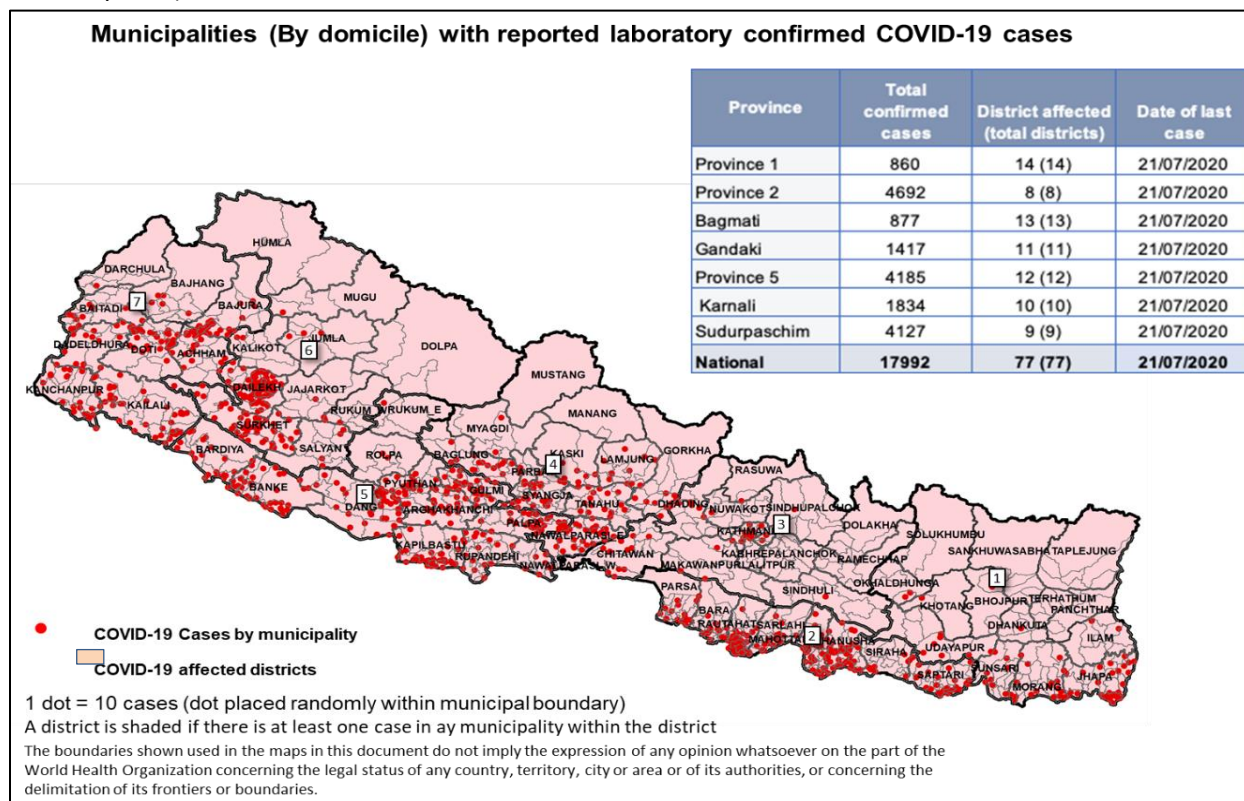


Table 1: Summary of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and transmission by provinces. (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

Reporting Province	Total confirmed cumulative cases	Total cumulative deaths	Transmission classification*	Districts affected (total districts)	Date of most recent case [#]
Province 1	860	0	Cluster of cases	14 (14)	21 July 2020
Province 2	4692	6	Cluster of cases	8 (8)	21 July 2020
Bagmati	877	8	Sporadic cases	13 (13)	21 July 2020
Gandaki	1417	5	Sporadic cases	11 (11)	21 July 2020
Province 5	4185	10	Cluster of cases	12 (12)	21 July 2020
Karnali	1834	4	Cluster of cases	10 (10)	21 July 2020
Sudurpaschim	4127	6	Cluster of cases	9 (9)	21 July 2020
National Total	17992	39		77 (77)	21 July 2020

[#] Date of last case is the date of onset or date of sample collection or date of lab report based on information available.

* Case classification is based on [WHO transmission classification](#)

No cases- provinces with no cases

Sporadic cases- provinces with one or more cases, imported or locally detected[#]

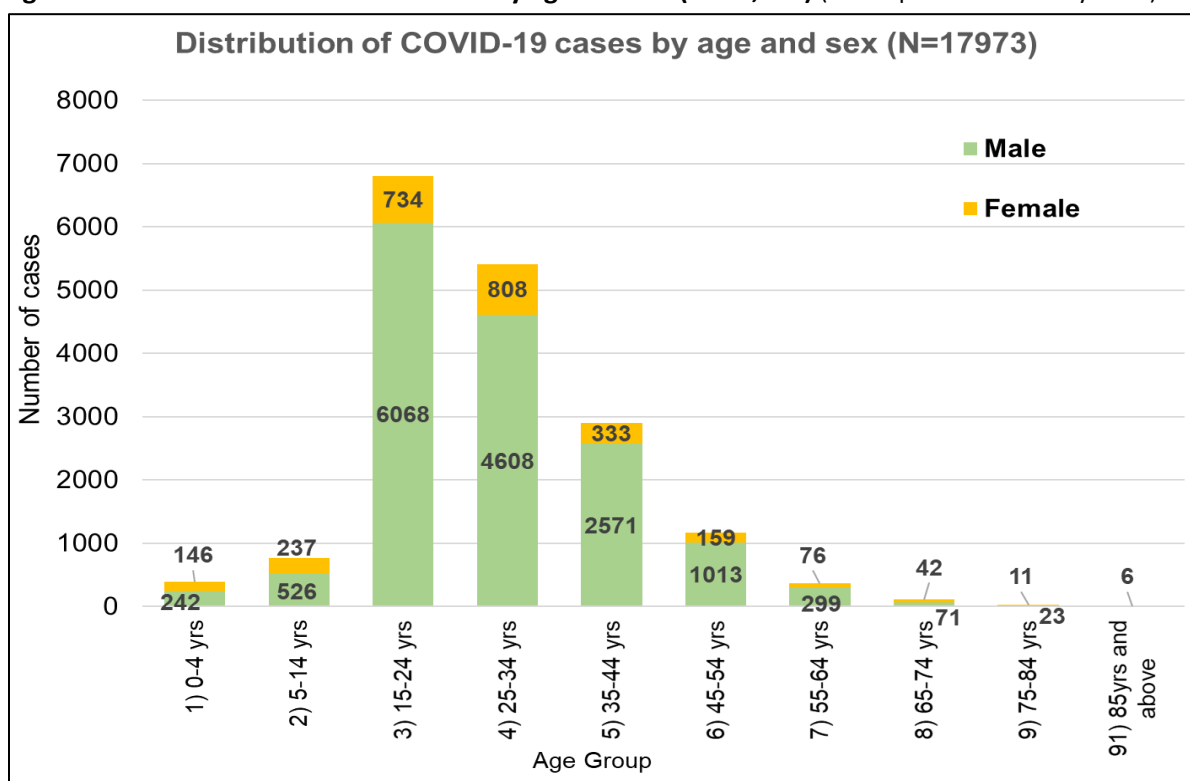
Cluster of cases- provinces experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures

Community transmission- experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to: - Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains

- Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance

- Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area

Figure 4: Distribution of COVID-19 cases by age and sex (N=17,992) (Data updated on 21 July 2020)



Details for 19 cases are yet to come

Table 2: Age Specific Case Fatality Ratio and Co-morbidity of Deaths* in COVID-19 confirmed cases. (N=17,992) (Data updated on 21 July 2020)

Age-specific case fatality ratio and comorbidity of deaths* in COVID-19 confirmed cases (N= 17992)					
Age Group	Total confirmed cases	Death (male)	Death (female)	Deaths with any known comorbid condition	Age specific case fatality ratio (%)
0-4 yrs	388	1	1	0	0.52
5-14 yrs	763	1	0	0	0.13
15-24 yrs	6802	1	0	1	0.01
25-34 yrs	5416	4	2	3	0.11
35-44 yrs	2904	6	1	3	0.24
45-54 yrs	1172	7	1	5	0.68
55-64 yrs	375	7	0	6	1.87
65-74 yrs	113	4	0	4	3.54
75-84 yrs	34	2	0	2	5.88
85+ yrs	6	1	0	0	16.67
Unknown	19	0	0	0	0
National	17992	34	5	24	0.22

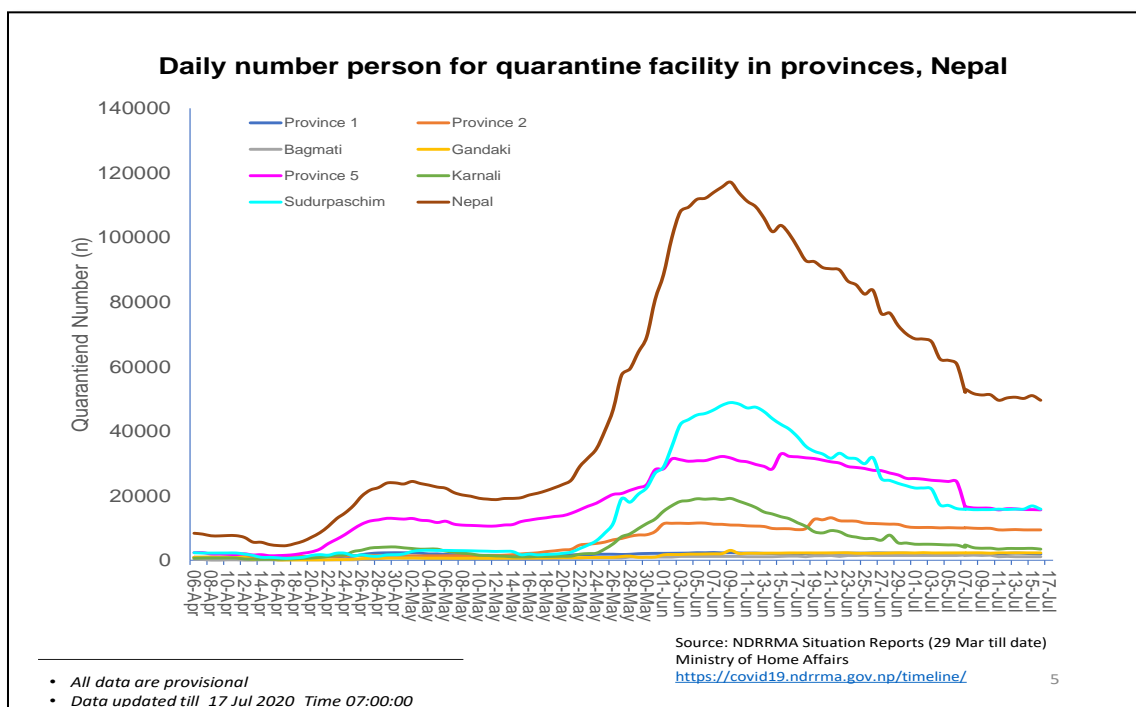
*COVID-19 positive lab result is temporally associated with death; causal association under investigation. * Source: <https://covid19.mohp.gov.np/#/>*

Table 3: Distribution symptomatic/asymptomatic COVID-19 cases at presentation (N=17,992)

(Data updated on 21 July 2020)

Age Group	Total confirmed cases	Asymptomatic	Symptomatic (n)	Symptomatic (%)
0-4 yrs	388	387	1	0.3
5-14 yrs	763	761	2	0.3
15-24 yrs	6802	6794	8	0.1
25-34 yrs	5416	5396	20	0.4
35-44 yrs	2904	2897	7	0.2
45-54 yrs	1172	1170	2	0.2
55-64 yrs	375	371	4	1.1
65-74 yrs	113	111	2	1.8
75-84 yrs	34	33	1	2.9
85+ yrs	6	5	1	16.7
Unknown	19	19	0	0.0
National	17992	17944	48	0.3

Figure 5: Quarantine Centre Occupancy (as of 17 July 2020)



PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

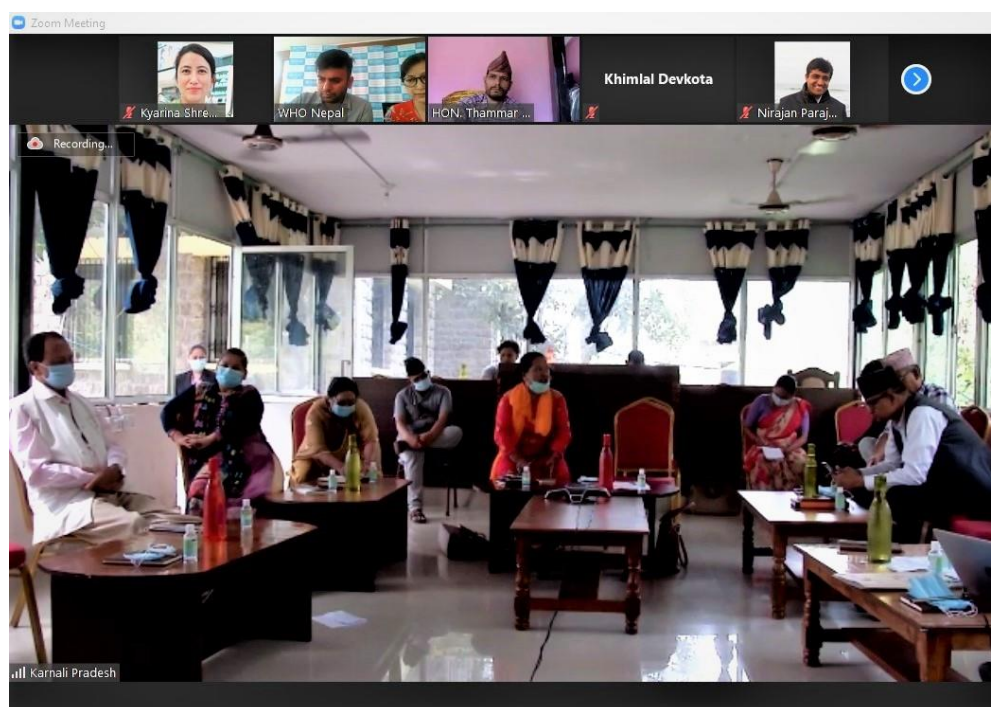
What are Government of Nepal (GoN) and MoHP doing?

- Government of Nepal (Cabinet) decided to completely lift the lockdown effective from 22 July 2020, however, the following socio-administrative and health measures will remain in force:
 - International travel and borders will remain closed till 16 August 2020.
 - Long route bus services and domestic and international passenger flights to resume from 17 August 2020 onwards as per the recent decision of Government.
 - All the PoEs will remain closed until further notice: Entries from border points except the designated ones will be closed until 16 August 2020. However, the 25 May 2020 directives of the Government of Nepal (GoN) on allowing cargos and arrival of Nepalese in need of urgent travels to the country will still be effective.
- Public health standard issued by MoHP are to be followed.
- Places or institutions with potential for high intensity transmission (schools, colleges, seminars, trainings, workshops, cinema hall, party palace, dance bar, swimming pool, religious places, etc.) will remain closed till next directive.
- Chief District Officers (CDOs) are the designated authorities to exercise power delegated by the Infectious Disease Act (issue final verdict on requests for deviations from the physical distancing and mitigation guidelines on transmission and also administer the penal provisions for those not complying with the guidelines).

What is WHO Country Office for Nepal doing?

- Technical support for the development of '**Dry Swab and direct PCR Protocol**'; method for validating the use of dry swab (*status-ongoing*); the validation is being performed at three different sites viz. NPHL, Narayani Hospital, Dhulikhel Hospital and Bharatpur Hospital. *Result interpretations and reports for validation are in process.*
- Support to NPHL in developing and finalizing '**Interim guidelines for SARS-CoV-2 PCR laboratories in the National Public Health Laboratory Network Nepal**'. The guideline is in the process of approval from MoHP.
- Technical support to NPHL in preparation and reviewing SOPs - for PCR kit verification, evaluation and verification of VTM and extraction kits and protocol on the preparation of positive and negative control panel for kit validation have been completed.
- Technical Support to NPHL, for National Quality Assessment (NQAS) of 16 designated laboratories for COVID-19 testing. All the participating laboratory results were satisfactory. *A virtual meeting was conducted with the participating laboratories for experience sharing on NQAS and result dissemination.*
- Technical support to NPHL in the evaluation of kits received from General Biological (GB) corporation. The GB kits are being evaluated and compared with the kits from other companies (Sansure and Molbio) in two different platforms (ABI and Rotorgene) - *Status: Ongoing.*
- WHO consultant along with NPHL staff visited HAMS hospital and Nepal Army Hospital for inspection and provided technical expertise for these two newly established COVID-19 molecular labs before getting permission to function.
- Xpert Xpress SARs-CoV-2: Key technical documents have been endorsed by National Tuberculosis Control Centre (NTCC) and NPHL.
- WHO has been developing a guidance on Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures for Aircrafts used in the MEDEVAC of COVID-19 cases from the subnational to the national level.

- UNDP published on their website a story about the interaction on the topic of COVID-19 between the parliamentarians of Karnali province and experts of WHO. This lively interaction was held on 13th July 2020. For more information, click [here](#)



Virtual Interaction of the Parliamentarians from Karnali Province with WHO-Nepal team on COVID-19 latest updates from WHO and myths and facts in UNDP's Parliament Support Project in synergy with WHO, 13 July 2020. Picture Courtesy- UNDP

- Upon the invitation of the Department of Community Medicine, Institute of Medicine, Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) WHO Consultant held a talk for the students of the MPH program on the importance of Risk and Crisis Communication in the COVID-19 response. The talk generated many questions and comments from the students and faculty.
- Participation from Nepal was strong at the webinars organised by the Risk Communication pillar at SEARO. The webinars were i) Achieving Impact: Monitoring and Evaluation of Risk Communication and Community Engagement for COVID-19 response on 15 July 2020; ii) Using data to support and sustain COVID-19 behavior change in Ireland on 17 July 2020.
- WHO Nepal contributed to addressing rumours, misinformation and concerns through the following stories and videos published in Nepal's leading health media outlets:
 - How to stay safe while traveling in public transports?: [Link](#)
 - How and where to wear masks?: [Link](#)
 - Does the COVID-19 virus found in sewage transmit to humans?: [Link](#)
 - How to stay safe in a religious place?: [Link](#)
- WHO has been collaborating with World Food Program (WFP) engineering team to design and develop Level 1 emergency health facility with 90 beds capacity, supporting MoHP in the national response to COVID-19 emergency response.

- WHO has been assisting the MoHP in the design of the draft layout of the Information Management Unit designated space in the HEOC, accommodating a total of 20 staff members, and following the social distancing guidelines for workplaces.
- Support has been provided to the development of the concept note regarding the cooperation with Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) at the POE's, Quarantine and Contact Tracing.
- Continued technical support for national forecasting, quantification and costing of COVID-19 logistics needs.

What the health cluster partners doing?

- National Health Cluster coordination team has been continuing with coordination with the MoHP, Provincial Health Directorates and health cluster partners; and the partners are supporting the MoHP in monsoon response in addition to COVID-19 response.
- WHO emergency teams which were deployed in the seven provinces continued providing support to the Provincial Government Health Directorates and COVID-19 hospitals to coordinate response.
- As the lockdown has been lifted, the partners are providing support to all levels of the government to implement the Public Health Standards and promote social distancing, use of masks, sanitization and hand hygiene to help contain COVID-19.
- A number of health cluster partners are also engaged in providing support for the continuity of essential services. Mental Health Sub-cluster meeting held on 15th July with participation of more than 40 individuals from various partner agencies engaged in MHPSS activities.

WHO's STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE- [link here](#)

RECOMMENDATION AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

- [Protect yourself](#)
- [Questions and answers](#)
- [Travel advice](#)
- [EPI-WIN](#): tailored information for individuals, organizations and communities

USEFUL LINKS

- MoHP's COVID-19 official portal is available [here](#).
- Nepal's COVID-19 regular updates and resources are available [here](#)
- For COVID-19 updates from WHO South East Asia Region Office, please visit [here](#).
- For information regarding coronavirus disease from WHO, please visit [here](#)
- Please visit this [site](#) for all technical guidance from WHO.
- Online courses on COVID-19 from WHO can be found [here](#)
- Global coronavirus disease situation dashboard can be found [here](#)
- Visit WHO Nepal [Facebook page](#) and webpage on COVID-19 [here](#)

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