

COVID-19 Weekly Situation Report

# of Countries Reporting	New Cases Reported in the Week	New Deaths Reported in the Week	Total Cases Reported	Total Deaths Reported
11 out of 11	299 275	2 446	14 190 021	214 918

# of Countries introduced COVID-19 vaccine	Total number of doses administered	# of person received first dose	# of persons fully vaccinated	First dose administered per 100 total Population
8 out of 11	69 398 091	58 206 965	11 191 126	3.4%

Highlights

- Between weeks 10 and 11, there has been an 8.7% increase of cases globally. All WHO regions except the Americas and the African region have reported increases in new cases during this period.
- South East Asia (SEAR) remains the third most affected WHO Region with 14.1 million cumulative cases, after the Americas region (n=53.9 million cases) and European Region (n=42.5 million cases). Between week 10 and 11, there is a 50.1% increase of new cases (n=299,275) in SEAR. All countries reporting cases in the region are reporting increase of new cases, except Myanmar.
- Over 69 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been given by eight countries in the SEA Region with more than 50 million in India alone; as of 24 March 2021.

Overview of situation (epidemiological week #10 for period between 08 - 14 March 2021)

- Bangladesh and Indonesia continue to report 'community transmission'; India, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Timor-Leste are reporting 'clusters of cases'. Bhutan is reporting 'sporadic cases' and DPR Korea continues to report 'no cases'
- India continues to report increasing cases for the fifth consecutive week. Between weeks 10 and 11, there is a 61.9% increase of new cases (n=240,082). Six states namely Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are reporting ~85% of new cases in the country.
- In Myanmar, the political situation since 1 February 2021 continues to hamper detection and testing which has seen a further decline between weeks 10 and 11. During epidemiological week 10, an average of 1,574 tests and 16 cases were reported daily, which further declined to 1,283 tests and 14 cases daily during week 11.
- Bangladesh reported a 90% increase of new cases between week 10 and 11. Sixty nine percent of the reported cases are from Dhaka Division (55% in Dhaka City). During week 11, Barishal, Khulan, Mymensingh, Sylhet, and Rajshahi divisions reported more than 100% increase of new cases compared to week 10. The Test Positivity Rate (TPR) has increased during this period and is currently at 8.7%.
- Maldives reported a 21% increase of new cases between week 10 and 11. Majority of new cases continue to be reported in Greater Male Region.
- In Thailand; there is an increase in number of new cases for the second consecutive week after 6 weeks of continuous decline. Between week 10 and 11 there is a 57.3% increase in new cases. Most of the new cases (locally acquired) reported in Thailand are detected in Samut Sakhon province followed by Bangkok province.
- Timor-Leste continues to report increasing number of cases for the third consecutive week. Between week 10 and 11 there is a 75.7% increase of new cases (n=132). Most new cases are detected through contact tracing and mass testing. Clusters of cases are reported in Dili, Baucau, Viqueque and Lautem municipality.
- After four weeks of decline of new cases, there is a marginal increase (3.7%, n=2,293 cases) of new cases in Sri Lanka between week 10 and 11. Most number of cases continue to be reported from Western Province, Kandy, Ratnapura, Kurunegala, Kegalle, Matara, Puttalam, Kalmunai, Badulla, Nuwara Eliya, Matale and Galle.

- Indonesia reports a 2.4% increase in number of new cases (n=40,729) between week 10 and 11 after 4 weeks of decline since week 7. The provinces of West Nusa Tenggara, Jambi, Southeast Sulawesi, Bangka Belitung Islands and Central Kalimantan reported an increase in the number of new cases in week 11.
- WHO SEARO, in collaboration with WHO Country offices continues to monitor the detection and reporting of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (Table 1)

Table1: SARS CoV2 Variants of Concern (VOC) reported in SEAR as of 23 March 2021

SARS CoV2- Variants of Concern	Number of countries reporting in SEAR	Countries
VOC 202012/01 (UK Variant)	6	Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand
501Y.V2 (South African variant)	3	India, Sri Lanka and Thailand
P.1 (Brazil Variant)	1	India

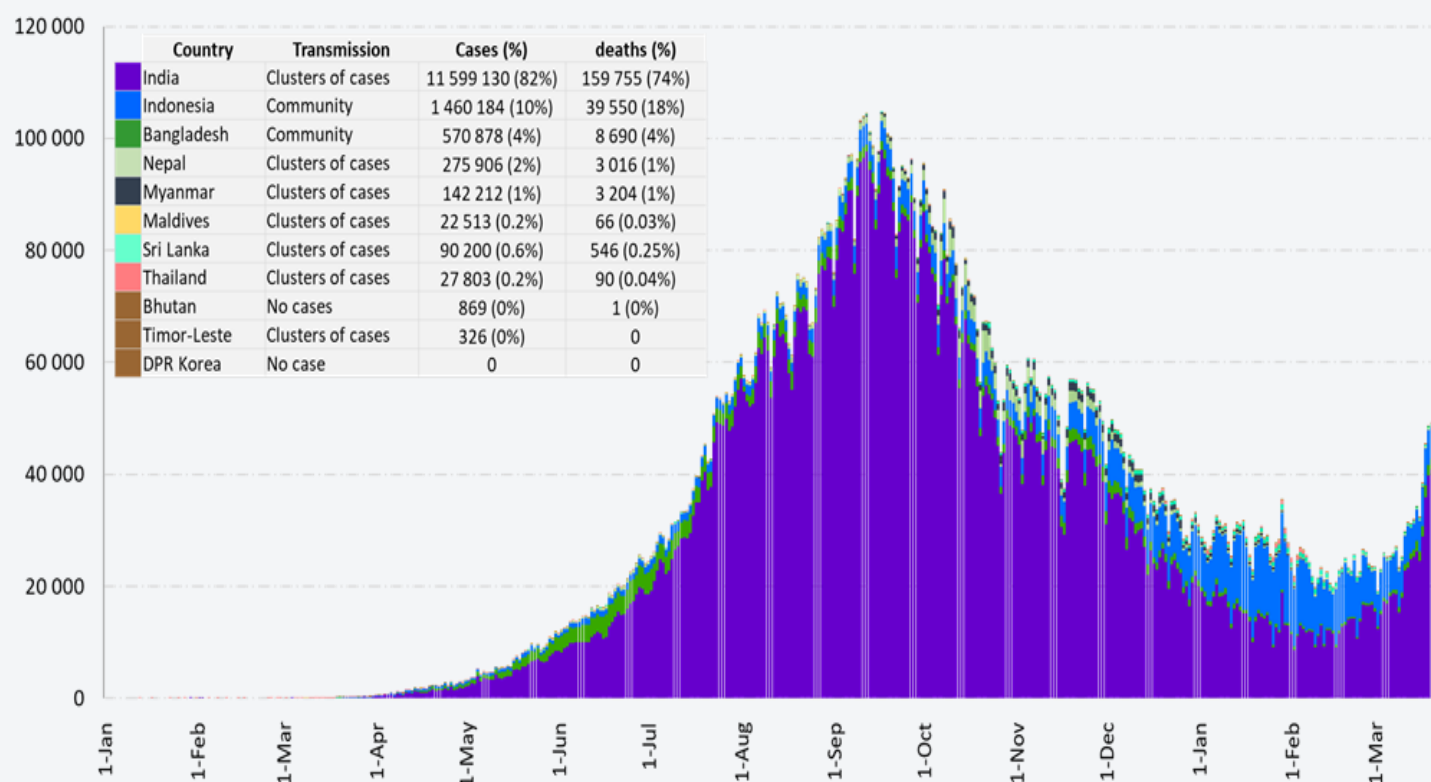
Summary of published Seroprevalence studies in SEAR:

So far, 2 countries in the SEAR, have published seroprevalence studies including India (n=38) and Thailand(n=1). Other countries in the region (e.g., Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal) have conducted seroprevalence studies, results are still awaited.

As per available information at SEARO, studies started as early as April 2020 and were conducted as recent as December 2020 (as per published studies). Targeted populations of these studies ranged from hospital settings, slums, city, district, states to Nationwide while the sample size ranges from 244 health care workers to around 29,000 samples from households at the community level.














SARS CoV2-related seroprevalence data in the SEAR are compiled from online sources into a list that can be accessed at “published seroprevalence studies”¹ Please note that this is ongoing work, and the list is non-exhaustive.

Figure 1: Reported COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in SEAR from 1 January 2020 to 21 March 2021



¹ [sars-cov2-seroprevalence-data-in-sear-feb-12.pdf \(who.int\)](#).

Table 2: Regional COVID-19 Situation (as of 21 March 2021)

Country		Total cases	Total cases per 1 million pop	Total deaths	CFR	New cases (last 7 days)	% change in new cases*	TPR (last 7 DMA)
India		11 599 130	8 405	159 755	1.4	240 082	61.9	3.2
Indonesia		1 460 184	5 338	39 550	2.7	40 729	2.4	14.0
Bangladesh		570 878	3 466	8 690	1.5	13 483	90.8	8.7
Nepal		275 906	9 469	3 016	1.1	675	32.4	3.2
Myanmar		142 212	2 614	3 204	2.3	65	-42.5	1.1
Sri Lanka		90 200	4 212	546	0.6	2 293	3.7	3.1
Maldives		22 513	41 649	66	0.3	941	21.0	3.0
Thailand		27 803	398	90	0.3	876	57.3	1.8
Bhutan		869	1 126	1	0.1	1		0.0
Timor-Leste		326	247		0.0	130	75.7	4.7
DPR Korea		0						
SEAR total		14 190 021	7 020	214 918	-	299 275	50.1	-

*Percent change in the number of newly confirmed cases/deaths in past seven days, compared to seven days prior.

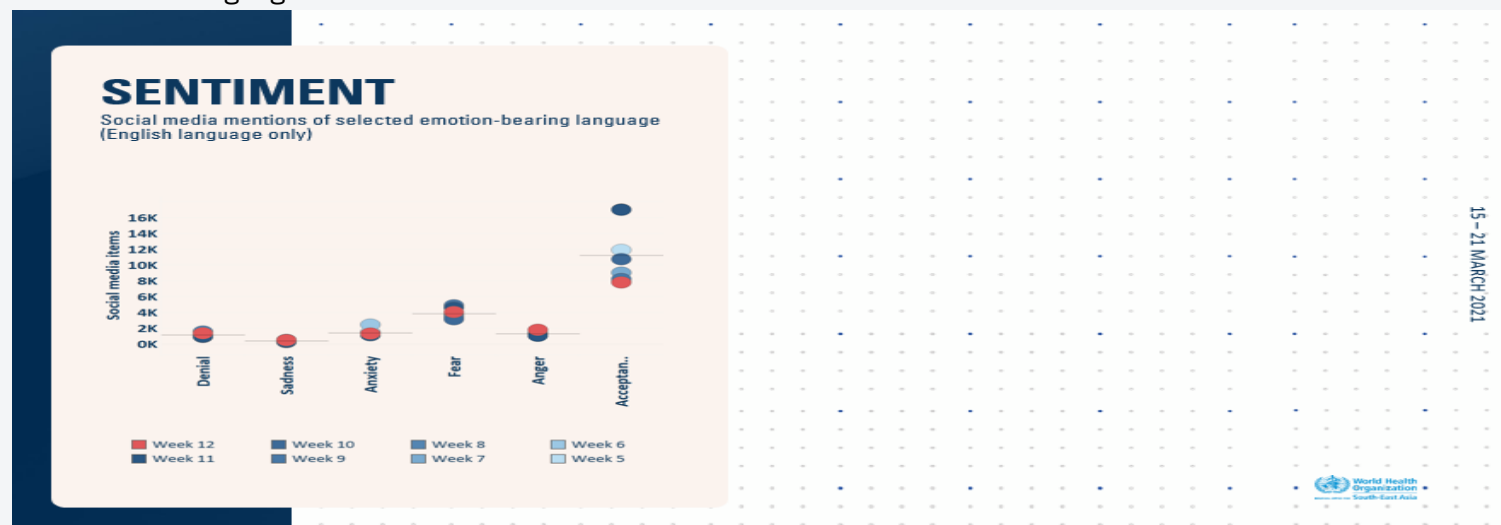
CFR=Case Fatality Rate; DMA= Day Moving Average; TPR=Test Positivity Rate

“WHO detailed [surveillance dashboard](#) is live now and available for public access. The dashboard is based on the data officially submitted by the Member States onto the WHO’s global surveillance of COVID-19 electronic reporting platform”

Key operational updates

Risk communication and community engagement:

- The weekly SEARO Infodemic Intelligence report for COVID-19 reveals conversations on fatigue regarding public health measures such as lockdown, implications for employment and about frustration that people are not following measures to protect themselves. Vaccines also continue to be of interest, with questions such as impact of vaccines if people have co-morbidities, and what people can do after being vaccinated. As cases increase, sentiment analysis reveals a sharp drop in conversations with language of acceptance, and an increase in the language of fear.



Clinical management:

- Weekly Training of Trainers workshop for clinicians on SARI case management in district settings with non-ICU settings continued during the week of reporting.
- Clinical management guidance was provided to WCO Indonesia

Operation support and logistics:

- As part of horizontal collaboration between WHO Country Offices (WCOs), coordinated between WCO Timor-Leste and Maldives to facilitate for additional 10,000 PCR tests kits to Timor-Leste from WCO Maldives stockpiles of 350,000 tests that WCO Maldives received in kind donation from global stockpiles with SEARO's facilitation. 10,000 kits from Maldives via Sri Lanka reached Timor-Leste on 17 March 2021.
- Based on the PPE requirement received from WCOs, PPE distribution plan is being developed from the strategic regional stockpiling of PPEs.

Bangladesh:

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has asked the Directorate General of Health Services to get the five hospitals operationally ready for any possible influx of patients. These five hospitals are: Lalkuthi Hospital in Mirpur, Dhaka Metropolitan General Hospital, Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, COVID Isolation Centre in Mohakhali and Government Employee Hospital. These hospitals were earlier declared dedicated to COVID-19 patients, later stopped the services after improvement in the COVID-19 situation and now asked to restore the services in the wake of recent resurgence in COVID-19 cases.

Bhutan:

- Bhutan has received its second consignment of 400 000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine from India on 22 March 2021 (first consignment of 150 000 doses received in January 2021); thus with 550 000 doses of Covishield, nationwide immunization campaign will be starting from 27 March 2021 onwards.
- Ministry of Health has identified 1 001 vaccination sites spread across 20 districts of the country; which include over 350 Early Childhood care and Development Centres (ECCD) and some identified schools. Except for the identified schools, remaining schools, institutions and offices will remain open as usual.
- People residing in cohorts such as monks, students and trainees in colleges and institutes will receive the vaccine after seven-day immunization campaign. Home-based vaccination will be arranged after the seven-day campaign for people who cannot walk.

DPR Korea:

- No cases of COVID-19 were reported as of 18 March 2021.
- Cumulatively 21,663 persons have been tested with rt-PCR at an interval of 10 days (total samples: 43,052) and all were found negative for COVID-19. This includes 753 persons who were tested during the week of 12-18 March 2021, of which 131 were people with Influenza-like illness and/or severe acute respiratory infections.

India:

- India has crossed a significant milestone in the fight against the global pandemic as cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has reached above 50 million.
- National Technical Advisory group for vaccination reviewed the available scientific evidences on immunological safety and outcome of different dosing interval of Covishield vaccine and subsequently the National expert group on Vaccine Administration for covid-19 (NEGVAC) during its 20th meeting recommended to provide a second dose of Covishield at 4-8 weeks 'interval after the first dose; instead of earlier practiced interval of 4-6 weeks.
- Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG) have been engaged in genome sequencing and analysis since its establishment in December 2020. Genome sequencing have been carried out on samples from arriving international travellers, contacts of those positive for Variants of Concerns (VOC) and community samples from most of the States at INSACOG partnering 10 laboratories. As per the analysed data released by the INSACOG, 771 VOCs have been detected in a total of 10 787 positive samples shared by the States/UTs. These include 736 samples positive for viruses of UK (B.1.1.7) lineage, 34 samples positive for the South Africa (B.1.351) lineage and 1 sample positive for the Brazilian (P.1) lineage. Three samples with these VOCs have been identified in 18 states of the country.

Indonesia:

- Indonesia has secured over 426 million doses of vaccines in total, including from Pfizer, BioNTech, Novavax, AstraZeneca and Sinovac. The distribution of vaccines in six provinces has started for rolling out the vaccination against COVID-19.
- Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy stated on 15 March 2021 that around 2 million Bali residents will be vaccinated against COVID-19 by July 2021 to protect the citizens and to reopen the province for tourism.
- On 19 March 2021, WHO supported the National Institute of Health Research and Development (NIHRD) to conduct a virtual training on the surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 genetic sequences, attended by around 80 participants from the genomic surveillance lab network in Indonesia.

Maldives:

- Health Emergency Operations Centre (HEOC), on 20 March 2021, informed that the government plans to purchase 300 000 doses of the COVISHIELD vaccine from the Serum Institute of India
- Maldives had received a total of 18,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine as donation; of which 15,000 were in single dose pre-filled syringes and 3,000 were in single dose vials. Vaccine Operations Committee decided to use the pre-filled syringes of Sinopharm in Greater Male' and single dose vials to vaccinate the frontline staff of Resorts. Vaccination with Sinopharm vaccine was started on 22nd March 2021. On the first day, 1562 people received SINOPHARM vaccines in Greater Male'.
- Health protection Agency announced that a new amendment was done to the existing guidelines on public health and social measures that allows cafes and restaurants to remain open until 22:30 hrs.

Myanmar:

- In the current political situation, the reported testing capacity of COVID-19 in Myanmar has been reduced. There is only limited information available on health service delivery and COVID-19 vaccination activities.

Nepal:

- Epidemiology and Disease Control Division/MOPH, has strengthened screening of arrivals at ground-crossings for any symptoms for COVID-19 and quarantining any suspected case. Eight districts in the Province 2 that shares a border with India have been put on high alert on assumption of likely increased returning migrants in the upcoming Holi festival.

Sri Lanka:

- Intra-Action review of the COVID-19 response has been completed within units of the MOH and further review in consultation with the stakeholders is being planned.
- Meeting of the Results Group for Health among UN agencies for partnership formation and identification of potential collaboration took place first time on 18 March 2021.
- All schools including grades 5, 11 and 13 in the Western province has reopened since 15 March 2021.

Thailand:

- Bang Khae Market, a large market complex, which houses six markets selling everything from fresh vegetables to raw meats and cooked food, was closed down from 16-18 March after cleaning and disinfection on 15 March 2021; owing to its emergence as a new cluster of COVID-19 cases.
- A total of 800 000 doses of the Sinovac vaccine for the first phase arrived in Thailand on 20 March and will be distributed in 19 provinces; including 300 000 doses to boost the economy at key tourist destinations.
- Cross-border cooperation between Thailand and Cambodian authorities are ongoing for prevention and control of COVID-19 transmission with sharing of data and vital intelligence on COVID-19 confirmed cases and; targeted and strong public health measures.

Timor-Leste

- MOH, with the technical and financial support from WHO and other partners; continues to conduct social mobilization and advocacy sessions at the municipality levels.

Web-based immunization vaccine tracker in Sri Lanka

The Government of Sri Lanka has committed to vaccinating all eligible people 30 years old and above; against SARS-CoV-2, aiming to achieve 50% population coverage in 2021. Accordingly, a presidential task force identified the establishment of a robust supply chain information system on stock management and an immunization information system that facilitates monitoring and reporting of vaccine utilization as priority tasks. The Ministry of Health (MoH) requested WHO's technical support in developing a COVID-19 immunization tracker (CIT) for Sri Lanka to fulfill this requirement.

The CIT was developed by the WHO country office technical team in partnership with the Health Information System Program and the core District Health Information Software (DHIS 2) developer community from the University of Oslo, Norway. The tracker is based on the free and open-source DHIS 2 platform, and the generic tracker can be contextualized based on country needs.

The tracker has the following generic features:

1. Records individual data of vaccine recipients, vaccination events (first and subsequent doses), and adverse events following immunization;
2. Monitors vaccine stock;
3. Generates dashboards with disaggregated information (age, gender, co-morbidities, etc.);
4. Produces a vaccination record and digital vaccination certificate for individuals;
5. Sends messages to people who have registered or received the vaccine and
6. Allows for data entry using a computer, tablet, or phone.

It has been further adapted based on country-specific requests, including:

1. Pre-registration with the Sri Lanka election database. Currently, all eligible adults in Sri Lanka (16 million persons) are registered in the CIT; and
2. Optimization to facilitate record retrieval in less than two seconds.
















































A comprehensive end-user package was developed, including a one-page guide for data entry, standard operating procedures, vaccination system monitoring solutions, and short data entry training videos.

The CIT is hosted by the Sri Lanka Government Cloud under the MoH and administered by the Director of Health Information. Several MoH departments and Government counterparts have monitoring dashboards.

The tracker is being used by the MoH, private sector hospitals, and the tri-forces at all vaccination centers covering all provinces and districts. Approximately 500 user credentials have been created, and both in-person and online training sessions have been conducted.

Embodying the COVID-19 mantra of *Together We Can*, we have provided the generic tracker and supported Timor-Leste in modifying the CIT to their specifications and scaling up the program. This horizontal collaboration has promoted two-way learning and capacity building by sharing resources, knowledge, and technology.

Update on the Public Health and Social Measures (16-23 March 2021)

Member State	Stay at Home	Public transport (Inter province movement)	School measures	Public gathering	Mask use
Bangladesh	None 	Resumed 		 Ban	Mandatory
Bhutan	None 	Resumed 		 Ban >25	Mandatory
DPR Korea	None 	Restricted*  (Capital to provinces and inter-province movement restricted)		 Ban > 5	Mandatory
India	Partial  (Movement restricted in containment zones; restrictions including night curfews in some areas)	Resumed*  (Operational hours limited in areas under curfew)	 (Schools reopened for some /all grades in most areas)	 Allowed (Gatherings banned in some states)	Mandatory
Indonesia	Partial  (Implementation of micro-level restrictions on community activities (neighbourhood/ward) in Java and Bali)	Restricted* 	 (Vary across provinces)	 (Vary across provinces)	Mandatory
Maldives (Emergency extended until 04 April 2021)	Partial  (Curfew from 2300 to 0430 hrs. at Greater Male' Region)	Restricted*  (Vehicle movement banned between 2030 to 0430 hrs.)	 (Pre-school and day care centres closed)	 Ban > 10	Mandatory
Myanmar	Partial  (Curfew imposed from 0200 to 0400 hrs.)	Restricted* 		 Ban > 50	Mandatory
Nepal	None 	Resumed 		 Allowed	Mandatory
Sri Lanka	None 	Resumed 	 (Schools reopened across the country except in western province)	 Ban > 10	Mandatory
Thailand (Emergency extended until 31 May 2021)	None 	Resumed 		 Allowed	Mandatory
Timor-Leste (Emergency extended until 2 April 2021)	Partial  (Stay-at-home orders at Dili)	Resumed* 	 (Closed at Dili)	 Ban	Mandatory
* Public transport allowed with limited capacity, limited timings and/or limited routes – variations at Sub National level					
Red icons	Complete restriction (applied to all or most areas or populations nationwide)			Bus, taxi/ private vehicle, Train	
Yellow icons	Partial restrictions (targeted to some areas or populations)			Waterways- boat	
Green icons	No restrictions			Airways	

Update on Pandemic Vaccine Deployment

- Following the Emergency Use Listing (EUL) of the Janssen Ad26.COV2.S (COVID-19) vaccine, the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization (SAGE) published Interim recommendations for the use of the Janssen Ad26.COV2.S (COVID-19) vaccine.
- The Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS) COVID-19 subcommittee on vaccine safety signals related to the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine noted that: The AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine (including Covishield) continues to have a positive benefit-risk profile, with tremendous potential to prevent infections and reduce deaths across the world.²
- It recommended that adequate education should be provided to health-care professionals and persons being vaccinated to recognize the signs and symptoms of all serious adverse events after vaccinations with all COVID-19 vaccines, so that people may seek and receive prompt and relevant medical care and treatment.
- The GACVS subcommittee further recommended that countries continue to monitor the safety of all COVID-19 vaccines and promote reporting of suspected adverse events
- Support from UNICEF Supply and Logistics workstream to follow-up Cold Chain Equipment (CCE) application from SEA Region countries. Seven SEAR countries have applied for CCE, decision made for Bangladesh India and Nepal; prereview completed for Bhutan and Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste, and ongoing for Indonesia and Maldives.
- Ongoing support provided by partners to countries for next steps to receive the allocated vaccine or implement National Deployment and Vaccination Plans (NDVP), and addressing other gaps identified during the regional review NDVPs. This includes support to country pharmacovigilance teams and safety surveillance for COVID-19 vaccine and developing demand generation and community engagement plan for the COVID-19 vaccine and risk communication plans.
- Emergency use authorizations granted by Maldives to SINOPHARM vaccine on 17 March 2021 and by Nepal to COVAXIN on 19 March 2021
- Ongoing collection, compilation and analysis of weekly COVID-19 vaccination data and development of regional AEFI data collection template
- The following table is a summary of vaccination status in the countries that are offering COVID-19 vaccines in the region as of 24 March 2021:

Country	Start date	Vaccine name	Last update	Total doses administered	Persons vaccinated with one dose	Persons vaccinated with two doses	First dose administered per 100 total population (of countries vaccinating)*	Source
Bangladesh	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	23-Mar-21	4,990,232	4,990,232		2.9%	As per GOVT. Report
India	16-Jan-21	COVISHIELD/COVAXIN	24-Mar-21	52,197,380	43,947,270	8,250,110	3.7%	https://pib.gov.in/PressRelease
Indonesia	13-Jan-21	CORONAVAC/AZ-SKBIO	24-Mar-21	9,330,853	6,389,837	2,941,016	3.4%	https://www.kemkes.go.id/
Maldives	01 Feb 21	COVISHIELD/SINOPHARM	24-Mar-21	224,979	224,979		40.4%	HPA COVID 19 update group
Myanmar	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	4-Feb-21	105,490	105,490		0.2%	WHO Country Office
Nepal	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	16-Mar-21	1,634,903	1,634,903		5.4%	FWD. MoHP Nepal
Sri Lanka	29-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	23-Mar-21	844,327	844,327		3.8%	Epidemiology unit, MoH
Thailand	28-Feb-21	CORONAVAC/AZ-SKBIO	20-Mar-21	69,927	69,927		0.1%	WHO Country Office
TOTAL				69,398,091	58,206,965	11,191,126	3.4%	

*measure of a comparable vaccine reach

² [https://www.who.int/news/item/19-03-2021-statement-of-the-who-global-advisory-committee-on-vaccine-safety-\(gacvs\)-covid-19-subcommittee-on-safety-signals-related-to-the-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine](https://www.who.int/news/item/19-03-2021-statement-of-the-who-global-advisory-committee-on-vaccine-safety-(gacvs)-covid-19-subcommittee-on-safety-signals-related-to-the-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine)

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Website: <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/outbreaks-and-emergencies/covid-19>

WHO SEARO Situation Reports: <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/outbreaks-and-emergencies/novel-coronavirus-2019/sear-weekly-situation-reports>