

COVID-19 Weekly Situation Report

# of Countries Reporting Cases	New Cases Reported in the Week	New Deaths Reported in the Week	Total Cases Reported	Total Deaths Reported
10 out of 11	199 351	2 126	13 890 746	212 472

# of Countries introduced COVID-19 vaccine	Total number of doses administered	# of person received first dose	# of persons fully vaccinated	First COVID-19 dose per 100 population
8 out of 11	48 397 664	40 512 043	7 885 621	02

Highlights

- Globally, across all WHO Regions, there has been a 10.4% increase of new cases between epidemiological weeks 9 and 10 with all the Regions reporting an increase
- South-East Asia Region (SEAR) remains the third most affected WHO Region (n=13.8 million cases), after the Americas Region (n=52.7 million cases) and European Region (n=41 million cases). Between week 9 and 10, there has been a 18.8% increase of new cases reported in SEAR, with India, Bangladesh, Thailand and Timor-Leste reporting the increase of new cases
- More than 48 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been given by eight countries in the SEA Region
- Support has been provided to further strengthen country pharmacovigilance and safety surveillance of COVID-19 vaccines, developing demand generation and community engagement plan for the COVID-19 vaccine and risk communication strategy
- WHO SEAR launched redesigned [COVID-19 webpage](#), one-stop site to access verified information, current updates, how to stay safe, frequently asked questions and much more

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'
- In Myanmar, the political situation since 1 February 2021 continues to hamper detection and testing which has seen a further decline between week 9 and 10. During epidemiological week 9, an average of 1 637 tests and 19 cases were reported daily, which further declined to 1 574 tests and 16 cases during week 10
- India continues to report increasing numbers of new cases for the fourth consecutive week. Between week 9 and 10, there has been 30% increase (n=148 249) of new cases. Five States - Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu collectively account for 71% of new cases reported during the week; Maharashtra alone accounted for ~60% of cases. Other states including Delhi, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh continue to report surge of new cases in the past week
- Bangladesh is reporting an increasing trend of new cases since week 6. Between weeks 9 and 10, there was a 71.7% increase of new cases (n=7 065). The Test Positivity rate (TPR) at the national level shows an increase compared to week 9. Dhaka division accounts for 69% of reported cases, followed by Chattogram division (20%)
- Maldives has been reporting a decline of new cases since week 8. Between week 9 and 10, there was a 22.3% decrease of new cases. Majority of new cases continue to be reported in Greater Male Region

- In Thailand, after 6 consecutive weeks of decline of new cases, there has been a reversal of trend with 32.9% increase of new cases reported between weeks 9 and 10. The increase of new cases during past week is largely attributed to active case finding in the Bang Khae market, Bangkok
- Indonesia continues to show a declining trend since week 7. Between weeks 9 and 10, there is a 11.6% decrease of new cases. National test positivity rate continues to decline further, but still high at 13.2%.
- Sri Lanka continues on a declining trend for the fourth consecutive week with a 9.8% decrease of new cases between weeks 9 and 10. Most of the cases continue to be reported from Western Province. Districts of Galle and Kegalle are showing a significant increase of new cases during the past week
- Timor-Leste shows an increasing trend of new cases since 28 February, 2021. Between weeks 9 and 10 there has been a 722% increase of new cases (n=74). Two cluster of cases reported in Baucau and Viqueque municipality which are linked to cases in the capital Dili
- 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 16 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

- WHO detailed [surveillance dashboard](#) is live now and available for public access. The dashboard is based on data officially reported to WHO via Case Report Forms (CRF), daily case/death counts by WHO Country Offices and Regional Offices, weekly aggregate reporting and Our World in Data

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) have conducted seroprevalence studies, results are still awaited.

As per available information at SEARO, studies had 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”. 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 14 March 2021

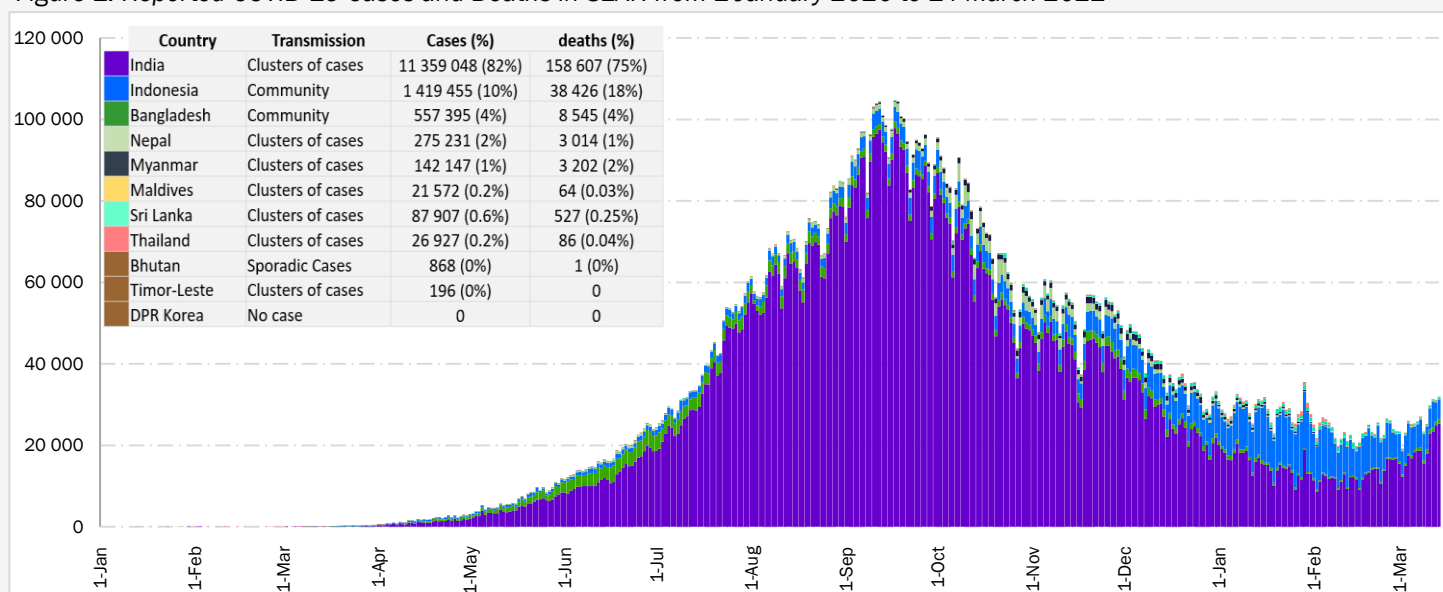


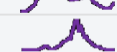



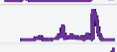


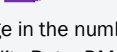
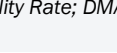



Table 2: Regional COVID-19 Situation (14 March 2021)

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		11 359 048	8 231	158 607	1.4	148 249	30.0	2.7
Indonesia		1 419 455	5 190	38 426	2.7	39 793	-11.6	13.2
Bangladesh		557 395	3 385	8 545	1.5	7 065	71.7	5.2
Nepal		275 231	9 446	3 014	1.1	510	-11.8	2.2
Myanmar		142 147	2 613	3 202	2.3	113	-18.1	0.9
Sri Lanka		87 907	4 105	527	0.6	2 212	-9.8	3.1
Maldives		21 572	39 908	64	0.3	778	-22.3	3.4
Thailand		26 927	386	86	0.3	557	32.9	1.8
Bhutan		868	1 125	1	0.1			0.0
Timor-Leste		196	149		0.0	74	722.2	4.2
DPR Korea		0						
SEAR total		13 890 746	6 872	212 472	-	199 351	18.8	-

*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

Key Operational / Country Updates

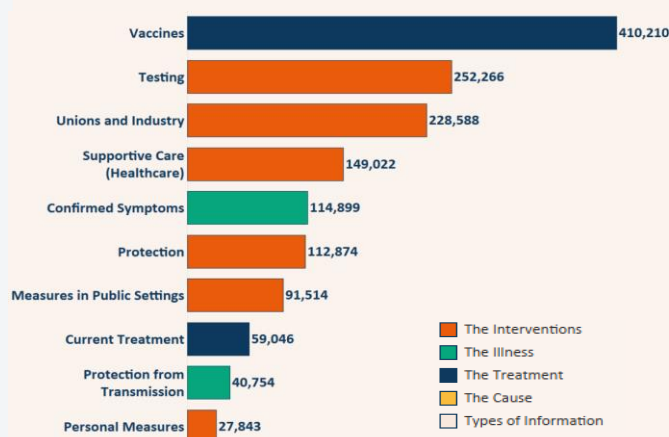
Key operational updates

Risk communication and community engagement:

- The weekly infodemic intelligence reports revealed that most of public concerns were around vaccines and asymptomatic transmission. Vaccine safety was particularly an area of concern expressed by people in digital media conversations after some countries temporarily suspended use of the Astra-Zeneca vaccine as a precautionary measure based on reports of a rare blood coagulation disorder among some people who received the vaccine. However, a large number of people also emphasized the overall benefits of vaccinating on digital media

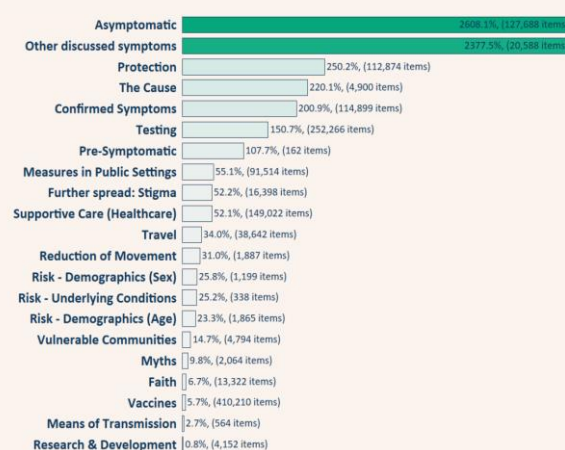
Top 10 topics by volume

Social media mentions of selected categories per taxonomy



Top rising topics

Based on % change of conversation volume from the



8 - 14 MARCH 2021

Operation support and logistics:

- WHO SEARO in collaboration with GOARN and partners conducted a webinar workshop on waste management of health commodities including vaccines being used for pandemic response. Participants from Ministries of Health, WHO Country Offices, and supply chain professionals from partner agencies attended the webinar. The webinar [recording](#) and [resource materials](#) can be accessed via the link in the text
- WHO SEARO facilitated and coordinated horizontal collaborations between WCOs Maldives and Timor Leste to provide support to urgent requests from Timor Leste for 10 000 PCR tests kits

Cumulative list of COVID-19 essential supplies provided to SEAR countries, as of 18 March 2021					
Personal Protective Equipment		Laboratory		Bio-medical	
Mask 3 plies	6 940 500	Swab	2 142 050	Pulse Oximeter	250
Glove exam	2 125 500	Tests (Manual PCR)	2 408 970	Nasal Oxygen canula	2 440
Respirator	604 495	Extractions	1 857 166	Venturi Mask	1 710
Gown	555 300	RDT COVID-19 antigen test	440 000	Oxygen Mask	1 000
Face shield	371 836	Reactions	6 000	Oxygen concentrator	769
Goggles	86 510			Thermo-meter infrared	110
Apron disposable	39 500			Monitor	106
Bag biohazard	30 000			Ventilator	13

Key country updates

Bangladesh:

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) directed the districts on fines as penalties for violating the COVID-19 regulations as Bangladesh witnessed sharp increase in number of cases last week
- The government is planning to engage non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in efforts to reach out to and vaccinate disadvantaged populations for COVID-19

Bhutan:

- The Prime Minister announced COVID-19 vaccination roll-out from 27 March 2021
- Bhutan will receive its second consignment of 400 000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine from India on 22 March 2021
- Virtual training on basic bioinformatics was conducted for laboratory officials at Royal Center for Disease Control by Thermo Fisher scientific company from 17-18 March 2021. WHO provided a genome sequence machine and training as a part of the package
- Cascade training for health care workers on COVID-19 vaccination management supported by WHO has been completed in most of the districts

DPR Korea:

- No reported cases of COVID-19 as of 11 March 2021
- Surveillance is ongoing, samples are being tested for COVID-19 in 15 laboratories including 13 sub-national laboratories

India:

- The Union Health Secretary urged States to reduce vaccine wastage and optimally use vaccines. Overall 6.5% vaccine wastage has been reported in India
- Covaxin developed by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in partnership with Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL) has been given permission for restricted use in emergency situation
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) launched a de-stigmatization campaign to address stigma associated with COVID-19 and resulting discrimination faced by patients as well as healthcare workers involved in COVID-19 related activities
- India recorded highest vaccinations in a single day with over 3 million doses administered on 15 March 2021

Indonesia:

- The Government started the third stage of the national vaccination campaign with the provision of COVID-19 vaccines to persons with disabilities on 11 March 2021
- The National COVID-19 Task Force announced the extension of the implementation of micro-scale restrictions on community activities from 9 to 22 March 2021
- WHO handed over 1 000 000 antigen-detecting rapid diagnostic tests (Ag-RDTs) to the Ministry of Health to support COVID-19 testing in the country

Maldives:

- The Maldives Food and Drug Authority (MFDA) has announced emergency use approvals for two COVID-19 vaccines - Sinopharm and Pfizer-BioNTech to boost the vaccination coverage across the country. Maldives has received 18 000 doses out of 200 000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine from China
- Guidelines for vaccination during Ramadan is being developed by the Ministry of Health along with planning the campaign for the second dose
- The Government has initiated vaccination for undocumented migrant workers in Maldives free of cost on registering with Maldives Red Crescent (MRC). Over 440 undocumented workers had received the vaccine as of 16 March 2021

Myanmar:

- Most of the immunization activities are on hold due to ongoing situation in Myanmar. As indicated by Gavi, Myanmar may not receive the initial allocation (4.24 million doses) of COVID-19 vaccines from COVAX
- The Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) physicians and medical teams administered COVID-19 vaccines to relevant staff and religious staff above 65 years of age

Nepal:

- Department of Drug Administration (DDA) has issued a public notice on 14 March 2021 requesting producers/imports/authorized distributors to apply for registration of the vaccine(s) and/or import license of the vaccines following the terms and conditions set out by the cabinet and amended drug act
- WHO is supporting the Health care waste Management (HCWM) technical working group (TWG) to prepare a three year HCWM intervention action plan at the national level including safe management of COVID-19 vaccination waste care

Sri Lanka:

- Ministry of Health (MoH) released revised screening and testing strategy for COVID-19 in workplaces for employees on 14 March 2021
- MoH is revising the facility-based quarantine guidelines in the country
- Sri Lanka started administration of vaccines received from the COVAX facility from 12 March 2021. The persons more than 60 years of age have been identified as the priority group for the vaccination under the current campaign and it has been planned to cover the Western province first
- University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP) sequenced 93 SARS-CoV2 viruses collected during the last month

Thailand:

- Private entities who intend to import COVID-19 vaccines need an import license and are required to apply for registration of such vaccines with the Thai FDA. To date, no private hospitals have submitted a request to the Thai FDA
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had discussed preparations for the re-opening of the tourism industry, which is expected to begin on 1 October 2021

Timor-Leste

- The Government extended sanitary health fence and confinement to contain any further transmission of COVID-19 in Dili until 2 April 2021 and in Baucau and Viqueque municipalities until 29 March 2021 following the recent surge in cases
- The National Health Laboratory (NHL) collect samples through mass screenings in the affected municipalities
- Ministry of Health (MoH) in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF conducted three-day training of trainers (ToT) for COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Around 65 participants were trained on different steps of the vaccination programme

Strengthening operational partnerships for stronger Pandemic response in the South-East Asia Region

Time and again it has been proven that any emergency, leave alone a pandemic, requires close collaboration among relevant partners, at all levels, from policy level to tactical. The unprecedented scale of the COVID-19 pandemic was no exception, and thus required everyone to come together in solidarity for efficient and effective response. Though at times challenging, lack of coordination and collaboration among responders, can have much negative effects, with many omissions, duplications and even lack of clear direction.

In appreciation of the strength of partnerships, World Health Organization (WHO) has been working diligently, at all levels, on building operational partnerships. With the onset of the pandemic WHO has been collaborating closely with partners at global, regional and national levels to support the pandemic response, thus encouraging a harmonized system-wide approach for response.

United Nations system-wide response

By mid-January 2020, with the rapid evolution of the outbreak, the Regional Office of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for the Asia Pacific Region Bangkok, Thailand established an ad-hoc Regional Working Group for COVID-19 to coordinate with partner agencies from the Asia Pacific region. This Working Group included Regional counterparts of many partners from the Far Eastern to the Western Pacific Region. With WHO at the forefront of technical response, the Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) mobilized a senior Technical Officer from the WHO Country Office in Thailand as the Liaison Officer to coordinate partners' activities closely collaborating with OCHA. By February 2020, WHO's Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) and the Western Pacific (WPRO) Partnerships Focal Points provided further technical support adding stronger coordination support to the working group. The working group met (virtually) on a weekly-basis for months into the response, supporting each other through multilateral and bilateral engagements.

Through this co-ordination mechanism, several sub working groups for specific responses were established where WHO played a key technical role. These included, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), Migration, Logistics etc. Through intense engagements in these working groups and sub-groups, WHO continued to facilitate a coordinated response building synergy mechanism in the region.

WHO has also been focusing on building specific operational partnerships over the last several decades. The Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) and Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) are two such platforms that played a critical role supporting Member States in the response to the current COVID 19 pandemic.

Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN)

GOARN was immediately activated from the early stages of the COVID 19 pandemic. SEARO made two requests from WHO country offices across the Region to identify human resources needs for surge capacity in relation to different pillars of response. In addition, an ad-hoc demand by countries was fulfilled when possible given the logistical challenges due to national lockdowns, flight cancellations and visa restrictions. To date, more than a dozen overseas experts were deployed to countries in the SEAR. The GOARN support continues at the time of writing with the plan of one expert being deployed in Bangladesh and remote support by three experts across several pillars of the response.
















































Partners Platform

Early into the current Pandemic, WHO was swift in developing a virtual platform, the Partners' Platform, to engage partners in the response and share information across all countries to build synergies. This platform was not only limited to operational partners, but all stakeholder including the governments. With the evolution of the Pandemic the platform was expanded to include the coordination of response among all stakeholders, from planning and Intra-Action Reviews to resource mobilization to supply chain management, as well as the latest being the addition on coordinating the Regional COVID-19 vaccination drive.

The way forward

Response to the COVID 19 pandemic is far from over. The pandemic is still evolving and so is the response to it. With many technical dimensions being added to the evolving response, the need for closer collaboration and solidarity among operational partners is becoming greater than ever. The WHO Regional Office for the South-East Asia is continuing its commitment and dedicated engagements along many technical fronts to ensure that the Member States of the region are well supported to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with national interests and global solidarity.

Update on the Public Health and Social Measures (9 – 16 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 (States to decide on requirements for gatherings; gatherings banned in Maharashtra)	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  (Restrictions imposed in a few small areas)	Resumed 	 (Schools reopened across the country except in Western Province)	 Ban > 10	Mandatory
Thailand (Emergency extended until 31 March 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

- Further support is being provided to country pharmacovigilance teams and safety surveillance of COVID-19 vaccines including that for causality assessment, classification of serious adverse events following immunization (AEFI), and reporting to the WHO global pharmacovigilance network
- Ongoing support is provided by partners to countries for next steps to receive the allocated vaccine or implement National Deployment and Vaccination Plans (NDVP). This includes completing cold chain expansion application, developing demand generation and community engagement plan for the COVID-19 vaccine and risk communication strategy addressing misinformation; and addressing other gaps identified during the regional review NDVPs
- Information is continuously being shared with country focal points with focus on cold chain and logistics with the objective of contributing to the learning agenda for COVID-19 vaccination.
- Collection, compilation and analysis of weekly COVID-19 vaccination weekly data is continued
- The following table is a summary of vaccination status in the countries that are offering COVID-19 vaccines in the SEA region as of 16 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 population	Source
Bangladesh	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	16 Mar 2021	4 580 391	4 580 391		2.7	As per GOVT. Report
India	16-Jan-21	COVISHIELD/COVAXIN	16 Mar 2021	34 859 345	28 690 473	6 168 872	.2.0	https://pib.gov.in/PressRelease
Indonesia	13-Jan-21	CORONAVAC/AZ-SKBIO	16 Mar 2021	6 185 700	4 468 951	1 716 749	1.6	https://www.kemkes.go.id/
Maldives	01 Feb 21	COVISHIELD	16 Mar 2021	214 486	214 486		38.5	HPA COVID 19 update group
Myanmar	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	04 Feb 2021	104 865	104 865		0.2	WHO Country Office
Nepal	27-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	16 Mar 2021	1 634 903	1 634 903		5.4	FWD. MoHP Nepal
Sri Lanka	29-Jan-21	COVISHIELD	14 Mar 2021	773 011	773 011		3.5	Epidemiology unit, MoH
Thailand	28-Feb-21	CORONAVAC/AZ-SKBIO	14 Mar 2021	44 963	44 964		0.1	WHO Country Office
TOTAL				48 398 289	40 512 668	7 885 621		

Note: India data for one dose and two doses sourced from <https://dashboard.cowin.gov.in/> COWIN dashboard, MoHFW