



# 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	209 163	3 295	12 269 796	188 021

## Highlights

- The total number of new COVID-19 cases in the South-East Asia Region (SEAR) continues to decrease. The Region has the lowest weekly increase (1.7%) in cumulative cases among all WHO Regions viz Africa Region (9.6%), Region of Americas (7.1%), European Region (6.7%), Western Pacific Region (7%) and Eastern Mediterranean Region (3.5%)
- Indonesia initiated the roll-out of COVID 19 vaccination on 13 January 2021 using the CoronaVac from China's Sinovac Biotech
- Regional meeting on Influenza surveillance and monitoring of SARSCoV2 through sentinel surveillance systems during the COVID-19 pandemic held on 13-14 January 2021 with participation from Member States, WHO SEARO Health Emergency Programme (WHE), WHO Global Influenza Programme, WHO Collaboration Centres (Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory, Australia and United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

## Overview of situation (epidemiological week#1 for period between 4 -10 January 2021)

- The weekly percentage change in cumulative cases in the Region for week #1 was 1.7% (209 163 new cases), compared to an increase of 1.8% the week before. The percentage increase in cumulative deaths was 1.8% (3 295 new deaths) which again is slightly lower than reported percentage increase last week of 2%
- The highest weekly percentage changes in cumulative cases in the Region was reported from Thailand (33.8%, 2 604 cases) followed by Bhutan (13.5%, 97 cases), Timor-Leste (11.4%, 5 cases), Indonesia (8.2%, 62 676 cases) and Sri Lanka (8.1%, 3 606 cases).
- Two member states in the Region, Bangladesh and Indonesia continue to report community transmission, while seven member states namely India, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan and Thailand report clusters of cases Timor-Leste reported sporadic cases and Democratic People's Republic of Korea reported no cases
- In Thailand, between 18 December 2019 and 11 January 2021, a total of 6 090 confirmed cases have been reported with more than 50% from Samut Sakhon province. Locally transmitted COVID-19 cases have now been reported in 58 provinces; of these 21 provinces did not report any new cases in the last 7 days
- In Indonesia, there is a continuing upward trend of reported COVID-19 cases since beginning of November 2020. The current test positivity rate (TPR) (last 7 days moving average {DMA}) of 24% is very high. Since end of last week, nearly 10 000 new cases are reported each day
- In Sri Lanka, the Peliyagoda fish market cluster (>40 000 cases) and prison clusters are still active. The current clusters have spread to all 25 districts
- In Bhutan, between 20 December 2020 and 11 January 2021, a total of 365 confirmed cases were reported of which 78% cases were reported from the capital city Thimphu. Most of the newly detected cases are contacts of known cases and or detected in quarantine facilities
- In Maldives, two clusters are currently active- one related to a wedding event in Greater Malé City which is evolving with 92 cases detected as of 11 January 2021, and the other at Gaaf Alif atoll linked to a family in quarantine and their contacts

- In Nepal, number of new cases as well as number of tests continue to decrease. TPR continues to decline but is still high at ~9%
- In Myanmar, since beginning of December 2020, there is a decreasing trend of new cases reported

Chart data as of Jan 13, 2021 7 am IST

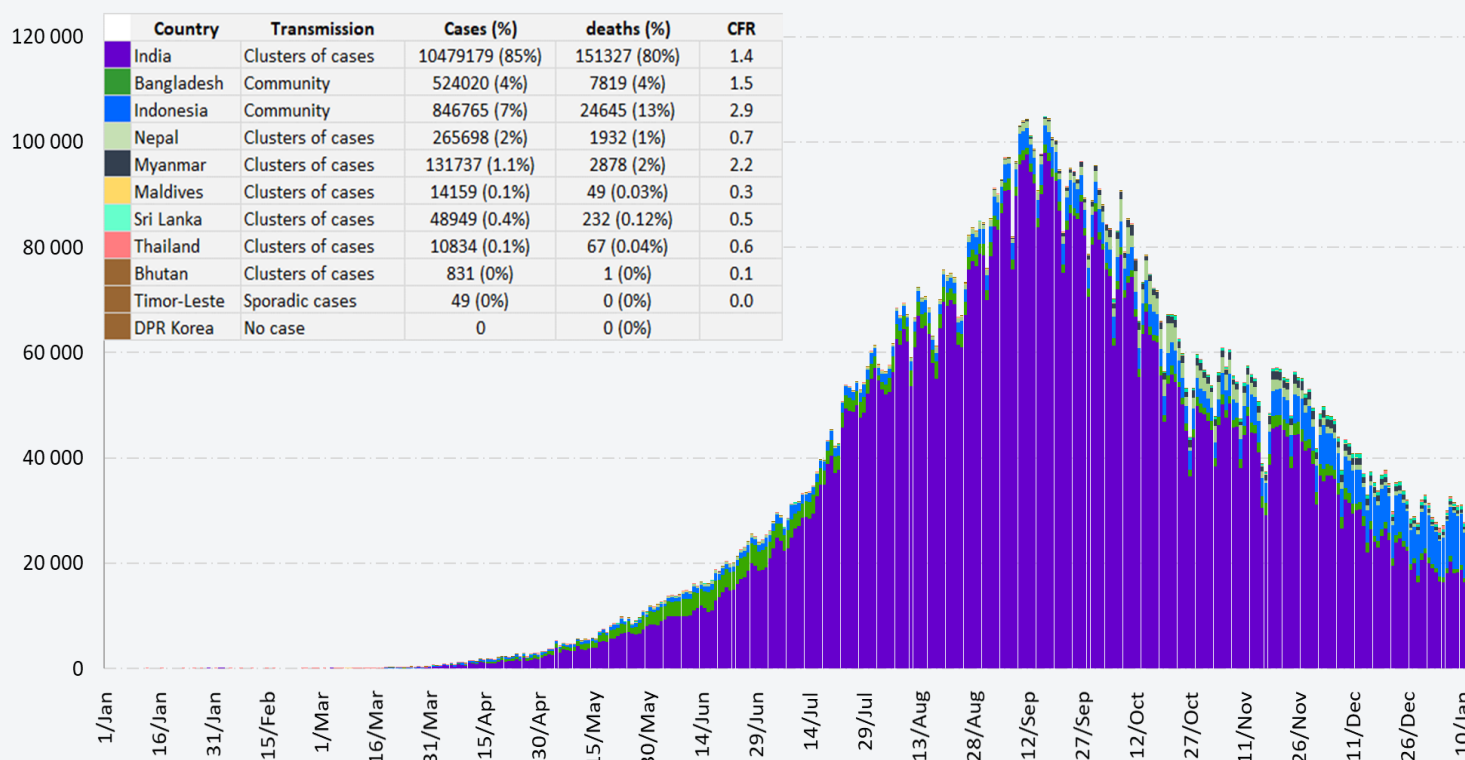


Table data as of Jan 13, 2021 7 am IST

Country		Total cases	Total cases per 1 million pop	CFR**	New cases (last 7 days)	%Change in new cases (last 7 days)	TPR (last 7 DMA)
India		10 479 179	7 594	1.4	122 335	-7.7	2.1
Indonesia		846 765	3 096	2.9	67 217	28.2	24.6
Bangladesh		524 020	3 182	1.5	6 100	-8.4	6.5
Nepal		265 698	9 119	0.7	2 914	-10.0	8.8
Myanmar		131 737	2 421	2.2	4 155	-6.2	3.3
Sri Lanka		48 949	2 286	0.5	3 223	-12.0	3.7
Maldives		14 159	26 194	0.3	229	-4.2	1.3
Thailand		10 834	155	0.6	1 868	-26.0	3.9
Bhutan		831	1 077	0.1	97	-1.0	0.4
Timor-Leste		49	37	0.0	0	0	0.0
DPR Korea		0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
<b>SEAR total</b>		<b>12 322 221</b>	<b>6 096</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>208 138</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>5.4</b>

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

\*\*CFR: case fatality ratio

## Key Operational / Country Updates

### Key operational updates

#### Points of entry:

- All Points of Entry (PoE) are closed with some exemption on visa restriction for certain criteria. Quarantine and reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT PCR) negative result is required by all Member States
- Some countries are adjusting international travel measures after the report of a new variant of SARS-CoV-2 from the United Kingdom on 14 December 2020
- Some countries are adjusting the duration of quarantine – India: self-monitoring if RT PCR negative, 7 days facility quarantine and 7 days home quarantine if PCR test had not been conducted; Indonesia: 5 days facility quarantine; Maldives: 10 days (except for tourists); Myanmar: 14 days facility quarantine for all incoming passengers after United Kingdom report on new variant; Nepal: 10 days quarantine

#### Case management:

- WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE) SEARO and the Integrated Management of Adolescent and Adult Illness and Childhood Illness (IMAI-IMCI) Alliance, a global network of institutions committed to strengthen health systems have agreed to train a core group of Trainers of Trainers in clinical management of Severe Acute Respiratory Infections due to COVID-19. The course consists of 16 theoretical and practical sessions conducted virtually

### Key country updates

#### Bangladesh:

- Of 516 019 total confirmed cases – 44.9% cases were confirmed in people between 20-39 years of age however, the highest death rate of 32% was reported in the age group of 70 years and above. Male cases represented 71% and 76% of the total reported confirmed cases and deaths respectively as of 4 January 2021
- Bed occupancy rate for general beds was 20.3% (total 10 445) and 40.7% (total 602) for intensive care unit (ICU) as of 11 January 2021

#### Bhutan

- Ministry of Health (MoH) advised 21-days mandatory self-quarantine for all the primary contact and 3 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test at different intervals
- MoH has launched stay home app for primary contacts. All primary contacts will have to enroll for the app and MoH officials will monitor their health status on real time basis
- All COVID-19 positive who do not require hospitalization post initial medical assessment will be admitted in isolation facilities under strict vigilance by health workers and Dessups (volunteers)
- Mobile flu clinic services located in strategic places to enhance COVID-19 testing services

#### DPR Korea

- No reported case of COVID-19 as of 7 January 2021
- Continuous surveillance is ongoing, samples are being tested for COVID-19 in 15 laboratories including 13 sub-national laboratories
- All points of entry (PoEs) remain closed

#### India

- Steady decline in active coronavirus infections, reporting less than 20 000 daily new cases since past 7 days
- Around 90 cases of new mutant strain of COVID-19 were reported in several States as of 11 January
- National Task Force on COVID-19 strategizes testing, treatment, and surveillance for COVID-19 in view of the new virus strain from United Kingdom
- Government gears up for roll out of COVID-19 vaccine from 16 January. Around 16.5 million doses of Covishield and Covaxin vaccines were allocated to all States/ Union Territories

## Maldives

- A new cluster is evolving from Southern atoll in Dheevadhoo island. The island was put under monitoring and contact tracing has been initiated
- National COVID-19 preparedness and response guidelines has been updated with case definitions including new testing strategy of testing all who have any COVID-19 like symptoms
- National vaccine deployment plan has been finalized and submitted to COVAX facility
- Tourist resorts were urged to take special precautions in anticipation of tourist arrivals in coming days

## Myanmar

- Department of Medical Research (DMR) conducted pilot research on whole genome sequencing with samples from returnees and local transmission cases and reported surge of D614G mutations
- WHO conducted initial bilateral discussion with EU for country level implementation of WHO\_EU agreement to be followed by discussion with Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS)
- Government aims to vaccinate all in order of priority in three years from 2021 to 2023, with first available vaccines allocated to priority groups, including healthcare workers and elderly people
- China pledged to donate 300,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to help its neighbor to control the pandemic

## Nepal

- Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has issued protocol for antigen-based testing at the community level
- MoHP launched 'IMU Nepal' - official application from the information management unit (IMU) for making one platform for all COVID-19 patient data All laboratory conducting RT-PCR testing are using the application to capture patient data
- WHO laboratory team facilitated virtual training on SARS-CoV2 Antigen RDT
- WHO supported establishment of health desk along with infrastructure support at the Tribhuvan International Airport

## Sri Lanka

- First case of new United Kingdom variant of COVID-19 reported last week
- Schools reopened on 11 January 2021, except for areas in isolation and whole of western province; overall attendance was at 51% for students and teacher attendance was at 88%
- Points of entry (PoEs) will be open to all passengers from 21 January 2021
- 2 991 people have been repatriated last week; 73 140 cumulative total repatriations as of 13 January 2021

## Thailand

- Prime Minister has instructed Department for Food and Drug Administration to accelerate the registration process for COVID-19 vaccines
- Cabinet has approved COVID-19 relief measures including financial support to individuals working in informal sector for two months

## Timor-Leste

- Prime Minister stated government commitment to fund 80% of the vaccine requirements. Established an inter-ministerial commission for the elaboration and coordination for the COVID-19 vaccination operational plan and a Technical Group to provide support to the COVID-19 vaccination operational plan
- Health Minister along with representatives of WHO and UNICEF attended the extraordinary council of ministers meeting for COVID-19 vaccine deployment

## A regional prioritization exercise to build SEAR's research agenda for COVID-19

Response to COVID-19 requires continuous generation of evidence to inform decision making. Given the large array of unknowns and scarce resources, it is imperative to identify and prioritize gaps in knowledge that can be acted upon. Understanding that regional resources are best spent on addressing issues of higher local significance, WHO/SEARO carried out an exercise to identify the current research priorities which would be useful to guide responses to the current COVID-19 pandemic in the region.













































































The research and emergency focal points in SEAR's ten WCOs and technical focal points at SEARO participated in an online anonymous survey and each contributed up to five research questions on seven key thematic areas: health systems, public health and social measures, epidemiology, basic sciences, clinical sciences, pandemic preparedness, and socio-economic and equity related. The research ideas were then scored on six parameters: regional specificity, relevance to response, regional capacity, urgency, effectiveness, and equity. Scores were totaled for each idea; those in the upper third were identified as high priority.

A total of 203 research ideas were received from 48 respondents. These were consolidated into 78 research ideas and scored. The final high priority list of 27 research ideas covered all thematic areas. Table 1 shows the top ten priorities.

The prioritized list can assist in advocating Member States and WHO to focus and support research which could impact and shape the COVID-19 response in SEAR. This would also help in building a COVID-19 research roadmap and ensure efficient use of limited resources available for COVID-19 research. While taking up these generic ideas for implementation, researchers may need to formulate them more specifically with reference to their own country or programme area.

Research idea	Rank	Thematic area
What is the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the continuity of essential health services?	1	Health systems
What are the major gaps in policies and strategies in responding to the pandemic effectively in SEAR Member States?	2	Health systems
How is/was the readiness for the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines in SEAR Member States;	3	Health systems
To estimate the disease burden in various groups (by age group, geographical location, sex, health status, vulnerable groups etc.) and conduct a trend analysis	4	Epidemiology
What is the impact of COVID-19 on health care workers (including rates of infection, stress, burnout, stigmatization, and violence) and measures taken to address them?	5	Health systems
Acceptability of COVID-19 vaccine and barriers to vaccination among the general population and among health care workers.	6	PHSM
Assessment of health system capacity to manage the epidemic.	7	Health systems
What are the sociocultural influences and other barriers and enablers of community behaviour change regarding COVID-19?	8	PHSM
How did COVID-19 exacerbate pre-existing inequities and their (negative) health and non-health impact on various disadvantaged groups, taking as migrants or others, as illustrative examples?	9	Socio-economic & equity
Sero-surveillance/sero-surveys to assess and monitor the infection burden of SARS-CoV-2 infection in various groups (by age, geographical location, sex, etc.)	10	Epidemiology

# Update on the Public Health and Social Measures (08 - 12 January 2021)

Member State	Movement restriction	Public transport (Inter province movement)	School measures	Public gathering	Mask use
<b>Bangladesh</b>	None 	Resumed    		Ban 	Mandatory
<b>Bhutan</b>	Partial  (Phased unlocking from 6 January 21)	Restricted    		Ban 	Mandatory
<b>DPR Korea</b>	Partial 	Restricted    		Ban  >5	Mandatory
<b>India</b>	Partial  (Local authorities to decide on restrictions in areas other than containment zones)	Restricted*    	 (Schools reopened in several States from 1 January 2021)	 (Ban >100 indoor gatherings; vary across States)	Mandatory
<b>Indonesia</b>	Partial 	Restricted*    	 (Vary across provinces)	 (Requirements vary across Provinces)	Mandatory
<b>Maldives</b> (Emergency extended until 3 February 2021)	Partial 	Resumed    	 (Schools remain closed for grade 8 & lower)	 Ban > 15	Mandatory
<b>Myanmar</b>	Partial 	Restricted*    		Ban 	Mandatory
<b>Nepal</b>	None 	   		Ban  >25	Mandatory
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Partial  (Restrictions imposed in isolated areas)	Restricted*    	 (Schools remain closed in Western Province and isolated areas)	Ban 	Mandatory
<b>Thailand</b> (Emergency extended until 28 February 2021)	Partial  (Restrictions imposed at provinces classified as Red/Orange/Yellow Zones)	Restricted*     (Vary in different zones)		Ban 	Mandatory
<b>Timor-Leste</b> (Emergency extended until 1 February 2021)	Partial 	Partial    (Restricted until 18 January 2021)		Ban  > 10	Mandatory

\* Public transport allowed with limited capacity, limited timings and limited routes – variations at Sub National level

## Update on Pandemic Vaccine Deployment

- Of the 11 Member States (MS) in the SEA Region, 10 are having advanced market commitment (AMC) and have joined the COVAX facility while one is a self-financing country (Thailand). All Member States are implementing preparatory activities for COVID-19 vaccine deployment and vaccination
- All 10 AMC countries have submitted their vaccine request forms to COVAX and are currently developing the national deployment and vaccination plans (NDVP)
- Of the 10 AMC countries, 8 have submitted requests for Technical Assistance (TA) to GAVI
- All Member States are submitting information to WHO SEARO on the vaccine introduction readiness assessment tool (VIRART/VRAF) at regular intervals
- India, a leading manufacturer of vaccines and with many COVID-19 vaccines in the pipeline, has granted emergency use authorization (EUA) on 3 January 2021 to two COVID-19 vaccines: Covishield, a viral vector vaccine, produced by Serum Institute of India with technology transfer from AstraZeneca/Oxford University; and Covaxin, a Whole Virion Inactivated Corona Virus Vaccine produced by Bharat Biotech.
- Indonesia granted EUA to CoronaVac, a product from China's Sinovac Biotech, on 11 January 2021. Two days later, on 13 January 2021, Indonesia became the first country in the SEA Region to formally launch COVID-19 vaccination, using the CoronaVac vaccine
- The first multi-country workshop for members of National Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) committees conducted with participation of representatives from Bhutan, Maldives and Myanmar on 13-14 January 2021
- A regional review committee (RRC) is being established to review NDVPs submitted by Member States to confirm comprehensiveness and to enable vaccine allocation from COVAX facility
- Discussion and preparations are being made with some SEA Region countries to enroll for First Wave allocation for the introduction of the mRNA Vaccine by Pfizer BioNTech, which has been granted emergency use listing (EUL) by WHO