



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	205 913	3 444	12 475 709	191 465

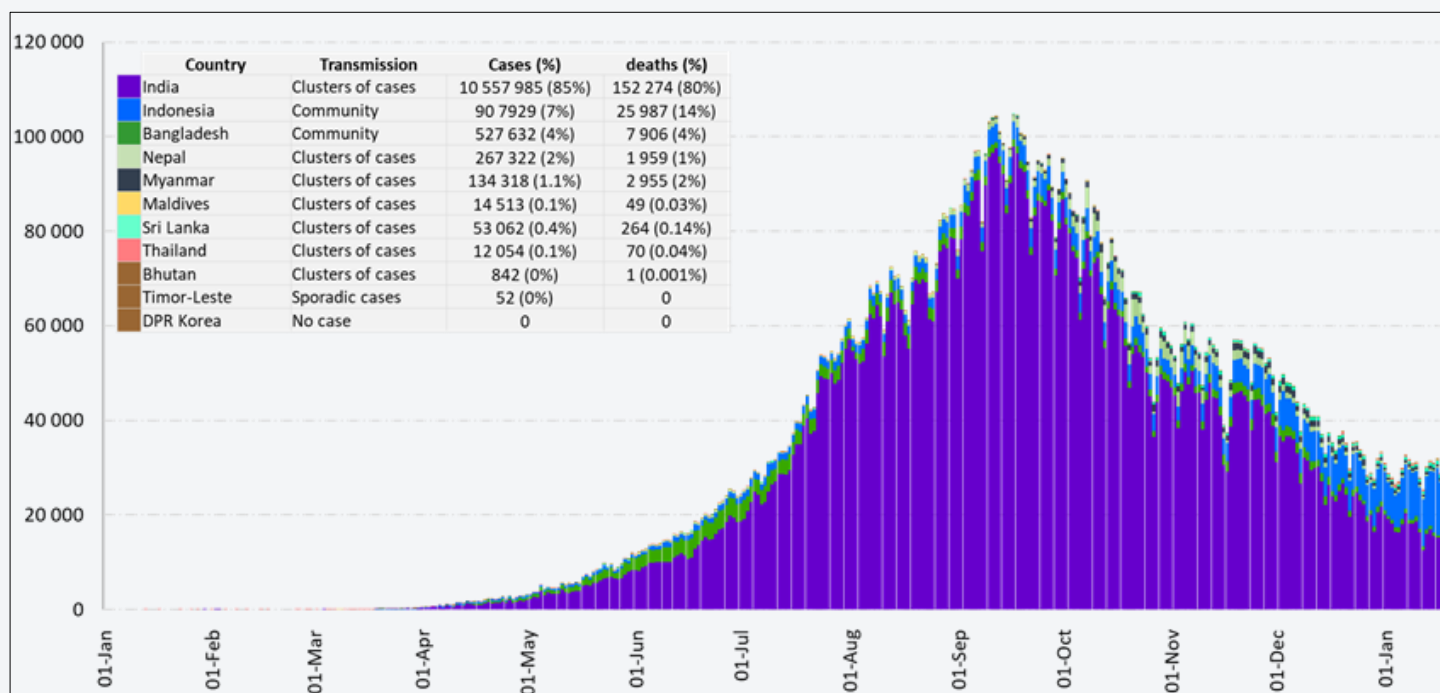
Highlights

- Among all WHO Regions, South-East Asia Region (SEAR) continues to record the lowest weekly increase in cumulative cases (1.7%) The weekly increases in cumulative cases reported in other regions were African Region (8.3%), Western Pacific Region (6.9%), Region of Americas (6.4%), European Region (5.6%), and Eastern Mediterranean Region (3.6%)
- India initiated COVID-19 vaccination on 16 January 2021 using the Covishield vaccine which was manufactured by the Serum Institute of India and the Covaxin vaccine manufactured by the Bharat Biotech targeting priority health workers
- Government of India has announced to provide COVID-19 vaccines to Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles from 20 January 2021. Bhutan and Maldives have already received vaccines and India is now set to dispatch Indian made COVID-19 vaccines to Nepal and Bangladesh

Overview of situation (epidemiological week#2 for period between 11 -17 January 2021)

- The weekly percentage increase in cumulative cases in the SEA Region for week #2 was 1.7% (205 913 new cases). The percentage increase in cumulative deaths during this week was 1.8% (3 444 new deaths)
- The top three highest weekly percentage changes in cumulative cases in the Region was reported from Thailand (17.1%, 1,756 cases), Sri Lanka (9.7%, 4,682 cases) and Indonesia (9.6%, 79,903 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 continues to report 'No Cases'
- In Thailand, evidence of local transmission has been expanded to 61 (84%) provinces. Notably, during 15 December 2020 – 12 January 2021, there were 4 048 confirmed cases, of which about 40% were migrant workers. As of 17 January 2021, a total of 7 817 cases had been reported in the current wave of the infection (since 15 December 2020) out of which 47% were detected through active case finding, 46% were classified as local transmission and only 7% were detected at quarantine facilities (ref: situation report dated 17 January 2021)
- In Maldives recent increase of cases have been explained by the detection of two clusters viz the Wedding event cluster, Male City and Southern Atoll cluster, Gaafu Alifu, Dhevvadhoo island. These clusters are still active for which contact tracing is ongoing; The high-risk contacts are under observation and random sampling and testing was initiated in Dhevvadhoo island to observe the extent of transmission. During the past week, three new clusters evolved in three different resorts. Since beginning of January 2021, there has been an observed gradual increase in numbers of new cases reported in Maldives (ref: weekly update dated 20 January 2021)
- In Myanmar the number of new cases and the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) continue to demonstrate a declining trend while the volume of testing has improved. The contact tracing remains a challenge as only ~5% of contacts can be followed-up. In addition, only 4% of new cases are known contacts for the period between 18-31 December 2020 (ref: weekly situation updates email dated 20 January 2021)

- Indonesia continued to show an upward trend in cases and deaths reported and the volume of testing and TPR also indicated an upward trend. The last weekly TPR remains high at ~28% consistent with the widespread community transmission
- In Sri Lanka, the Peliyagoda fish market cluster (> 45 000 cases) and the prison clusters were still active, and cases linked to the clusters were reported across all 25 districts in the country. (Ref: Situation Report dated 13 January 2021)
- In Bhutan the number of new cases showed a declining trend and only 29 cases were reported during epi week 2, despite increase in testing following mass screening in Thimphu. As of 17 January 2021, the total of 381 cases had been detected during the recent spike (ref: MoH FB page)
- In the SEA Region, 4 countries have so far reported the SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern (VOC) 202012_01 variant viz India (102 cases), Thailand (4 cases), Nepal (3 cases) and Sri Lanka (1 case).



Country		Total cases	Total cases per 1 million pop	Total deaths	CFR	New cases (last 7 days)	% change in new cases* (last 7 days)	TPR (last 7 DMA)
India		10 557 985	7 651	152 274	1.4	107 701	-14.7	2.1
Indonesia		907 929	3 319	25 987	2.9	79 903	27.5	27.9
Bangladesh		527 632	3 204	7 906	1.5	5 179	-19.5	5.7
Nepal		267 322	9 175	1 959	0.7	2 542	-13.0	8.4
Myanmar		134 318	2 469	2 955	2.2	3 714	-12.8	2.9
Sri Lanka		53 062	2 478	264	0.5	4 682	29.8	4.5
Maldives		14 513	26 849	49	0.3	404	66.9	1.8
Thailand		12 054	173	70	0.6	1 756	-32.6	2.4
Bhutan		842	1 091	1	0.1	29	-70.1	0.4
Timor-Leste		52	39		0.0	3	-40.0	0.0
DPR Korea		0						
SEAR total		12 475 709	6 172	191 465	0.61 (Median CFR)	205 913	-1.6	

*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 updates

Risk Communication and community Engagement:

- The regular weekly public insights and misinformation monitoring for infodemics revealed that majority of conversations occur around COVID-19 vaccines. While vaccine rollout received positive responses, there were concerns regarding vaccine hesitancy, especially concerns related to vaccine safety, as well as logistics. Few concerns were expressed on suitability of vaccines for all communities

Points of entry:

- All Points of Entry (PoE) in SEAR Member States are closed with some exemption on visa restriction for certain criteria. Quarantine and reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) negative result are required by all Member States
- Some countries are adjusting international travel measures after the report of a new variant of SARS-CoV-2 in the United Kingdom (UK) on 14 December 2020.
- During epidemiological week# 2, India extended the requirement of mandatory self-paid RT-PCR tests on arrival for passengers from the UK
- India adjusted quarantine measures for passengers from the United Kingdom and those with positive result have to undergo institutional isolation

Operation support and logistics:

- Diagnostics: South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) coordinated shipment and delivery (shipment pipeline) of 1 936 700 (537 780) tests of manual PCR, 260 000 (1 240 000) tests of Ag RDTs, 2 268 950 (1 500 000) swabs, 1 886 166 (731 384) of extraction kits
- Personnel Protective Equipment: 6 940 500 three-ply face masks, 2 125 500 gloves, 555 300 gowns, 604 495 respirators, 86 510 goggles and 371 836 face shields have been shipped to the countries
- Case management: 2 440 units of nasal canula, 106 units of Patient monitors, 769 units of oxygen concentrators, 250 units of pulse oximeter, 110 infrared thermometers and 610 venturi masks were shipped

Key country updates

Bangladesh:

- A medical firm (Globe Biotech) applied for permission to conduct clinical trial pertaining to a local vaccine 'Bongovax' from the Bangladesh Medical Research Council
- Bed occupancy rate for general beds and intensive care unit beds allocated for COVID-19 in Bangladesh was 20.3% (total 10 445) and 40.7% (total 602) respectively as of 11 January 2021

Bhutan:

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) received 150 000 doses of Covishield vaccines from India
- Mass screening of the whole population in two red zones of Paro and Thimphu was completed, active members from each household were tested. Based on the testing results decision to ease the lock down in the red zones will be initiated
- WHO is supporting United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) along with other stakeholders on digital solutions of COVID-19 vaccine deployment

DPR Korea:

- No reported cases of COVID-19 as of 14 January 2021
- Surveillance is ongoing, samples are being tested for COVID-19 in 15 laboratories including 13 sub-national laboratories

Indonesia:

- The government of Indonesia officially launched its national COVID-19 vaccination on 13 January 2021. Around 1.4 million health workers are expected to receive vaccination in the first phase
- The governor of Jakarta announced complete large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) until 25 January 2021 in view of rising number of COVID-19 cases and to prevent hospitals being overwhelmed

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the National COVID-19 Task Force (Satgas) are hiring additional 80 000 people to enhance contact tracing activities and extend to all 34 provinces
- WHO supported the Indonesia Medical Association to disseminate the 'Guidelines on Standardized Procedures for Doctors' Protection in the COVID-19 Era'

India:

- The government of India (GoI) started rolling out the world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive on 16 January 2021. A total of 806 484 beneficiaries have received the vaccination. And 14 118 sessions have been conducted as of 20 January 2021
- The GoI conducted trainings on operational aspects for COVID vaccines for Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bahrain, Mauritius, Morocco, Oman, Seychelles and Brazil in an effort to further strengthen the global vaccine rollout
- First COVID-19 case was reported in the Lakshadweep islands on 18 January 2021, Lakshadweep Islands, until now, was India's only COVID19 -free territory

Maldives:

- Over 300 contacts were identified and other remaining contacts in high-risk group and elderly were kept under observation after the onset of the new wedding event cluster in Male city. Random sampling was started in Dheevadhoo island to find the extent of transmission following clusters of cases from southern atoll Gaafu Alifu
- A sudden surge in number of cases were reported in the tourist establishment and operational resorts where over 70% of the cases were found among staff.
- Health Emergency Operations Centre (HEOC) launched a special portal for registration of COVID-19 vaccine in preparation for vaccine deployment plan
- National COVID-19 preparedness and response guidelines have been updated with case definitions and the new testing strategy of testing that demands testing of all who have any COVID-19 like symptoms
- The National vaccine deployment plan has been finalized and submitted to the COVAX facility
- Tourist resorts were urged to take special precautions in anticipation of tourist arrivals in coming days

Myanmar:

- The government further extended the night time curfew from 12 AM to 4 AM until 15 March in Yangon Region
- The government aims to vaccinate all in order of priority in three years from 2021 to 2023, with first available vaccines. These vaccines will be allocated to priority groups, including healthcare workers and elderly population
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved the second emergency financial assistance of USD 350 million to minimize the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

Nepal:

- The Minister of Foreign Affairs along with delegates attended a meeting with Indian counterparts to discuss supply of COVID-19 vaccine. The government of Nepal (GoN) requested 4.7 million doses of Covishield vaccines as the first installment for front line health workers
- The Department of Health Services (DoHS) organized a meeting to review COVID-19 vaccination guidelines and the deployment plan. The guidelines are proposed to be endorsed by the incident command system of MoH
- WHO is supporting the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) to draft a guideline for strengthening the National Influenza Surveillance Network (NISN)
- WHO handed over video conference equipment to different divisions of DoHS to facilitate virtual trainings and meetings. Critical care training equipment were handed over to the National Training Centre for critical trainings

Sri Lanka:

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) submitted the National Vaccination Deployment Plan (NVDP) to the COVAX facility on 18 January 2021
- The government has utilized two luxury hotels as temporary out of pocket stay and treatment facilities for COVID-19
- The Ministry of Health finalized the training manual for strengthened delivery of mental health care at Primary Health care level
- Points of entry (PoEs) will be open to all passengers (except those from the United Kingdom) from 21 January 2021. Tourism reopened after 10 months and a maximum of 2 500 tourists will be permitted each day to enter.

Thailand:

- The Ministry of Labour has initiated a registration drive for migrant workers from neighboring countries. The estimate of unregistered migrant workers in the country is approximately 500 000. Additional measures were announced by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) for high risk groups, who will be tested twice for COVID-19 and high-risk close contacts of confirmed cases will be self-quarantined at home for 14 days
- The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation has developed an artificial intelligence software to support Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) and authorities in the surveillance of preventive behaviours in the public spaces

Timor-Leste:

- The minister of Health along with the European Union (EU) Ambassador to Timor Leste and WHO launched MoH-EU-WHO partnership to enhance COVID-19 response and to strengthen the overall health systems
- The government amended the provisions in the current State of Emergency to include some relaxations considering reduced number of active cases in the country and other epidemiological evidence
- The Ministry of Health (MoH) was supported by WHO to conduct random mass community surveillance in Dili and three border municipalities from the last week of January
- MoH will further augment laboratory capacity for testing and strengthening critical care capacity, especially at the regional level and in border municipalities

Cover Story

The special session of the SEAR Immunization Technical Advisory Group (SEAR ITAG) on COVID-19 vaccine target groups prioritization and deployment

A special session of the SEAR Immunization Technical Advisory Group (SEAR ITAG) on COVID-19 vaccine target groups prioritization and deployment took place on 25-26 November 2020. Participants of the virtual meeting included ITAG members, representatives of National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) and national Immunization Programmes, the chair of the Strategic Advisory Group of experts on Immunization (SAGE) and members from South East Asia Region, the South East Asia Regional Working Group for COVID-19 vaccines, WHO and UNICEF.













































































The seven key topics addressed, in the sessions were namely (1) planning and coordination, (2) resources and funding, (3) prioritization of target groups, (4) service delivery, (5) training and supervision, (6) monitoring and evaluation, (7) demand generation and communication. Additional meetings were convened on cold chain, vaccine regulation and safety surveillance.

The ITAG noted that all countries had initiated planning for COVID-19 vaccine introduction and reasonable progress had been made on preparatory activities for deploying the pandemic vaccine. The ITAG provided specific recommendations by all programme areas. Key recommendations for countries were to:

- Develop a national deployment and vaccination plan (NDVP) as soon as possible;
- Apply the guidelines provided by WHO in the 'Values Framework' and the 'Prioritization Roadmap' to identify priority groups;
- Develop an identification and tracking mechanism for the vaccination of target groups;
- Leverage experience in vaccine delivery platforms for adults, including experience with seasonal and pandemic influenza vaccinations, as well as Measles and Rubella and Japanese Encephalitis vaccination campaigns, to identify effective ways to reach eligible adults with COVID-19 vaccines;
- Continue with routine immunization and vaccine preventable surveillance activities while COVID 19 vaccine is introduced.

Conclusions and recommendations of the meeting were shared with countries. All countries in WHO's South East Asia Region has progressed well in developing NDVPs and eight countries have submitted plans to WHO's South East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) and to the COVAX facility (which is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator). The progress of country preparations is currently being assessed using the Vaccine Introduction Readiness Assessment Tool (VIRAT/VRAF 2.0) and information shared with SEARO

Update on the Public Health and Social Measures (13 - 19 January 2021)

Member State	Movement restriction	Public transport (Inter province movement)	School measures	Public gathering	Mask use
Bangladesh	None 	Resumed    		 Ban	Mandatory
Bhutan	Partial  (Phased unlocking since 6 January 21)	Restricted*    		 Ban	Mandatory
DPR Korea	Partial 	Restricted    		 Ban > 5	Mandatory
India	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
Indonesia	Partial  (New curbs in some areas for enforcement of public activity restrictions)	Restricted*    	 (Vary across provinces)	 (Requirements vary across Provinces)	Mandatory
Maldives (Emergency extended until 3 February 2021)	None 	Resumed    		 Ban > 15	Mandatory
Myanmar	Partial  (Stay at home orders only in few townships)	Restricted*    		 Ban > 30	Mandatory
Nepal	None 	Resumed    		 Ban > 25	Mandatory
Sri Lanka	Partial  (Restrictions imposed in isolated areas)	Restricted*    	 (Schools remain closed in Western Province and isolated areas)	 Ban > 10	Mandatory
Thailand (Emergency extended until 28 February 2021)	Partial  (Restrictions imposed at provinces classified as maximum controlled areas)	Restricted*     (Vary in different controlled areas)	 (Vary across controlled areas zones)	 Ban	Mandatory
Timor-Leste (Emergency extended until 1 February 2021)	Partial 	Restricted   		 Ban > 10	Mandatory

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

Update on Pandemic Vaccine Deployment

- The support to Member States for development of National Deployment and Vaccination Plans (NDVP) and preparations for COVID-19 vaccination including identification of priority groups, cold chain expansion, capacity building and communication/demand generation is ongoing
- Six Member States have submitted expression of interest and NDVPs to the COVAX facility to be considered for the first wave of allocation of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine
- Eight Member States submitted updated country vaccine introduction readiness assessment tool (VIRAT/VRAF)
- Many countries currently conduct negotiations for bilateral deals to provide COVID-19 vaccines to a target beyond the 20% of their populations expected to be covered by the COVAX facility
- A Regional review committee was established to review the country eligibility to be included in the first wave of vaccine allocation
- Third meeting of the coordination subgroup of the regional working group on COVID-19 vaccines, was held on 19 January 2021 with participation of WHO, UNICEF, ADB, WB, CDC, UNDP, Rotary and IFRC and other members
- Around USD 8.4 million were provided by Gavi for technical support to SEAR countries



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