

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	199 986	3 337	12 870 449	198 005

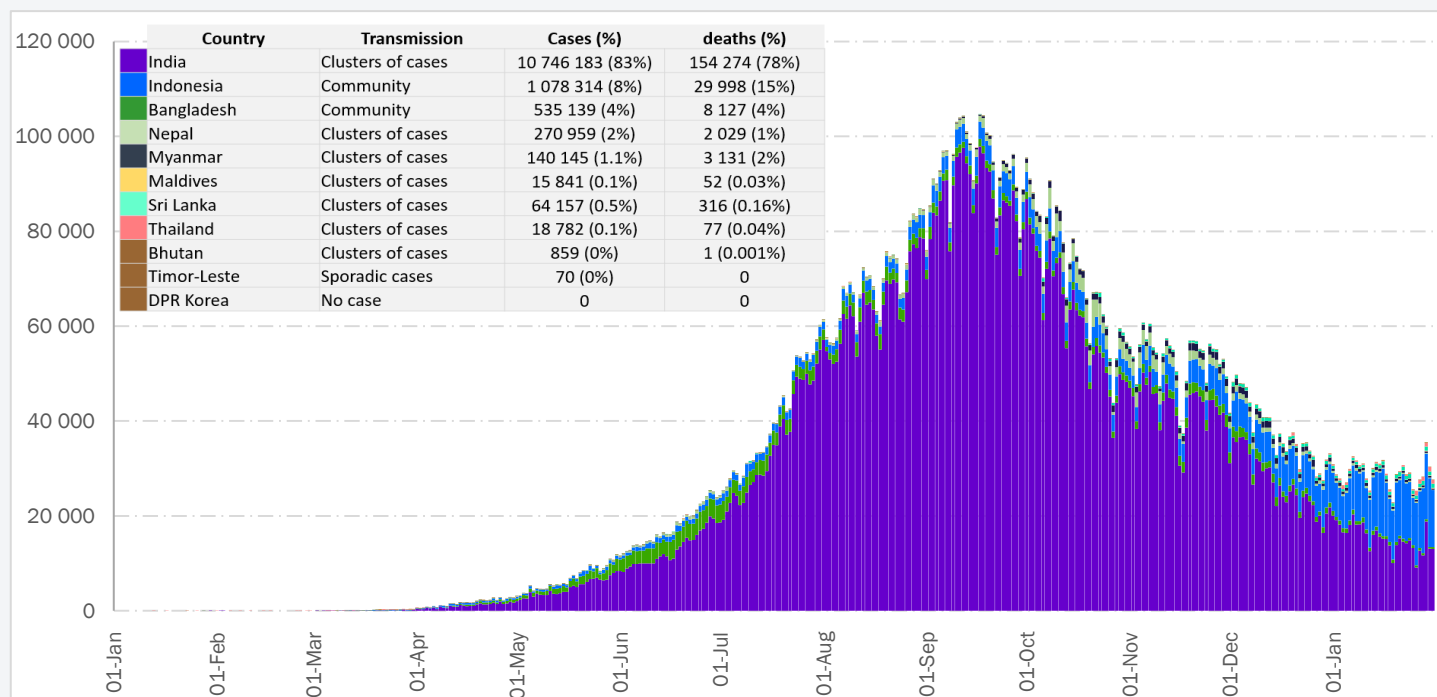
Highlights

- Global decline of new cases for three consecutive weeks (-13.2% last week compared to the previous week). WHO's South-East Asia Region (SEAR) reported 3.1% increase of new cases while all other WHO regions reported a general decline ranging from -27.2% (AFRO) to -5.2% (EMRO) compared to previous week
- Five Member States of WHO South-East Asia Region started COVID-19 vaccination programme with Covishield manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII); Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal launched nationwide vaccination on 27 January 2021 while Sri Lanka on 29 January 2021 and Maldives on 1 February 2021. This brings the number of states offering COVID-19 vaccination to seven, in addition to India and Indonesia

Overview of situation (epidemiological week#4 for period between 27 - 31 January 2021)

- South-East Asia Region (SEAR) continues to be the third most affected WHO Region (~12.9 million), after the Americas region (n=45.2 million) and European Region (n=34.3 million)
- The top three countries in SEAR reporting increased number of cumulative cases compared with that of previous week are Thailand (39%, 5 282 new cases), Sri Lanka (9.8%, 5 727 new cases) and Indonesia (9%, 89 052 new cases) (as of 31 January 2021)
- Two Member States in the Region, Bangladesh and Indonesia continue to report 'Community transmission', while seven - India, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan and Thailand reported 'Clusters of cases' mode. Timor-Leste reported 'Sporadic cases' and DPR Korea continues to report 'No Cases'
- Thailand reported a steep increase in number of new cases last week compared with that of the previous week (265%, 5 282 new cases). For the past 9-10 days, number of cases reported by day range from 710 – 890 cases compared with 120 -320 cases per day since 1 January 2021. COVID-19 cases have now been reported in 63 provinces. Since the beginning of this week (31 January 2021), only 12 provinces have reported cases, of which 10 provinces reporting > 50 cumulative cases include Samut Sakhon, Bangkok, Chonburi, and Rayong (ref: [Thailand Situation Report](#) dated 2 February 2021)
- In Maldives, there is a gradual increase in number of new cases reported compared to the previous week (77% increase, 848 new cases). Cases continue to be concentrated in the Greater Male Region; however, new clusters have been identified in four resorts in Kaafu atoll, and Meemu Atoll island of Kolhufushi, while the existing cluster from Gaaf Alif Dhevadhoo is increasing in size. (ref: Country office report dated 27 January and 3 February 2021)
- Indonesia surpassed 1 million COVID-19 cases on 26 January with six provinces making 64% of cases since 1 January. Cases and deaths are still on the rise. Test positivity rates are still high ranging from 15% in Jakarta, 35% in central Java and 45% in Kalimantan. (ref: [Indonesia situation report](#) 27 January 2021)
- Sri Lanka reported a 6.7 % increase in number of new cases last week compared with that of the previous week. Last week's number of new cases (n= 5 727) was the highest ever by week in Sri Lanka since the start of the pandemic. Most cases continue to be reported from Western Province, Kandy, Ratnapura, Kalmunai, Kurunegala, Kegalle and Galle. (ref: Country office report dated 30 January 2021)

- In Nepal, cases continue to show a declining trend; the number of new tests as well as the test positivity rate continue to show declining trend as well. All 7 provinces in Nepal are reporting 'clusters of cases' transmission. (ref: Country office report dated 27 January 2021)
- India continues to show a declining trend in reported new cases and new deaths. The number of new tests show a declining trend and the test positivity rate for the last week was approximately 2%.
- In the SEA Region, four countries have so far reported the SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern (VOC) 202012_01 variant (commonly referred as the UK variant) viz India (102), Thailand (4 cases), Nepal (3 cases) and Sri Lanka (1 case). The South African VOC (501Y.V2) is yet to be reported



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		10 746 183	7 787	154 274	1.4	91 650	-5.1	2.0
Indonesia		1 078 314	3 942	29 998	2.8	89 052	9.5	30.1
Bangladesh		535 139	3 249	8 127	1.5	3 340	-19.8	3.6
Nepal		270 959	9 300	2 029	0.7	1 509	-29.1	4.8
Myanmar		140 145	2 576	3 131	2.2	2 571	-21.0	2.1
Sri Lanka		64 157	2 996	316	0.5	5 727	6.7	5.1
Maldives		15 841	29 306	52	0.3	848	76.7	3.7
Thailand		18 782	269	77	0.4	5 282	265.3	4.3
Bhutan		859	1 113	1	0.1	4	-69.2	0.0
Timor-Leste		70	53		0.0	3	-80.0	14.8
DPR Korea		0						
SEAR total		12 870 449	6 367	198 005	-	199 986	2.7	-

*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:

- Weekly public insights from digital media reveal that the topic of vaccines continue to dominate social media conversations until 1 February 2021. Most of the increase in volume of conversations was around the vaccination of frontline workers, as well as development of new vaccines and efficacy of available vaccines. Top rumours on social media are about COVID-19 vaccines as well as non-proven cures

Operation support and logistics (cumulative supplies as of 3 February 2021):

- Diagnostics: WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) coordinated shipment and delivery of 1 936 700 tests of manual polymerase chain reaction (PCR), 260 000 tests of antigen-detecting rapid diagnostic tests (Ag RDTs), 2 268 950 swabs, 1 886 166 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, 371 836 face shields, 39 500 aprons and 30 000 biohazard bags 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

Resource Mobilization

- The technical working group (TWG) to oversee the implementation of the joint World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Union (EU) project - South-East Asia health pandemic response and preparedness programme - was established. The TWG will be supporting all the eight countries in the implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the project for next three years. This proposal includes a contribution of EUR 20 million from the EU
- The COVID-19 health sector emergency response support in Sri Lanka and the Maldives was signed in December 2020 with a retroactive starting date of the project in May 2020. This proposal includes a contribution of EUR 3 million from the EU
- The health support in response to COVID-19 in Timor-Leste (HSCTL) was signed with starting date of 1 January 2021. This proposal includes a contribution of EUR 1 971 600 from the EU

Key country updates

Bangladesh:

- A total of 567 registered participants received COVID-19 vaccine on 27-28 January 2021 during the dry run and kept under medical observation for seven days. Nationwide vaccination program is scheduled to start from 7 February 2021
- Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) is conducting healthcare worker case-control study in four government COVID-19 hospitals. Similar study will be extended in private COVID-19 hospitals. Protocol on national seroprevalence study is being finalized by IEDCR
- WHO supported IEDCR to strengthen capacity of contact tracing through training of trainers (ToT) on Go.Data (software for management of visualization of contact tracing data)

Bhutan:

- After more than 40 days of lockdown, the capital city Thimphu reopened to resume routine works from 1 February 2021
- Almost every household was tested twice in Thimphu to ascertain the epidemiological status to decide phase-wise unlocking
- All travelers to register with check post management system (CPMS) prior to travel. Public transport drivers will have to undergo mandatory testing every two weeks

DPR Korea:

- No reported cases of COVID-19 as of 28 January 2021
- Surveillance is ongoing, and samples are being tested for COVID-19 in 15 laboratories including 13 sub-national laboratories

India:

- Union Budget 2021-22 reflects strong focus on health and well-being as USD 4.78 billion (INR 35 000 crore) has been allocated for COVID-19 vaccine
- Union Secretary of Health reviews status of COVID-19 vaccination with States and Union Territories
- More than 3.7 million healthcare workers have been vaccinated across the country since the launch of COVID-19 vaccination drive
- Ministry of Home Affairs issues revised guidelines for surveillance, containment, and caution effective between 1 - 28 February 2021
- WHO continues to provide technical support to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) through JMG (Joint Monitoring Group) at the national level and through task force/control rooms at the state and district level

Indonesia:

- Ministry of Health (MoH) has revised health sector operational response plan for COVID-19, including a new pillar on COVID-19 vaccination
- The President ordered implementation of limited area quarantines down to neighbourhood or ward levels to curb COVID-19 transmission
- Ministry of Health (MoH) launched a chatbot service to facilitate registration for the COVID-19 vaccination programme, in partnership with WhatsApp to help healthcare workers (HCWs) connect to the nearest health facilities to receive COVID-19 vaccination
- MoH conducted a series of training sessions for over 2 270 newly recruited contact tracers from 10 priority provinces in collaboration with National COVID-19 Task Force to strengthen contact tracing in districts
- WHO handed over 248 sets of magnetic stands and a high-throughput automated sample preparation system for nucleic acid extraction to the National Institute of Health Research and Development (NIHRD) to strengthen COVID-19 laboratory capacity

Maldives:

- The Government of Maldives launched nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive with health workers, frontline COVID-19 volunteers and government staff on 1 February 2021
- The Health Protection Agency (HPA) announced a curfew from 12:00 midnight to 04:00 AM in the capital region and prohibition of large gatherings following spike in daily number of cases
- HPA announced a large-scale inspection of all public service providers to ensure adherence to the HPA guidelines for COVID-19
- Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC) reinstated 10-day mandatory quarantine for persons travelling from Greater Male region to inhabited islands

Myanmar:

- The Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) announced a one-year State of Emergency, during which the Commander-in-Chief (CiC) would assume full “legislative, judicial and executive powers”. The MAF detained senior Government leaders including State Counsellor, the President, Union ministers, and Chief ministers of all States and regions on 1 February 2021
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) announced extension of the precautionary restriction measures relating to control of the COVID-19 pandemic until 28 February on 31 January 2021
- A crisis management team (CMT) has been established by United Nations Country Team (UNCT). WHO Representative was included as a member of CMT to ensure continuity of COVID-19 response
- More than 103 000 healthcare workers have been vaccinated with the first dose of Covisheild vaccine since the launch of COVID-19 vaccination drive

Nepal:

- More than 116 920 targeted group people have been vaccinated with the first dose of Covisheild vaccine since the launch of COVID-19 vaccination drive on 27 January 2021
- WHO has drafted an operational guideline to strengthen the surveillance over UK variant and other variants of COVID-19

- WHO is supporting National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) and Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) for SARS-CoV-2 genetic sequencing using Sanger's method
- WHO handed over 15 Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) kits (sufficient to cater priority NCD needs of 10 000 people for three months) to Department of Health Services (DoHS)

Sri Lanka:

- More than 118 767 health workers and military front liners have been vaccinated with the first dose of Covisheild vaccine since the launch of COVID-19 vaccination drive on 29 January 2021
- The country will receive an indicative allocation of 1 692 000 doses of Astra Zeneca vaccines for the identified priority groups by mid-February
- The Ministry of Health (MoH) published guidelines for vaccination campaign and WHO has published a FAQs on vaccines in English, Sinhala and Tamil to support the campaign
- MoH has revised discharge criteria for COVID-19 patients to decongest isolation units - asymptomatic patients will be discharged after 10-days followed by 4-days of home quarantine

Thailand:

- Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) has eased COVID-19 control measures in most areas from 1 February 2021. CCSA will continue to monitor the situation and the outcome of the implementation of measures
- The majority of confirmed cases in Samut Sakhon during the new wave from both active case finding and self-presentation to healthcare facilities are in migrant workers
- Migrant workers wishing to travel to other provinces will require advance permission from the Provincial Disease Control Committees
- Strict measures are in place to minimize mobility in Samut Sakhon and to ensure appropriate treatment for all confirmed cases

Timor-Leste:

- The National Parliament approved the extension of State of Emergency for 30 days starting 2 February 2021 until 3 March 2021
- The Government decided to reactivate the integrated centre for crisis management (ICCM) to support Ministry of Health (MoH) and to update daily situation with immediate effect from 2 February until end of the State of Emergency
- MoH will decide on new restrictive measures including mandatory institutional quarantine and ending the optional provision of home quarantine

Adapting contact tracing activities in the south-east Asia region

The implementation of effective contact tracing and quarantine is critical to reduce transmission and control the COVID-19 epidemic.

As the intensity of transmission has increased in many member states, it has exceeded the capacity of the public health system to quickly and extensively notify and quarantine all contacts and isolate all cases.

WHO Country Offices (WCO) have been working closely with member states to identify the bottlenecks in scaling up contact tracing, particularly in areas of community transmission, and to adapt and prioritise activities to respond to these challenges. Necessary adaptations depend not only on settings' limited capacities, but also need to adapt over time, to best suit the current epidemiology of the outbreak (see table).













































Any specific adaptation may impact the overall effectiveness of contact tracing in interrupting transmission. Understanding the balance and trade-offs – alongside other interventions such as public health and social measures and case detection/testing/isolation – is a complex but necessary endeavour to deliver an optimal response. The evidence to inform such strategic decision on the relative value of contact tracing is clearly insufficient, especially when countries still struggle with operational problems for which data availability is also scanty. As a result, robust and regular analysis and comparison of contact tracing performance across geographies is difficult, hampering identification of benchmarks and the most basic learning towards continuous improvement. Suboptimal human resource capacity, organization and leadership, and weak community-based systems remain at the root of these challenges.

Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of contact tracing programmes must remain a priority for the countries; this is part of WHO's mandate under IHR. SEARO continues to provide technical support to these activities with financial support including from the enhanced contact tracing (ECT) grant within the HQ Solidarity Fund.



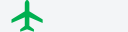
Adaptation	Examples
Workforce adaptations (i.e. who will do the case investigations and contact tracing)	In Sri Lanka and Cox's Bazar, existing public health infrastructure is used. In Sri Lanka the military provides further organizational support towards contact tracing activities In Bangladesh, a new cadre of 50 000 contact tracers within Dhaka city has been mobilized. Indonesia and Nepal have adapted JHSPH* training materials into local languages and used for training workforce
Epidemiologic adaptations (e.g. which contacts will be followed)	In Bangladesh and Cox's Bazar, contact tracing targets high-risk contacts only in hotspots (presence of several clusters) In Sri Lanka, rapid turnaround of PCR and rapid diagnostic test results to ensure all potential exposures investigated, tested and isolated within 24 hours of the cluster being identified
Information system adaptations (e.g. how will cases and contacts be notified and monitored)	In SEARO, 7 of 11 countries have adopted digital proximity tracing apps In Indonesia, digital surveillance platform (DHIS2) adopted to address challenges in information sharing Myanmar and Sri Lanka continue to use simple, proven low tech solutions (e.g. paper and excel based forms)
Financial, Logistical, and Operational adaptations (e.g. what resources will be available to support the system designed)	In Sri Lanka, households required to quarantine were provided with incentives such as dry rations for 14 days. Earlier in the pandemic they were also provided with financial assistance to make up for loss of income. Free ambulance services are also available to refer symptomatic contacts to a network of 52 isolation hospitals setup by MoH across the country

* Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/contact-tracing>

Update on the Public Health and Social Measures (27 January – 3 February 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  (Local authorities to decide on restrictions in areas other than containment zones)	Restricted* 	 (Schools reopened for some /all grades and vary across States)	 Allowed (States to decide on requirements for gatherings)	Mandatory
Indonesia	Partial  (New curbs in some areas for enforcement of public activity restrictions)	Restricted* 	 (Vary across provinces)	 (Vary across Provinces)	Mandatory
Maldives	Partial  (Curfew from 2300 to 0430 hrs. at Greater Male Region from 3 February)	Resumed  (Vehicle movement banned between 2030 to 0430 hrs)	 (Preschool and day care centers closed)	 Ban > 15	Mandatory
Myanmar	Partial  (Limiting movement only in a few townships)	Restricted* 		 Ban > 30	Mandatory
Nepal	None 	Resumed 		 Ban > 25	Mandatory
Sri Lanka	Partial  (Restrictions imposed in isolated areas)	Restricted* 	 (Schools closed in Western Provinces)	 Ban > 10	Mandatory
Thailand (Emergency extended until 28 February 2021)	Partial  (Limiting movement in controlled areas)	Restricted*  (Ban on public transport in Samut Sakhon; Measures vary for other areas)	 (Schools remain closed in Samut Sakhon province; In highly controlled areas <25 students/class allowed)	 Ban	Mandatory
Timor-Leste (Emergency extended until 3 March 2021)	Partial 	Restricted 		 Ban > 10	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)		Land transport – 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

- Two Member States of SEAR, namely Bhutan and Maldives, have been selected for the first wave introduction of the Pfizer vaccine
- All 10 Advance Market Commitment (AMC) countries of SEAR received letters from COVAX facility informing of vaccine types and quantities covering 7.5% of population. Countries have been advised to upload the National Deployment and Vaccination Plans before 09 February 2021 to be eligible for allocation and shipment of the vaccines. Indonesia and Bhutan have uploaded their National Deployment and Vaccine Plan (NDVP) on partners portal for review by Regional Review Committee
- Workshop on safety surveillance for COVID-19 vaccines for Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, was conducted from 27-28 January 2021. Participants were members of national adverse events following immunization (AEFI) committees, Ministry of Health staff and WHO country office staff of these countries involved with COVID-19 vaccine deployment. Objectives were:
 - To provide clarity on the unique and different context in which vaccine safety surveillance will have to be implemented for COVID-19 vaccine(s)
 - To provide guidance on adapting global guidance tools on vaccine safety surveillance for use in countries, based on the context of individual countries
 - To identifying key activities for safety surveillance that need to be accomplished before, during and after COVID-19 vaccine deployment
 - To provide guidance on inclusion of comprehensive vaccine safety surveillance in national vaccine deployment and vaccination plans for COVID-19 Vaccines
- COVID-19 vaccination of priority groups in Indonesia and India complete the third and fourth week of vaccinations, respectively. Priority groups for India are health care workers, frontline workers, high risk population (>50 years of age) and persons <50 years with comorbidities; and for Indonesia: frontline health workers, essential staff, the marginalized poor and the elderly (>60 years of age)
- SEARO provides ongoing support to countries for development and pre-review of NDVP and support to preparations for COVID-19 vaccination introduction. Nine countries have submitted the final NDVPs or a draft version of NDVPs and preparations for first introductions of the Pfizer vaccines