

# WHO South-East Asia Region Epidemiological Bulletin

WHO Health Emergencies Programme

WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia

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HEALTH  
**EMERGENCIES**  
programme



World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR  
South-East Asia



This epidemiological bulletin aims to provide the situation of key infectious diseases in the WHO South-East Asia region to inform risk assessments and responses. The bulletin uses information from publicly available sources and will be published every two weeks. For feedback or suggestions, please write to [seoutbreak@who.int](mailto:seoutbreak@who.int).

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## Key events and updates

### Earthquake in Nepal <sup>123456</sup>

#### Situation overview, as of 12 November 2023

- On 3 November 2023, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck Karnali province, western Nepal with an epicentre in Ramidanda, Jajarkot district, approximately 65 km northeast of Surkhet. This has been followed by multiple aftershocks including a 5.8 magnitude aftershock on 6 November.
- As of 13 November, according to UNICEF, 154 deaths (70 males and 84 females) have been reported including 366 people injured. Children account for 50-60% of the casualties and injuries.
- A total of thirteen districts were impacted and according to UNICEF, as of 13 November there are an estimated 250 000 people (including 80 000 children) affected in the districts of Jajarkot and Rukum West.
- Approximately 62 039 houses have been damaged with 26 550 fully destroyed and 35 489 partially damaged and many people are sleeping in open or makeshift shelters in freezing temperatures.
- A total of 47 health facilities have been damaged with 13 facilities rendered nonfunctional, leading to a significant disruption of critical health services such as maternal and newborn care.

#### Health needs

- Continuation of essential health services, including sexual and reproductive health, maternity and child health services, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Nearly 5 000 pregnant women are likely to require maternal and newborn care.
- The establishment of active surveillance for the early detection and timely response to outbreaks. In particular, there is an increased risk of respiratory and waterborne infections.
- Mapping of displacement sites and shelters, to ensure accessibility to the nearest health facilities and enable a rapid response in case of outbreaks.

#### Country response

- The Government of Nepal is leading response efforts with support from the private sector, local non-governmental organizations, neighbouring countries and international humanitarian organizations.
- Four Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) were deployed by the Ministry of Health and Population.
- More than five medical tents were installed in Jajarkot and Rukum West.
- 200 newborn incentive kits including warm clothes and 300 health kits were provided to health facilities.
- Provision of 14 different sets of inter-agency reproductive health kits, including medicines and supplies.
- Provision of tents to establish health posts with birthing centers.
- UN agencies have strengthened their cluster co-leadership functions, prepositioned relief items and facilitated the transportation and storage of assistance.

#### WHO Response

- Provided technical, coordination and information management support at the federal and provincial level including the linkage with the inter-cluster coordination.
- Support for implementation of active syndromic disease surveillance and event-based surveillance.
- Support for mental health and psycho-social support, including psychosocial counselling for earthquake survivors.
- Review of risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) materials for priority health threats in coordination with the National Health Education, Information and Communication Center (NHEICC).
- Dispatched two basic modules of Interagency Emergency Health kits to Jajarkot.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/nepal/news/detail/07-11-2023-who-responds-to-nepal-earthquake>

<sup>2</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/unicef-nepal-humanitarian-situation-report-no-2-earthquake-13-november-20233>

<sup>3</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/children-account-half-dead-and-injured-nepal-earthquake-unicef>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/news/detail/08-11-2023-who-responding-to-western-nepal-earthquake-2023>

<sup>5</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/united-nations-response-western-nepal-earthquake-2023-10-november-2023>

<sup>6</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-western-nepal-earthquake-2023-situation-report-no-02-10-november-2023>

## Zika virus disease in India <sup>7 8</sup>

Situation as of 13 November 2023

- According to a press release by the Government of Kerala, India, eight cases of Zika virus disease have been confirmed in Thalassery city, Kannur district in the state of Kerala, India.
  - The area has been visited by the district medical officer and rapid response team and preventive measures have been intensified.
  - Pregnant women with symptoms including fever are advised to report to healthcare services and healthcare workers have been advised to monitor patients for symptoms suggestive of Zika virus disease.
- In September 2023, three confirmed cases of Zika virus disease were reported from Kohapur district, Maharashtra.

## WHO South-East Asia Regional Strategy for the prevention and control of Nipah virus infection 2023-2030 <sup>9</sup>

- On 31 October 2023, WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia published the [South-East Asia Regional Strategy for the prevention and control of Nipah virus \(NiV\) infection for 2023 to 2030](#).
- In the region, since 2001, outbreaks of NiV infection have been reported in Bangladesh on a nearly annual basis and periodically in eastern and southern India with the most recent being in 2023 in Kerala State.
- The Strategy was developed to support Member States until 2030, to prevent illness and deaths due to Nipah virus (NiV).
- The key components of the Strategy include:
  - improving the understanding of the socioecological aspects of NiV
  - enhancing policy, strategy and regional capacity
  - increasing multisectoral, One Health system capacity and readiness for detection, early warning, and response to cases and outbreaks
  - enhancing risk communication and awareness to reduce spillover and spread
  - promoting research and development
  - promoting behavioural changes to reduce risk
  - improving the control of disease in domestic animals through enhanced biosecurity
  - increasing laboratory diagnostic capability in, and surveillance and information-sharing among the human, animal and wildlife sectors
  - improving clinical diagnosis and case management
  - developing and improving access to medical countermeasures
  - ensuring resilience.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.prd.kerala.gov.in/ml/node/238648>

<sup>8</sup> <https://idsp.nic.in/WriteReadData/l892s/128660161699611747.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789290210849>

## COVID-19

### Status as of 12 November 2023

- The WHO South-East Asia Region has recorded a cumulative total of 61 209 872 COVID-19 cases, including 808 064 deaths. In the Region, from 6 to 12 November 2023, 409 new cases, a decrease of 18.4% and four new deaths, an increase of 100.0% were reported compared to the previous week.
- Between 6 to 12 November 2023, Thailand (287 new cases, -5.6%), India (72 new cases, -48.2%), Bangladesh (34 new cases, -2.9%), Myanmar (10 new cases, -33.3%) and Sri Lanka (six new case, -25.0%) reported a decrease in the number of new cases compared to the previous week. Data were not available from Bhutan, Indonesia, Maldives, Nepal and Timor-Leste for this period.
- Globally, 771 820 937 COVID-19 cases, including 6 978 175 deaths have been cumulatively reported, as of 8 November 2023<sup>10</sup>.
- Please refer to the [WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard](https://covid19.who.int/) for further information of COVID-19 in WHO South-East Asia Region.

**Table 1. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the weekly change in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week from 6 to 12 November 2023**

Country		Cumulative cases	New cases (last 7 days)	% change in new cases	New cases per 1M pop	Cumulative deaths	New deaths (last 7 days)	% change in new deaths	New deaths per 1M pop
Thailand		4,758,716	287	-5.6	4.1	34,489	1	0	0.0
India		45,001,456	72	-48.2	0.1	533,295	1	0	0.0
Bangladesh		2,045,992	34	-2.9	0.2	29,477	0	0	0.0
Myanmar		641,366	10	-33.3	0.2	19,494	0	0	0.0
Sri Lanka		672,612	6	-25.0	0.3	16,885	2	100	0.1
Bhutan		62,697	NA	NA	NA	21	NA	NA	NA
Indonesia		6,813,429	NA	NA	NA	161,918	NA	NA	NA
Maldives		186,694	NA	NA	NA	316	NA	NA	NA
Nepal		1,003,450	NA	NA	NA	12,031	NA	NA	NA
Timor-Leste		23,460	NA	NA	NA	138	NA	NA	NA
SEAR total		61,209,872	409	-18.4	NA	808,064	4	100	NA

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

NA = data not available.

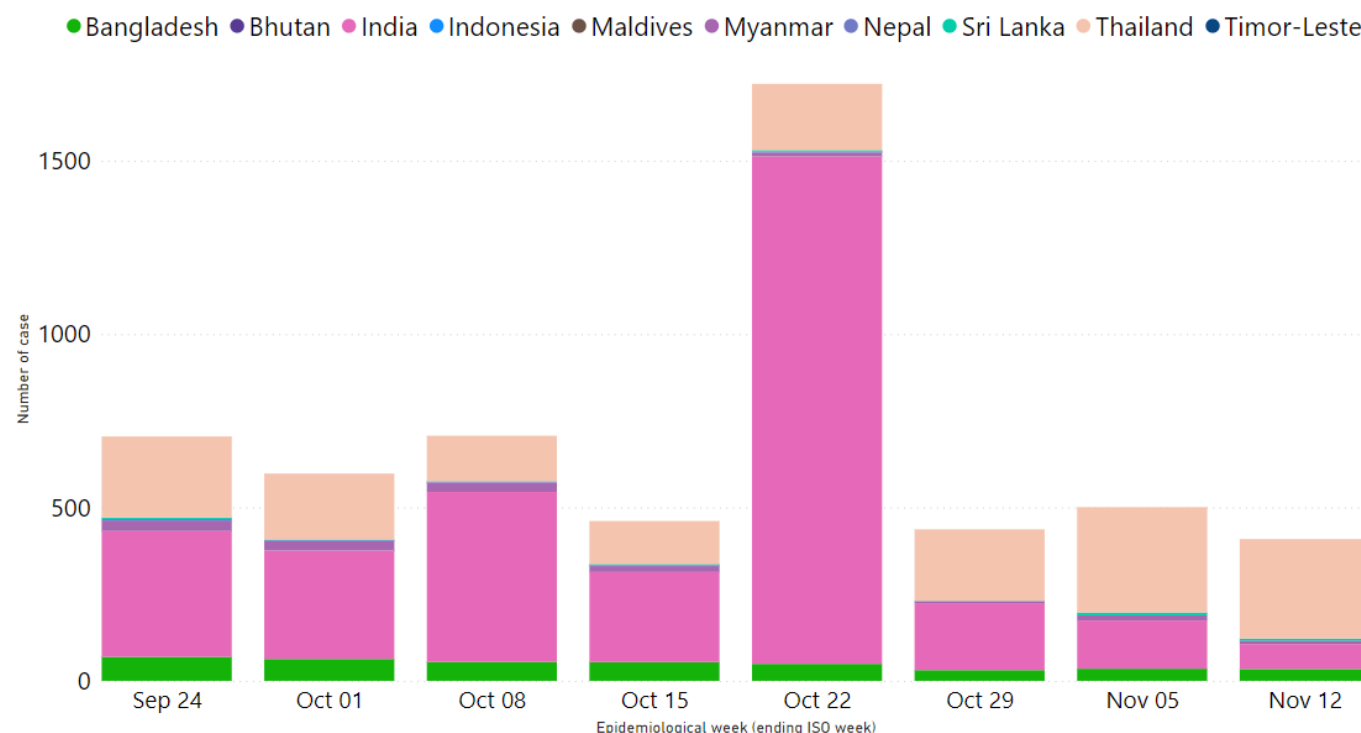
DPR Korea has not reported confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Thailand data were for the period from 22 to 28 October 2023 in comparison to the preceding week.

As for cumulative numbers, Maldives data are as of 5 August, Timor-Leste data as of 11 August, Indonesia data as of 13 September, Bhutan data as of 8 October and Nepal data as of 20 October 2023,

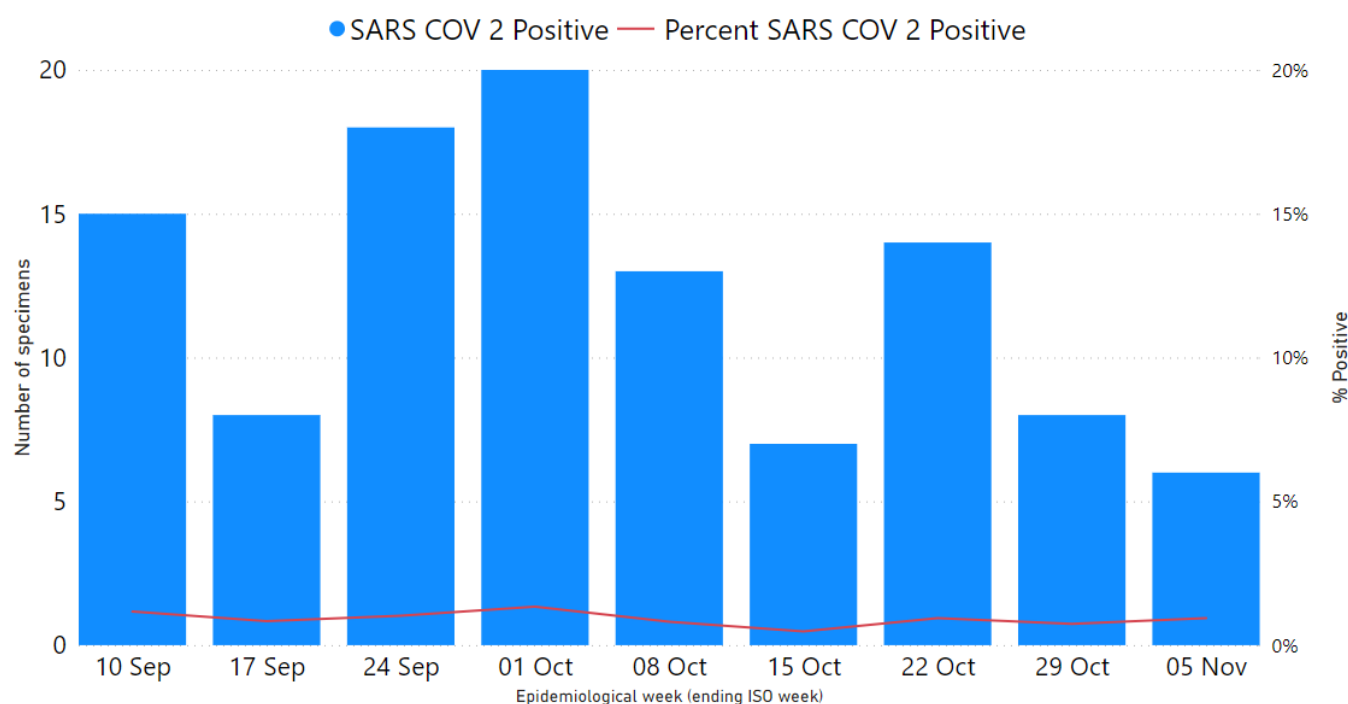
<sup>10</sup> Data as of 6:15pm CET, 8 November 2023 link: <https://covid19.who.int/>

**Figure 1. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the previous eight weeks (18 September to 12 November 2023) in the WHO South-East Asia Region \***



\* Maldives, Indonesia and Timor-Leste data are not available. Bhutan Data are as of 8 October and Nepal Data are as of 20 October 2023.

**Figure 2. Weekly number of SARS-CoV-2 positive samples and test positivity from integrated influenza-SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance systems in the previous seven weeks (10 September to 5 November 2023) in selected countries\* (as of 5 November 2023)**



\* Countries routinely conducting SARS-CoV-2 testing of the samples collected through influenza sentinel surveillance sites (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal and Timor-Leste).



## SARS-CoV-2 variants in the South-East Asia Region

- Currently, WHO is closely tracking three variants of interest (VOI) and six variants under monitoring (VUMs) and their descendent lineages (\* includes their descendant lineages).<sup>11</sup>
  - The VOIs are XBB.1.5, XBB.1.16 and EG.5 (including HK.3 and HV.1).
  - The VUMs are BA.2.86, DV.7, XBB, XBB.1.9.1, XBB.1.9.2 and XBB.2.3.
- As of 12 November 2023, the sequence data submitted to GISAID by countries in the South-East Asia region in the last 60 days by date of collection are as follows (Table 2). Only a small number of sequences has been submitted from the Region and therefore the data should be interpreted with caution.
  - In **India**, 49 sequences were submitted. XBB.2.3\* continues to account for the highest percentage of sequences submitted (63.3%, n=31) followed by XBB.1.16\* (20.4%, n=10).
  - In **Myanmar**, two sequences were submitted, one of HK.3\* and one of XBB.2.3\*.
  - In **Thailand**, 179 sequences were submitted. XBB.1.16\* continued to account for the majority of sequences (24.0%, n=43). This was followed by EG.5\* (excluding HK.3 and HV.1) (17.3%, n=31), XBB.2.3\* (16.2%, n=29) and HK.3\* (13.4%, n=24).
  - Other countries have not submitted sequences recently to GISAID.

**Table 2. Percentage and number of Omicron sub-lineages submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 12 November 2023 (by date of sample collection)**

Lineage	India (n=49)		Myanmar (n=2)		Thailand (n=194)	
	<31 days (n=10)	31-60 days (n=39)	<31 days (n=0)	31-60 days (n=2)	<31 days (n=26)	31-60 days (n=153)
<b>VOIs</b>						
XBB.1.5*	1 (10.0%)	1 (2.6%)			3 (11.5%)	36 (3.9%)
XBB.1.16*		10 (25.6%)			1 (3.8%)	42 (27.5%)
EG.5*		1 (2.6%)			3 (11.5%)	28 (18.3%)
HK.3*					11 (42.3%)	13 (8.5%)
HV.1*					2 (7.7%)	3 (2.0%)
<b>VUMs</b>						
BA.2.86*						2 (1.3%)
DV.7*						4 (2.6%)
XBB*						1 (0.7%)
XBB.1.9.1*		1 (2.6%)			2 (7.7%)	14 (9.2%)
XBB.1.9.2*	2 (20.0%)			1 (50%)	2 (7.7%)	5 (3.3%)
XBB.2.3*	6 (20.0%)	25 (64.1%)		1 (50%)		29 (19.0%)
Other	1 (10.0%)				2 (7.7%)	6 (3.9%)

\*indicates the sub-lineage of each variant.

XBB\* excludes XBB.1.16\*, XBB.1.5\*, XBB.1.9.1, XBB.1.9.2 and XBB.2.3\*

XBB.1.9.2\* excludes the sub-lineage EG.5\*

EG.5\* excludes the sub-lineages HK.3\* and HV.1\* Sources: GISAID (<https://gisaid.org/>), as of 12 November 2023.

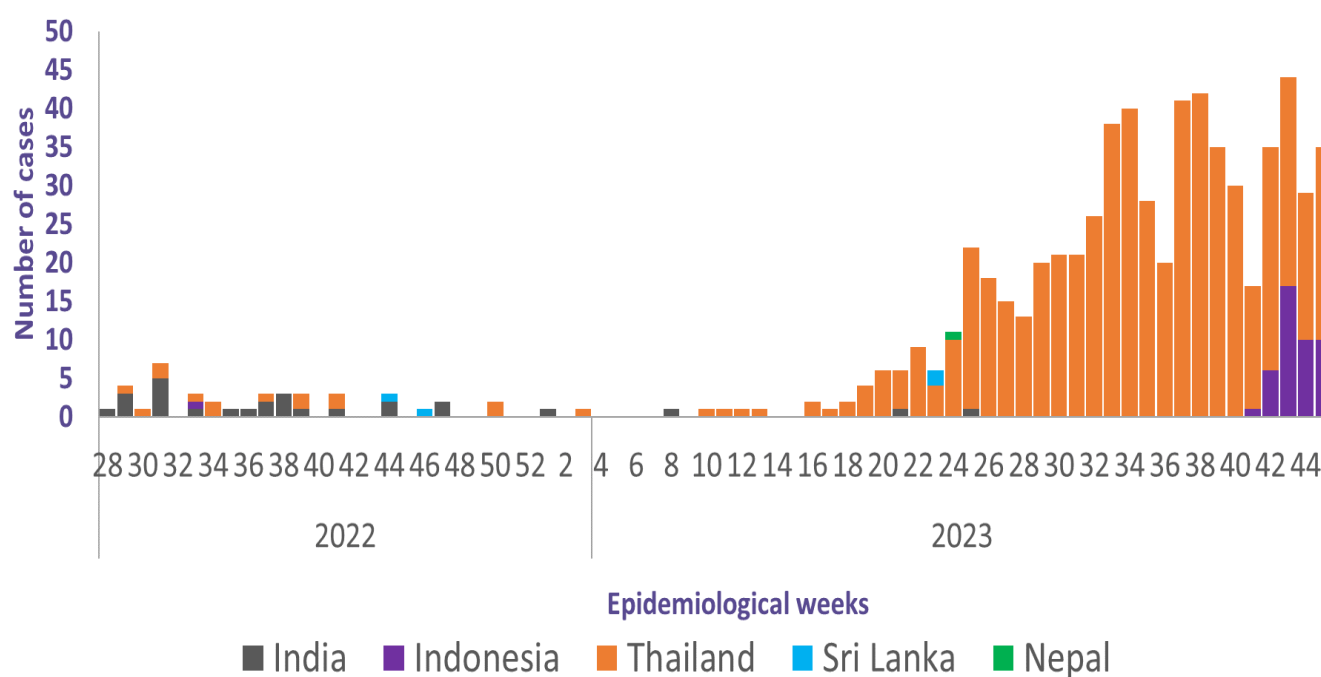
<sup>11</sup> <https://www.who.int/activities/tracking-SARS-CoV-2-variants/>

## mpox

Status as of 12 November 2023

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 684 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases, including two deaths, have been reported since 14 July 2022 (Figure 3). In epidemiological week 44 and 45 (from 30 October to 12 November 2023), 44 new mpox cases from Thailand and 20 new mpox cases were reported from Indonesia.
- Table 3 summarizes the basic epidemiological profile of the 654 mpox cases in the Region for which case-based information is available.
- For more information on the global situation of mpox outbreak, please visit the [global dashboard](#).

**Figure 3. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification\* (14 July 2022 – 12 November 2023)**



\*Cases are plotted per week of notification - the date on which the case is notified to the public health authority.

**Table 3. Profile of the 654 confirmed mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region for which case-based information is available since July 2022 and since July 2023 (as of 12 November 2023)**

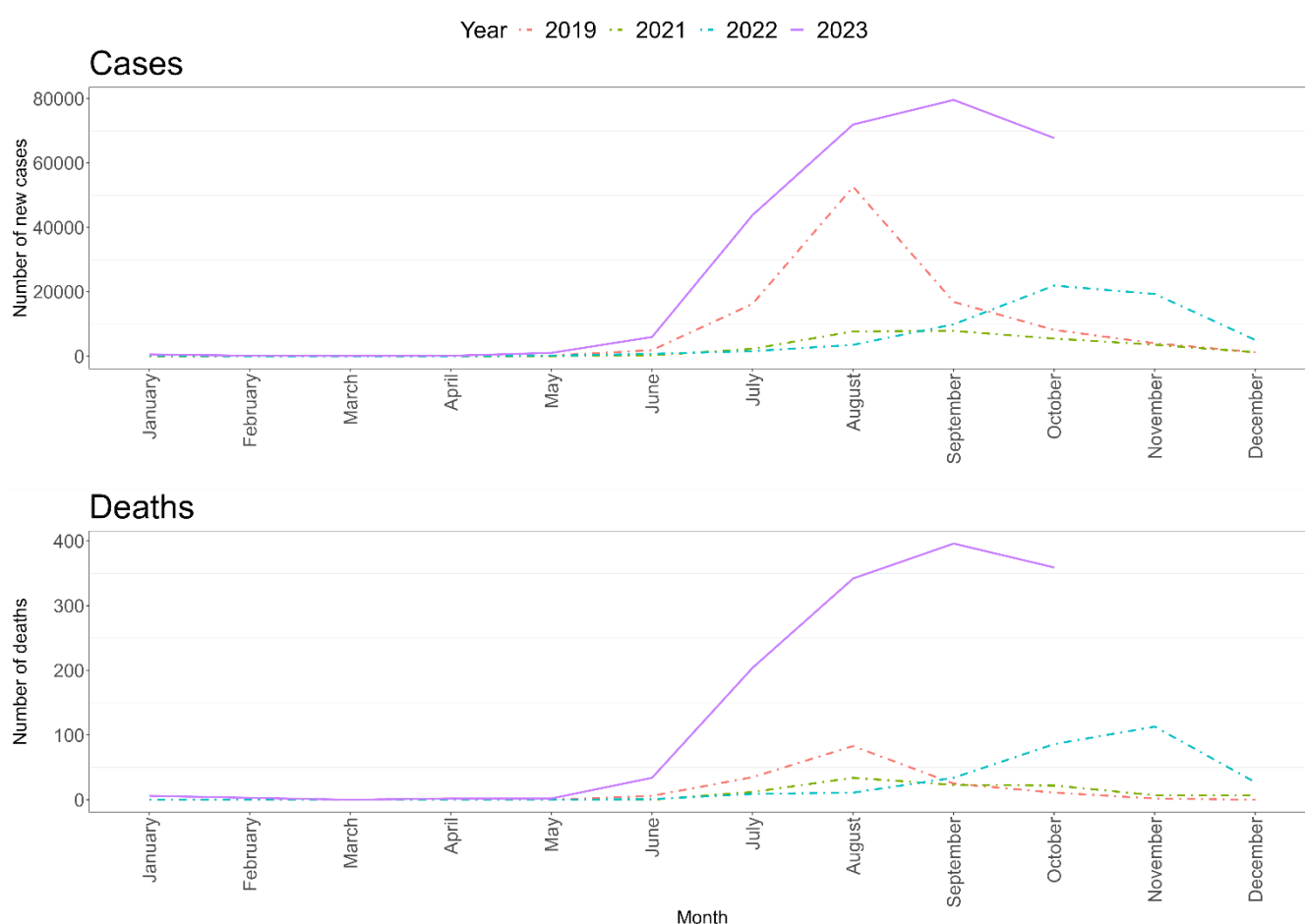
	Since July 2022 (n = 654)	Since July 2023 (n = 525)
<b>Country</b>		
India	27 (4.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Indonesia	40 (6.1%)	39 (7.4%)
Nepal	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Sri Lanka	4 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Thailand	582 (89.0%)	486 (92.6%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	31 (4.7%)	9 (1.7%)
Male	622 (95.1%)	516 (98.3%)
Transgender	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Age group (years)</b>		
Less than 18	4 (0.6%)	3 (0.6%)
18-29	221 (33.8%)	182 (34.7%)
30-39	278 (42.5%)	223 (42.5%)
40-49	127 (19.4%)	102 (19.4%)
50 and over	24 (3.7%)	15 (2.9%)
<b>Sexual orientation</b>		
Heterosexual	55 (8.4%)	31 (5.9%)
Men who have sex with men (MSM)	529 (80.9%)	447 (85.1%)
Bisexual	9 (1.4%)	8 (1.5%)
Other	8 (1.2%)	6 (1.1%)
Unknown	53 (8.1%)	33 (6.3%)
<b>Recent travel</b>		
Yes	42 (6.4%)	11 (2.1%)
No	604 (92.4%)	512 (97.5%)
Unknown	8 (1.2%)	2 (0.4%)

## Dengue

### Bangladesh<sup>12 13</sup>

- A total of 291 832 dengue cases including 1 476 deaths have been cumulatively reported between 1 January and 12 November 2023 with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.50%.
- During October 2023, a total of 67 769 cases including 359 deaths were reported. The highest monthly numbers of cases and deaths based available historical data from 2019 to 2023 were reported in September 2023 (79 598 and 396, respectively). Between 1 and 12 November at total of 20 657 cases including 128 deaths were reported (Figure 4).
- A total of 11 928 cases of dengue were reported in Bangladesh during week 45 (6 to 12 November 2023), similar to the number of cases reported during week 44 (30 October to 5 November 2023) (n=12 224).
- The number of new deaths also decreased by 9.3% from 75 in week 44 to 68 in week 45.

**Figure 4. Number of new cases of, and deaths from dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to 31 October 2023**



Source: Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS Reported Monthly Dengue cases & Dengue Deaths in Bangladesh. <https://old.dghs.gov.bd/index.php/bd/home/5200-daily-dengue-status-report>

<sup>12</sup> <https://old.dghs.gov.bd/index.php/bd/home/5200-daily-dengue-status-report>

<sup>13</sup> [https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231112\\_dengue\\_all.pdf](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231112_dengue_all.pdf)

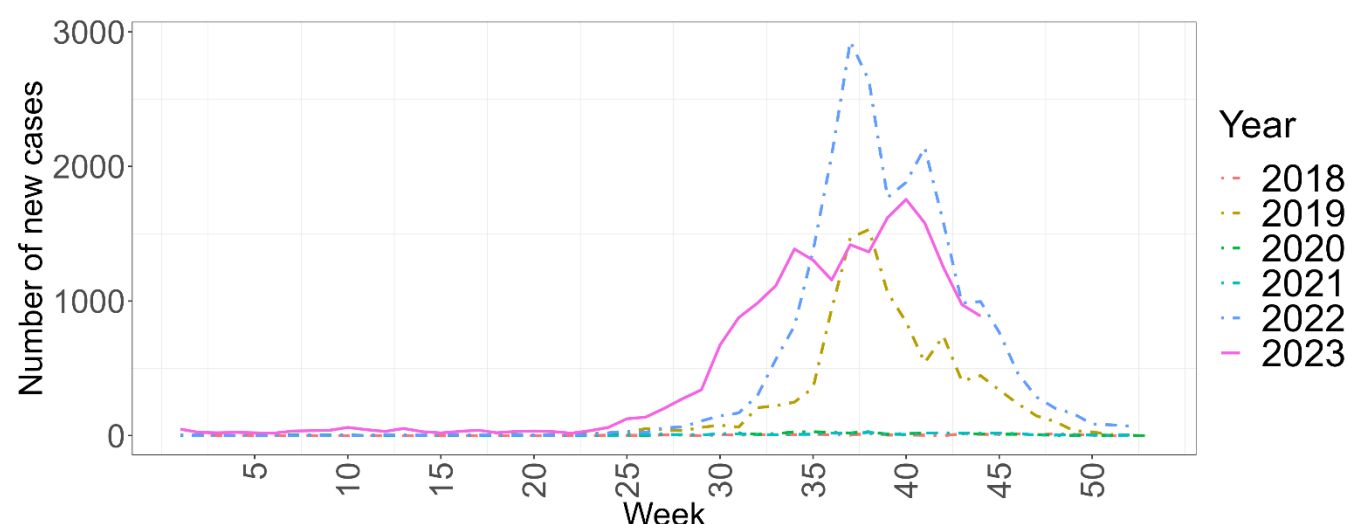
## Maldives

No new data have been uploaded since the Monthly Communicable Disease report for May 2023 in Maldives. Please refer to previous versions of the [South-East Asia Epidemiological Bulletin](#) for prior epidemiological information.

## Nepal<sup>14 15</sup>

- Between 1 January and 6 November 2023, 46 319 cases of dengue including 20 confirmed deaths (CFR=0.05%) have been reported from 77 districts in Nepal.
- The highest number of monthly cases in 2023 has been reported in October (n=12 418). The highest cumulative number of cases has been reported from Sunsari district, Koshi province (16 160 cases (34.9% of the total) 1 818 cases per 100 000 population. However, the highest cumulative case incidence has been reported from Tanahu district, Gandaki province (6 811 cases (14.7% of the total), 1 986 cases per 100 000 population.
- Over time, the spatial distribution of cases has changed: In August 2023, incidence was highest in districts in Koshi province (Sunsari, Sankhuwasabha and Morang) as well as Dhading in Bagmati province; in October 2023, incidence has been highest in districts in Gandaki province (Tanahun, Gorkha and Kaski)).
- A total of 888 cases of dengue were reported in Nepal during week 44 (29 October to 4 November 2023) via the Early Warning Reporting System (EWARS), a 8.7% decrease compared to week 43 (22 to 28 October, n= 973) (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Number of new cases of dengue by week reported by the Early Warning Reporting System (EWARS) in Nepal from January 2018 to 4 November 2023**



Source: Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Disease Control Division. EWARS Weekly Bulletin. <https://edcd.gov.np/resources/newsletter>

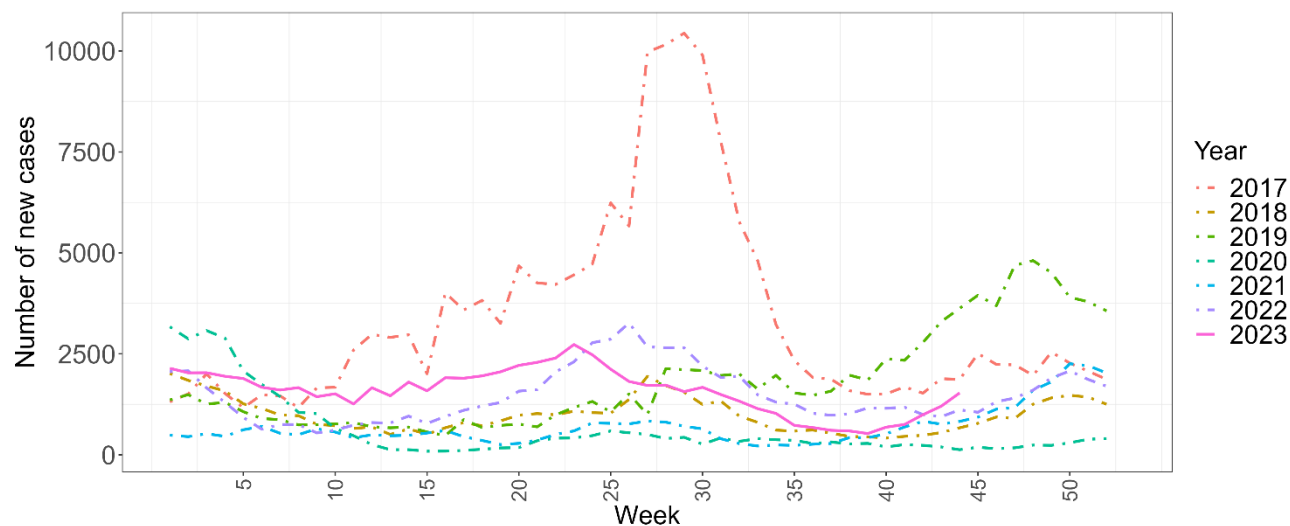
<sup>14</sup> Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Disease Control Division. EWARS Weekly Bulletin. <https://edcd.gov.np/resources/newsletter>

<sup>15</sup> Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Disease Control Division. Situation Report on Dengue in Nepal- 2023. Sitrep No. 65, Friday, October 27, 2023. <https://edcd.gov.np/news/20231026dengue-situation-update-1>

## Sri Lanka<sup>16</sup>

- As of 5 November (end of week 44), a total of 69 505 cases of dengue have been reported in Sri Lanka in 2023. This compares to 65 052 cases reported between weeks one and 44 in 2022.
- A total of 1532 cases of dengue were reported in Sri Lanka in week 44 (30 October – 5 November), a 27.2% increase compared to 1 204 cases reported in week 43 (23 to 29 October 2023) (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Number of new cases of dengue by week in Sri Lanka from January 2018 to 5 November 2023 (week 44)**



Sources: Epidemiology Unit and National Dengue Control Unit, Ministry of Health.

<https://www.epid.gov.lk/epid/public/index.php/weekly-epidemiological-report/weekly-epidemiological-report> (2017 to 2020)

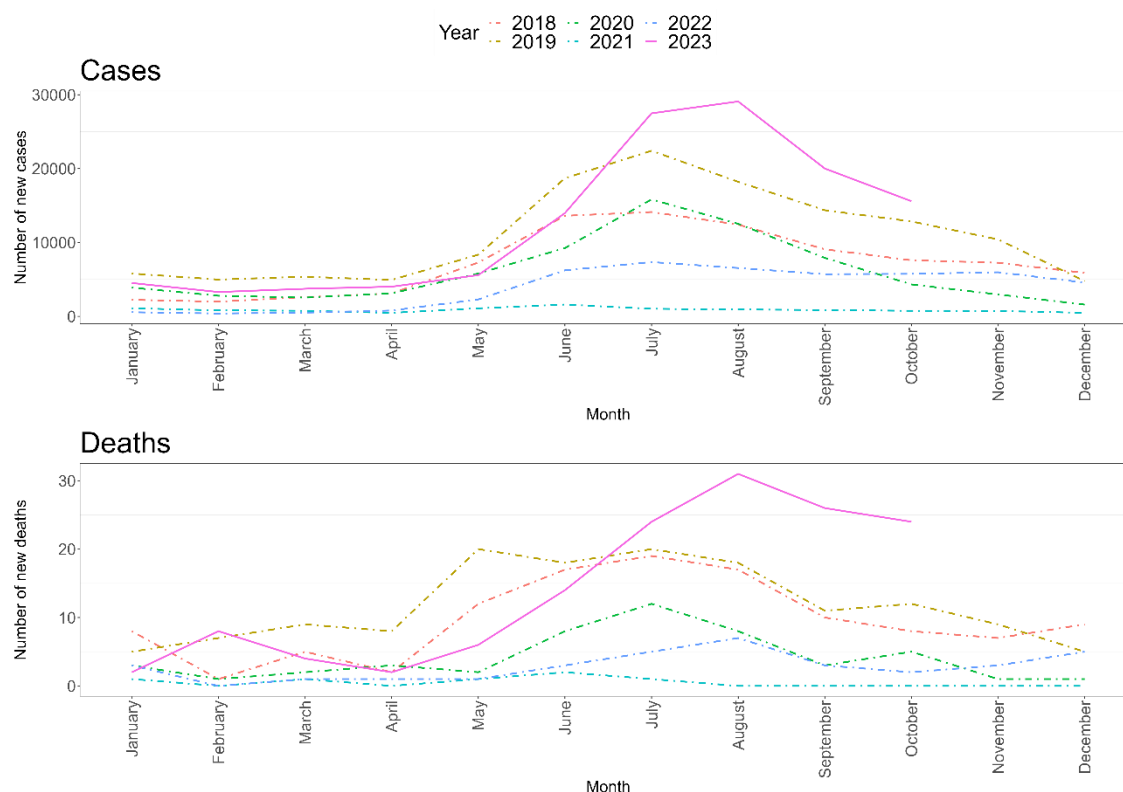
<https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB> (2021 to 2023)

<sup>16</sup> <https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB>

## Thailand <sup>17 18 19 20</sup>

- As of 8 November, a total of 127 838 dengue cases (inclusive of dengue (n=97 033, 75.9%), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) (n=29 726, 23.3%) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS) (n=1 079, 0.8%)) and 141 dengue deaths (inclusive of dengue (n=14, 9.9%), DHF (n=38, 27.0%) and DSS (n=89, 63.1%)) (CFR=0.1%) were reported in Thailand in 2023.
- In 2023, the number of cumulative cases and deaths between January and October (n=127 285 and n=141, respectively) is higher than that reported for the same period in previous years (2018 to 2022).
- Of the 127 838 cases reported until 8 November in 2023, there were equal proportions of males and females (50.9%) (n=65 110) 49.1% (n=62 728), respectively). Those aged five to 14 years comprised the 33.6% of cases (n=42 988) and those aged 15 to 24 years accounted for 21.9% (n=27 974).

**Figure 7. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by month in Thailand from January 2018 to October 2023.**



Sources: Bureau of Epidemiology, DDC, MPH. <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=66>; <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=26> and <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=27>

<sup>17</sup> Bureau of Epidemiology, DDC, MPH. <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=66>

<sup>18</sup> Bureau of Epidemiology, DDC, MPH. <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=26>

<sup>19</sup> Bureau of Epidemiology, DDC, MPH. <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=27>

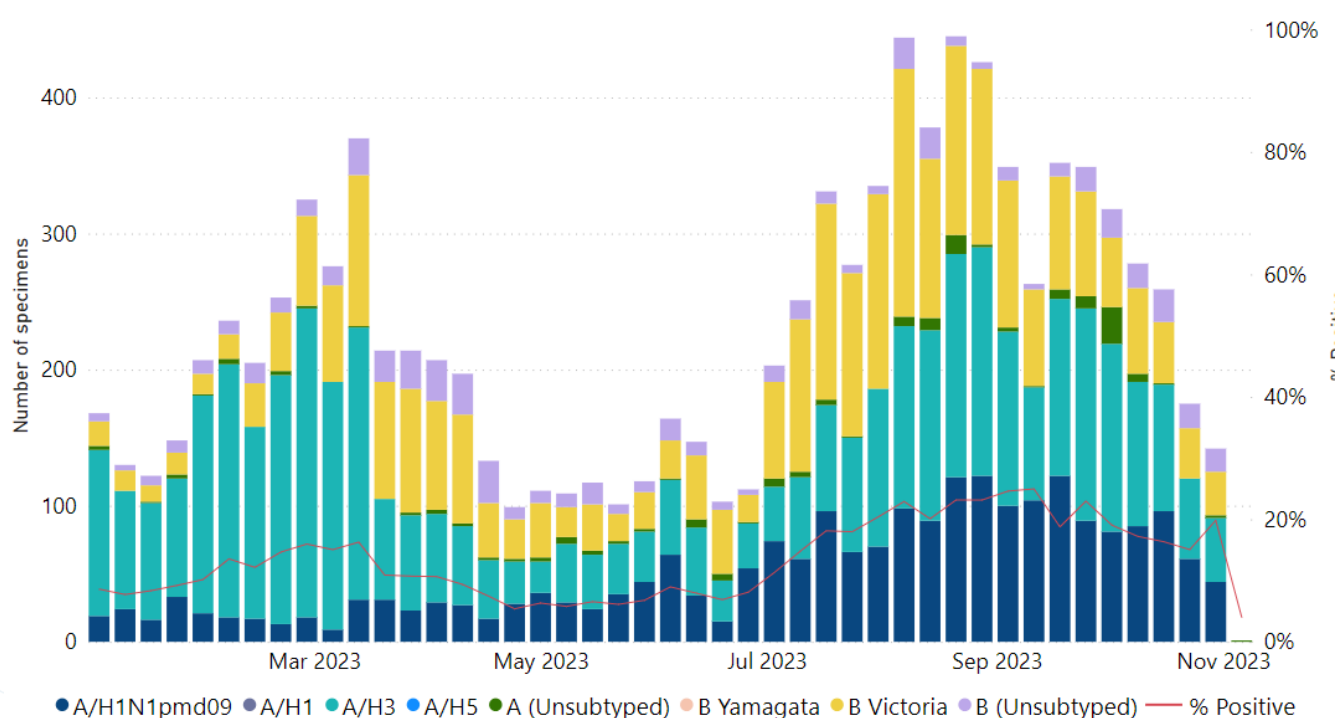
<sup>20</sup> [https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/dfa7d4e2-b7f5-48ed-b40a-54f1cd4cbdfb/page/p\\_ortuohurpc](https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/dfa7d4e2-b7f5-48ed-b40a-54f1cd4cbdfb/page/p_ortuohurpc)

## Influenza

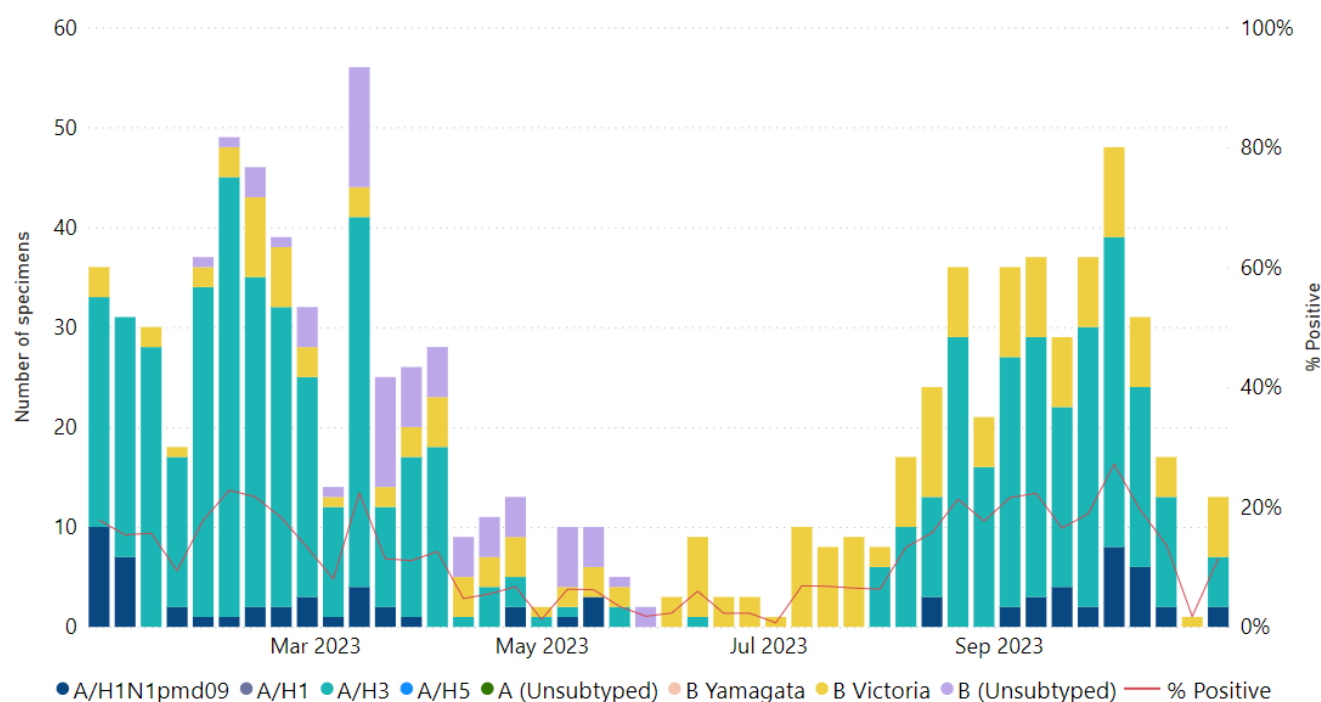
Status as of 12 November 2023

- From the week starting 26 June 2023, in the WHO South-East Asia Region, an increase in transmission of seasonal influenza has been observed. The percentage of specimens positive for influenza has remained between 18% and 23% from the week beginning 24 July to the week beginning 30 October 2023. During this period, the most frequently circulating strains were Influenza A/H3, A/H1N1pdm09 and B Victoria (Figure 7).
- The increases were primarily driven by Bangladesh, Nepal and Thailand.
- In Bangladesh, since the week starting 14 August there has been a declining trend with the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza virus decreasing from 35% (n=148) during the week beginning 14 August 2023 to 4% (n=3) during the week beginning 23 October 2023. The transmission in Bangladesh was primarily driven by influenza subtype B Victoria followed by Influenza A/H3 and influenza A/H1N1 pdm09.
- In Nepal, the percentage of specimens testing positive started to increase from the week beginning 7 August and until 2 October 2023, remained between 13% and 27% (Figure 8). From 2 October, it has shown a declining trend with a positivity of 11% during the week beginning 30 October.
- In Thailand, the percentage of specimens positive for influenza increased from 29% during the week starting 14 August to 38% during the week starting 25 September. However, in the most recent two weeks (starting 23 October), the positivity has fallen to below 25%. In the last month, the most frequently circulating strains have been the subtype influenza A/H3 followed by influenza A/H1N1 pdm09 and un-subtyped influenza B (Figure 9).
- From the week starting on 14 August to the week starting on 23 October, the proportion of respiratory samples collected at influenza sentinel surveillance sites in these countries that tested positive for COVID-19 varied from 2.2% to 1.7% (Figure 2).
- Data sources and information on influenza, including updates of integrated surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 using influenza sentinel surveillance systems, are available at [WHO SEARO Influenza dashboard](#).

**Figure 7. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in WHO South-East Asia Region (as of 12 November 2023)**



**Figure 8. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in Nepal 2023 (as of 5 November 2023)**



**Figure 9. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in Thailand 2023 (as of 5 November 2023)**

