

# WHO South-East Asia Region Epidemiological Bulletin

WHO Health Emergencies Programme

WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia

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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

### Timor-Leste: Rabies

#### Situation as of 24 April 2024

- WHO Disease Outbreak News published an article on rabies in Timor Leste <sup>1</sup>.
- The Timor-Leste government reported to the World Health Organization on 22 March 2024, its first confirmed fatal human case of rabies.
- The country had been classified as rabies-free. The case, from Pasabe Sub-Region, Oecusse, with a history of dog bite on 26 December 2023, went to a local health center on 20 March and died on 22 March 2024.
- During 2024, as of 24 April, a total of 95 exposures to dogs have been reported in Oecusse Municipality.
- Ten dogs were confirmed positive for rabies using rapid diagnostic tests. Out of the 95 exposures, seven had been bitten by confirmed rabid dogs.
- The public health response is ongoing and includes vaccination of dogs, risk communication, training of healthcare workers on case management, active surveillance, and ensuring the availability of human rabies vaccines and human rabies immunoglobulin.
- Based on the currently available information, the WHO assesses the risk posed by this event as high at the national level and low at regional and global levels.

### India: West Nile Virus (WNV) disease

#### Situation as of 13 May 2024

- The Kerala State Government <sup>2</sup> is reporting 9 confirmed cases, 16 suspected cases and 2 suspected deaths in May 2024; and 1 additional confirmed case and 4 additional suspected cases cumulatively for the year.
- Unverified media<sup>3</sup> are reporting that the cases are from Kozhikode, Malappuram and Thrissur districts.
  - The deceased was allegedly a 79-year-old man from Thrissur who died on 3 May.
  - Health authorities reportedly confirmed WNV infections at the Virus Research and Diagnostic Lab, with further confirmation conducted at the National Institute of Virology in Pune.
  - District Medical Officers have been told to intensify pre-monsoon cleaning drives across the State in coordination with the Department of Local Self-Government and the respective district administration.

<sup>1</sup> [Disease Outbreak News: Rabies Timor-Leste](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Communicable Diseases – Daily Report on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2024](#) | State Surveillance Unit, Directorate of Health Services, Kerala

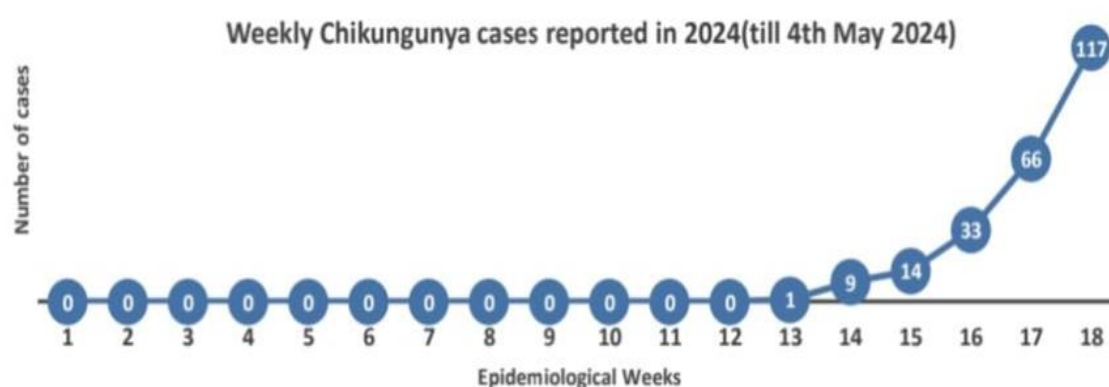
<sup>3</sup> [Kerala govt issues alert against West Nile fever](#) | The Hindu

## Maldives: Chikungunya

### Situation as of 4 May 2024 <sup>4</sup>

- A total of 240 chikungunya virus disease cases were reported as of 4 May, of which 5 were reported in March, 177 in April and 58 in May (Figure 1).
- A total of 117 cases were reported in week 18, almost two times more than in week 17 (Figure 1).
- Majority of cases (80%) were reported in the capital Male (Table 1).
- Climate, especially intermittent heavy rains followed by hot weather, is a likely contributing factor for this sudden increase.

**Figure 1. Number of chikungunya virus disease cases by week of report, Maldives. Week 1 – Week 18, 2024.**



**Table 1. Number of chikungunya virus disease cases by location, Maldives. Week 1 – Week 18, 2024.**

Locations reporting chikungunya cases 25 <sup>th</sup> March to 4th May 2024	
HA	2
SH	1
B	1
L	1
Male'	193
Hulhumale'	40

Source: [Health Protection Agency \(HPA\)](#).

<sup>4</sup> [Chikungunya](#) | Maldives Health Protection Agency

## COVID-19

### Status as of 12 May 2024

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, from 29 April to 12 May 2024, 5 596 new COVID-19 cases and 39 deaths were reported which is an increase of 27.3% and 62.5% respectively, compared to the previous 14 days (Table 2).
  - From 29 April to 12 May 2024, Thailand (3 672 new cases, +37.2%), India (1 565 new cases, +13.4%), Myanmar (137 new cases, +73.4%) and Indonesia (28 new cases, +47.4%) reported an increase in the number of new cases, while Bangladesh (186 new cases, -23.1%) reported a decrease in the number of new cases, compared to the previous 14 days.
  - Data were not available from Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Timor-Leste for this period.
- The Region has recorded a cumulative total of 61 286 952 COVID-19 cases, including 808 677 deaths (Table 2).
- During week 17 in 2024, the proportion of respiratory samples collected at influenza sentinel surveillance sites in the selected countries that tested positive for COVID-19 ranged from 3% (Bangladesh) to 11% (Nepal) (Figure 3).
- Please refer to the [WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard](#) for further information of COVID-19 in WHO South-East Asia Region.
- Globally, 775 379 864 COVID-19 cases, including 7 047 369 deaths have been cumulatively reported, as of 28 April 2024 <sup>5</sup>. Please visit [WHO COVID-19 dashboard](#) for global situation of COVID-19.

**Table 2. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the weekly change in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week from 29 April to 12 May 2024**

Country		Cumulative cases	New cases (last 14 days)	% change in new cases	New cases per 1M pop	Cumulative deaths	New deaths (last 14 days)	% change in new deaths	New deaths per 1M pop
Thailand		4,777,976	3,672	37.2	51.2	34,625	23	91.7	0.3
India		45,038,518	1,565	13.4	1.1	533,599	14	27.3	0.0
Bangladesh		2,050,156	186	-23.1	1.1	29,494	0	-100.0	0.0
Myanmar		642,229	137	73.4	2.5	19,494	0	0.0	0.0
Indonesia		6,829,010	28	47.4	0.1	162,058	0	0.0	0.0
Sri Lanka		672,762	8	NA	0.4	16,901	2	NA	0.1
Bhutan		62,697	NA	NA	NA	21	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		61,286,952	5,596	27.3	NA	808,677	39	62.5	NA

Percent change in the number of newly confirmed cases/deaths in past 14 days, compared to the previous 14 days.

NA = data not available.

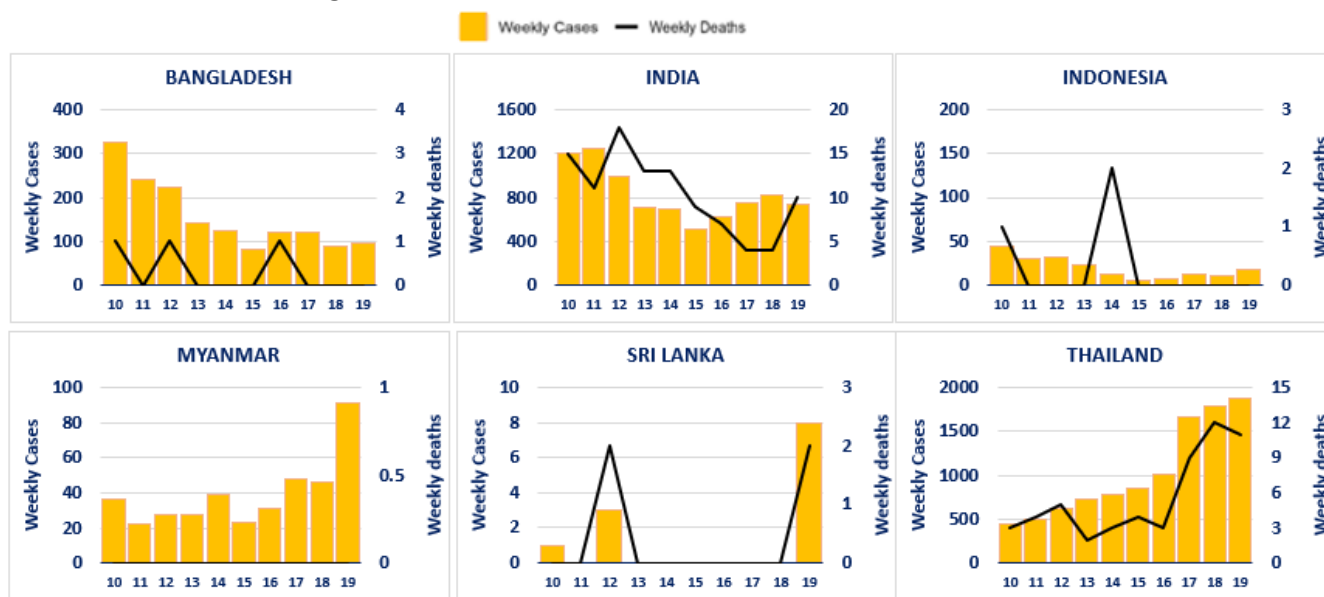
DPR Korea has not reported confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Thailand and Indonesia data were for the period from 28 April to 11 May 2024 in comparison to the preceding 14 days.

As for cumulative numbers, Maldives data are as of 5 August 2023, Timor-Leste data as of 11 August 2023, Bhutan data as of 8 October 2023, Nepal data as of 20 October 2023 and Sri Lanka data as of 6 May 2024.

<sup>5</sup> Data as 28 April 2024 link: <https://data.who.int/dashboards/covid19/cases>

**Figure 2. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the previous ten weeks (as of 12 May 2024) in the WHO South-East Asia Region \***



\* Data of Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal and Timor-Leste are not available. Sri Lanka data as of 6 May 2024.

**Figure 3. Weekly number of SARS-CoV-2 positive samples and test positivity from integrated influenza-SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance systems in the previous eight weeks (from 4 March to 28 April 2024) in selected countries\* (as of 12 May 2024)**



\* Countries routinely conducting SARS-COV-2 testing of the samples collected through influenza sentinel surveillance sites (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal and Timor-Leste). Timor-Leste data as of 7 April 2024





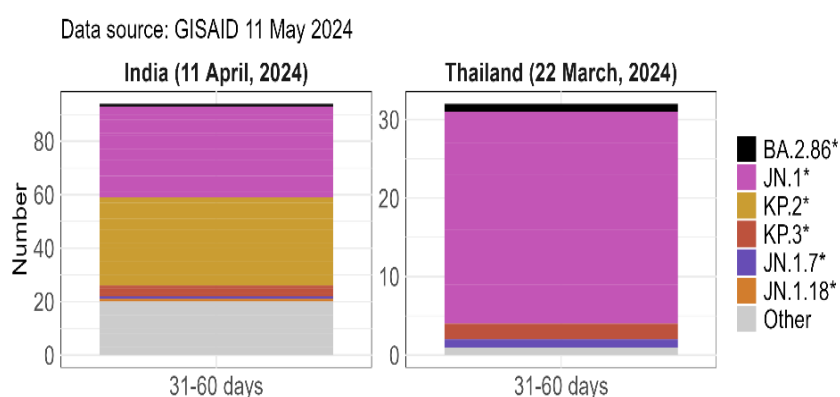
## Global circulation of SARS-CoV-2 variants

- WHO is currently tracking several SARS-CoV-2 variants and their sub-lineages including <sup>6</sup>:
  - Five variants of interest (VOIs): XBB.1.5; XBB.1.16; EG.5; BA.2.86 and JN.1
  - Four variants under monitoring (VUMs): JN.1.7; JN.1.18; KP.2; KP.3
- Information on the current status of the global SARS-CoV-2 variants can be found from [the WHO COVID-19 dashboard](https://www.who.int/covid19/dashboard).

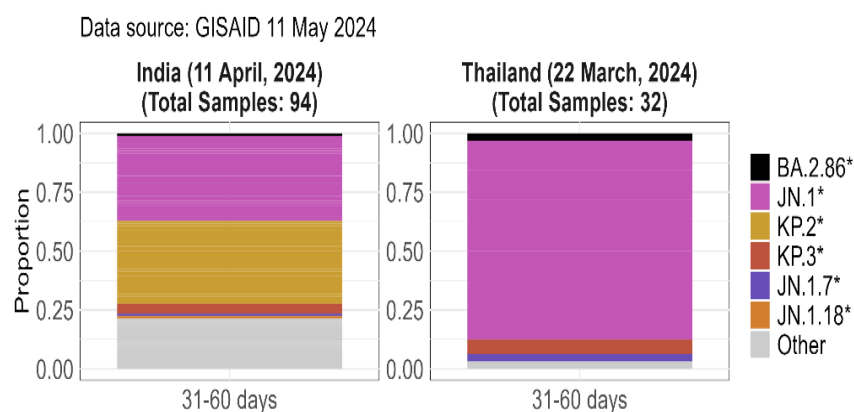
## SARS-CoV-2 variants in the South-East Asia Region

- As of 11 May 2024, the genomic sequence data submitted to GISAID<sup>7</sup> by countries in the South-East Asia region in the last 60 days by date of collection are shown in Figures 4a and 4b. Only a small number of genomic sequences have been submitted from countries and therefore the data should be interpreted with caution.
- In the last 60 days:
  - In **India**, 94 genomic sequences were submitted, with JN.1\* accounting for 36.2% (n = 34). Proportion of KP.2 (JN.1 descendant variant) has been increasing and accounted for 35.1% (n = 33). Four genomic sequences with KP.3\* was submitted and one genomic sequence was submitted with JN.1.7\* and JN.118\* respectively.
  - In **Thailand**, 32 genomic sequences were submitted with JN.1\* accounting for 84.4% (n=27) followed by KP.3\* (6.2%, n=2), BA.2.86\* (3.1%, n=1) and JN.1.7\*(3.1%, n=1).
  - Other countries have not submitted genomic sequences recently to GISAID.

**Figure 4a. Number of SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest and variant under monitoring sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 31-60 days as of 11 May 2024 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions) †**



**Figure 4b. Proportion of SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest and variant under monitoring sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 31-60 days as of 11 May 2024 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions) †**



No sequences were submitted to GISAID in the recent 30 days from both countries.

\* indicates the sub-lineage of each variant.

† The date next to the country name indicates the latest date of sample collection for sequence submission to GISAID.

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

Source: GISAID (<https://gisaid.org/>), as of 11 May 2024.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/covid-19-epidemiological-update-edition-166>

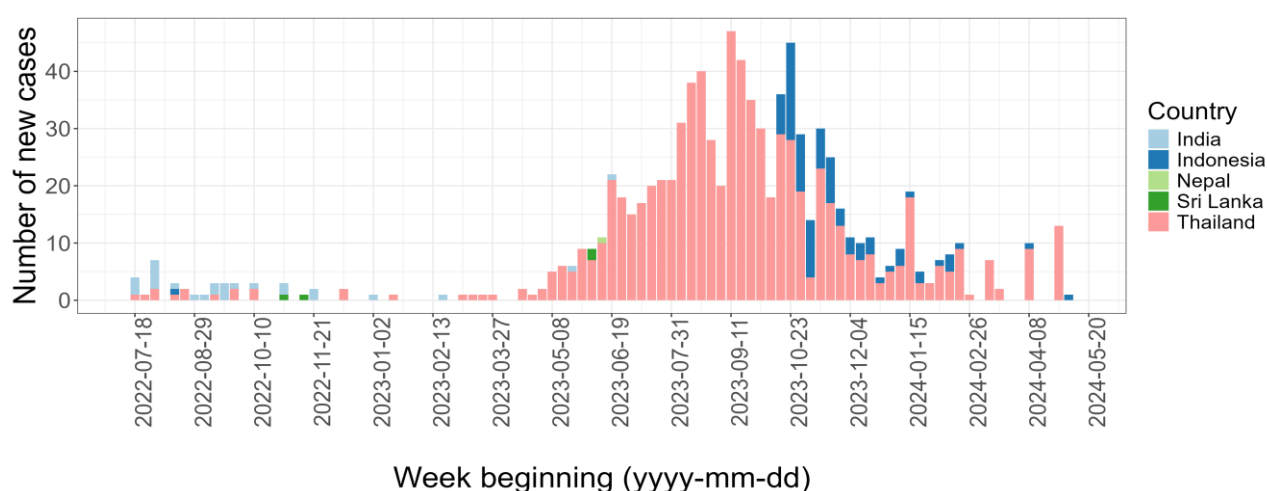
<sup>7</sup> <https://gisaid.org/>

## mpox

### Status as of 12 May 2024

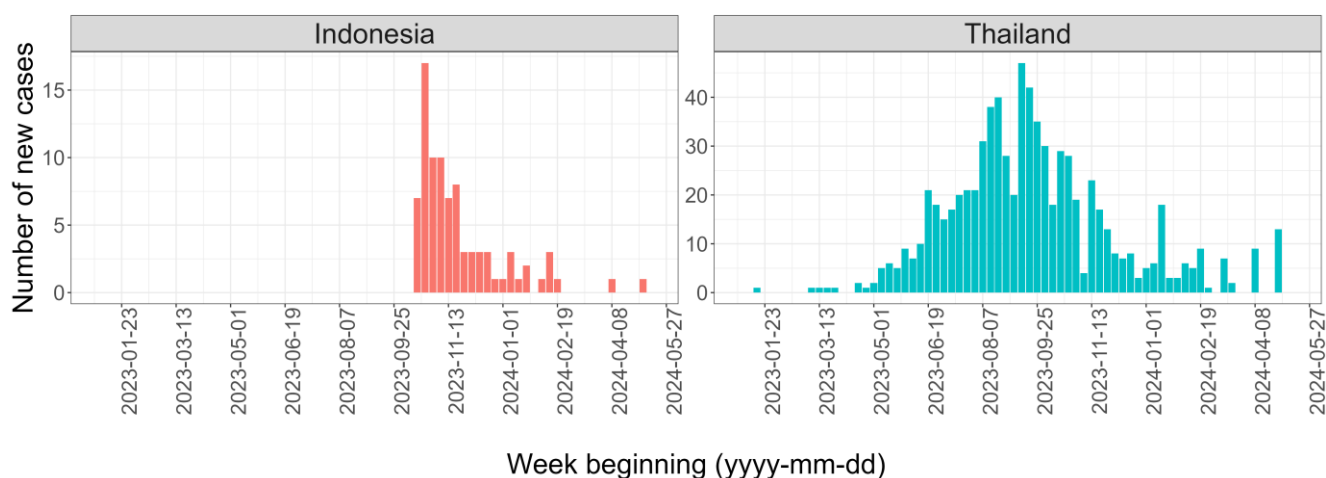
- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 893 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases (including two deaths) have been reported since 14 July 2022 (Figure 5).
- Thailand reported 13 new mpox cases between 12 and 30 April 2024 (774 confirmed cases cumulatively as of 30 April 2024)<sup>8</sup> (Figure 6).
- Indonesia reported one new mpox case in the weeks 18 and 19 (from 28 April to 11 May)<sup>9</sup> (Figure 6).
- Table 3 summarizes the basic epidemiological profile of the mpox cases in the Region.
- For more information on the global situation of mpox outbreak, please visit the [global dashboard](#).

**Figure 5. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification\* (14 July 2022 – 12 May 2024)**



\* Cases are plotted as per the week of notification (based on the date on which the case was notified to the public health authority). For 86 cases in Indonesia for which the date of notification is missing, the date of diagnosis was used.

**Figure 6. Weekly number of mpox cases reported in Indonesia (n=86) and Thailand (n=760) since 1 January 2023 by date of notification\* (as of 12 May 2024)**



\* Cases are plotted as per the week of notification (based on the date on which the case was notified to the public health authority). For 86 cases in Indonesia for which the date of notification is missing, the date of diagnosis was used.

<sup>8</sup> [http://aidsboe.moph.go.th/aids\\_system/](http://aidsboe.moph.go.th/aids_system/)

<sup>9</sup> <https://infeksiemerging.kemkes.go.id/document/update-mpox-minggu-ke-18-dan-ke-19-2024-28-april-11-mei-2024/view>

**Table 3. Profile of the 861 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 May 2024)**

	Since July 2022 (n = 861)	Since July 2023 (n = 728)
<b>Country</b>		
India	27 (3.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Indonesia	86 (10.0%)	85 (11.7%)
Nepal	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Sri Lanka	4 (0.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Thailand	743 (86.3%)	643 (88.3%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	34 (3.9%)	12 (1.6%)
Male	826 (95.9%)	716 (98.4%)
Transgender	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Age group (years)</b>		
Less than 18	4 (0.5%)	3 (0.4%)
18-29	294 (34.1%)	255 (35.0%)
30-39	364 (42.3%)	307 (42.2%)
40-49	167 (19.4%)	141 (19.4%)
50 and over	32 (3.7%)	22 (3.0%)
<b>Sexual orientation</b>		
Heterosexual	60 (7.0%)	36 (4.9%)
Men who have sex with men (MSM)	703 (81.6%)	617 (84.8%)
Bisexual	14 (1.6%)	13 (1.8%)
Other	26 (3.0%)	24 (3.3%)
Unknown	58 (6.7%)	38 (5.2%)
<b>Recent travel</b>		
Yes	45 (5.2%)	14 (1.9%)
No	808 (93.8%)	712 (97.8%)
Unknown	8 (0.9%)	2 (0.3%)

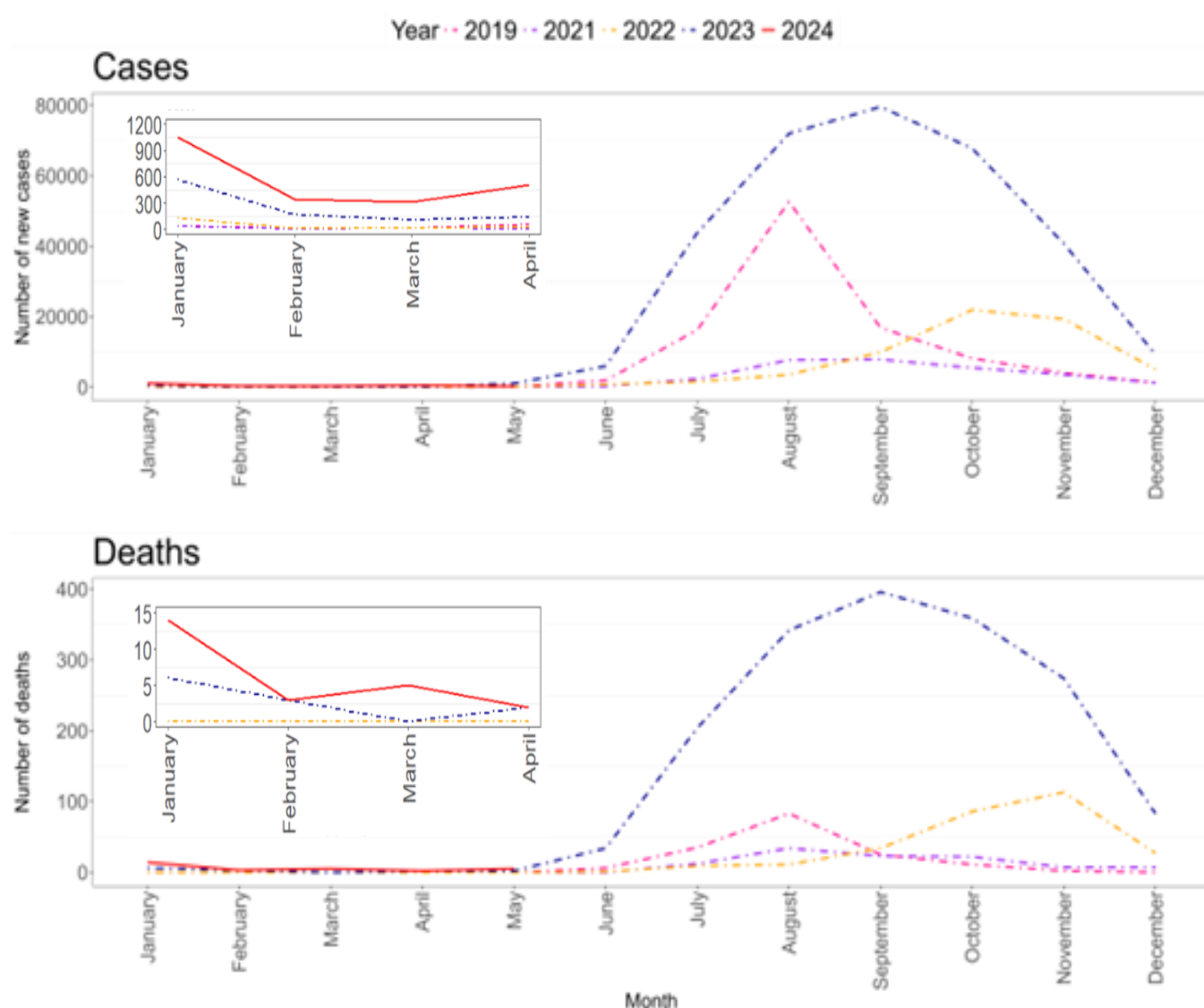


## Dengue

### Bangladesh<sup>10 11</sup>

- During week 19 (06 May 2024 to 12 May 2024), a total of 172 new dengue cases were reported in Bangladesh, a 21.1% increase compared to 142 cases reported during week 18 (29 April 2024 to 05 May 2024).
- During week 19 a total of 2 new dengue deaths were reported in Bangladesh, a 33.3% decrease compared to 3 cases reported during week 18.
- During 2024 (as of 12 May 2024), a total of 2 471 dengue cases and 29 dengue related deaths have been reported. This was 2.1 times the number of cases (n=1 202) and 2.4 the number of deaths (n=12) reported during the same period in 2023.

**Figure 7. Number of new cases of, and deaths from dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to May 2024 (as of 12 May 2024)**



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>

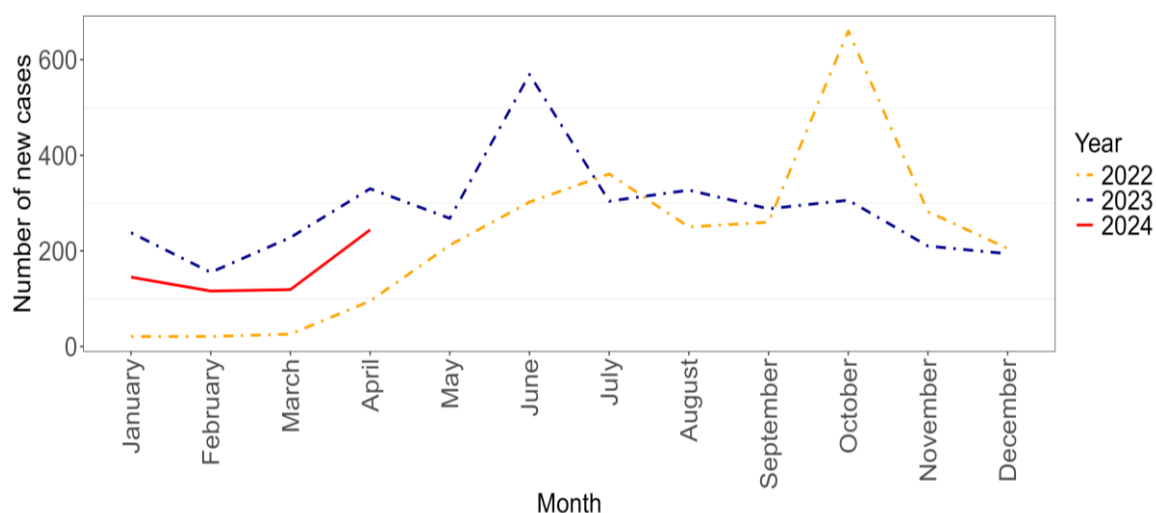
<sup>10</sup> <https://old.dghs.gov.bd/index.php/bd/home/5200-daily-dengue-status-report>

<sup>11</sup> [https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20240512\\_dengue\\_all.pdf](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20240512_dengue_all.pdf)

## Maldives<sup>12</sup>

- During April 2024, a total of 244 cases of dengue were reported in Maldives, a 105% increase relative to the number reported in March 2024 (n=119).
- For the first 4 months of 2024, a total of 624 cases of dengue have been reported, compared to 951 cases during the same period in 2023. A total of 3 417 cases were reported in the entirety of 2023.

**Figure 8. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Maldives from January 2022 to April 2024**

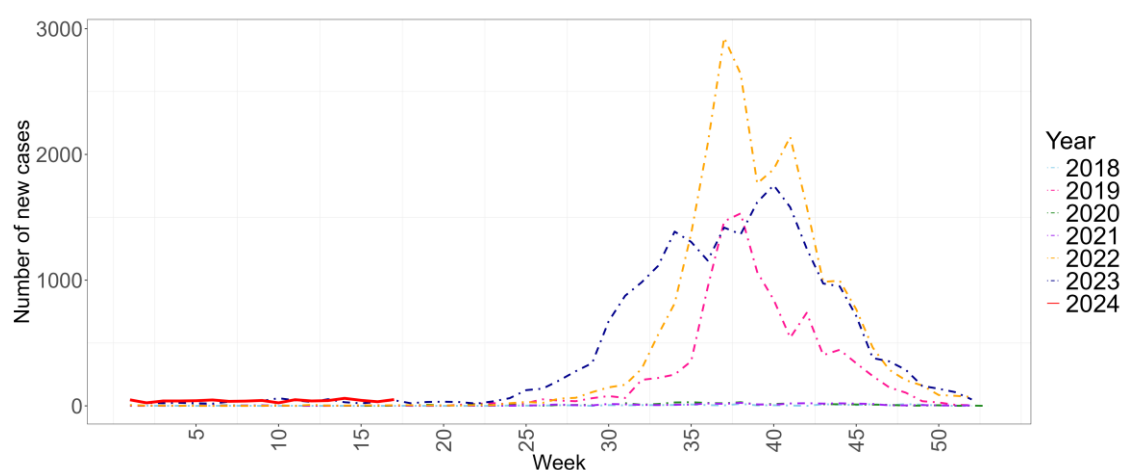


<sup>12</sup> <https://health.gov.mv/en/publications/monthly-communicable-disease-report-april-2024>

## Nepal<sup>13</sup>

- During week 17 (22 April 2024 to 28 April 2024), a total of 50 new dengue cases were reported via the Early Warning and Reporting System (EWARS) in Nepal, a 51.5% increase relative to the 33 cases reported during week 16 (15 April 2024 to 21 April 2024).
- Between weeks one and 17 in 2024, a total of 696 dengue cases were reported via EWARS compared to 579 and 39 during the same period in 2023 and 2022, respectively.

**Figure 9. Number of new cases of dengue by week reported by the Early Warning and Reporting System (EWARS) in Nepal from epidemiological week (EW) 1 of 2018 to EW 17 of 2024**



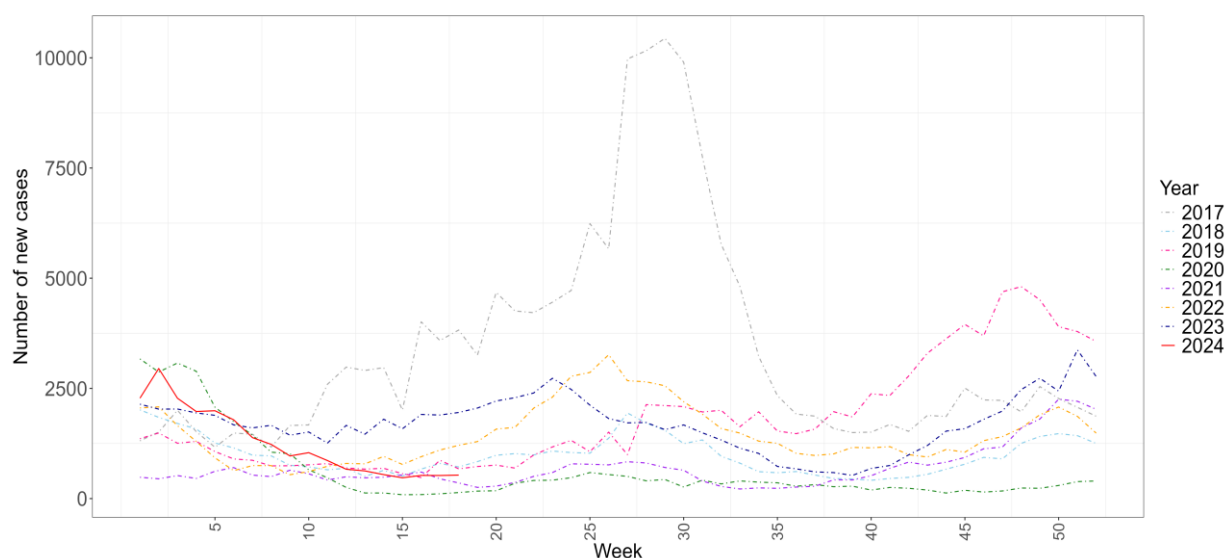
Source: Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, Epidemiology and Disease Control Division. EWARS Weekly Bulletin. <https://edcd.gov.np/resources/newsletter>

<sup>13</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>

## Sri Lanka <sup>14</sup>

- During week 18 (29 April 2024 to 05 May 2024), a total of 533 new dengue cases were reported in Sri Lanka, a 1.7% increase, relative to 524 cases reported during week 17 (22 to 28 April 2024).
- Between weeks one and 18 in 2024, a total of 22 641 cases were reported compared to 31 450 and 18 614 during the same period in 2023 and 2022, respectively.

**Figure 10. Number of new suspected cases of dengue by week in Sri Lanka from epidemiological week (EW) 1 of 2017 to EW 18 of 2024**



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)

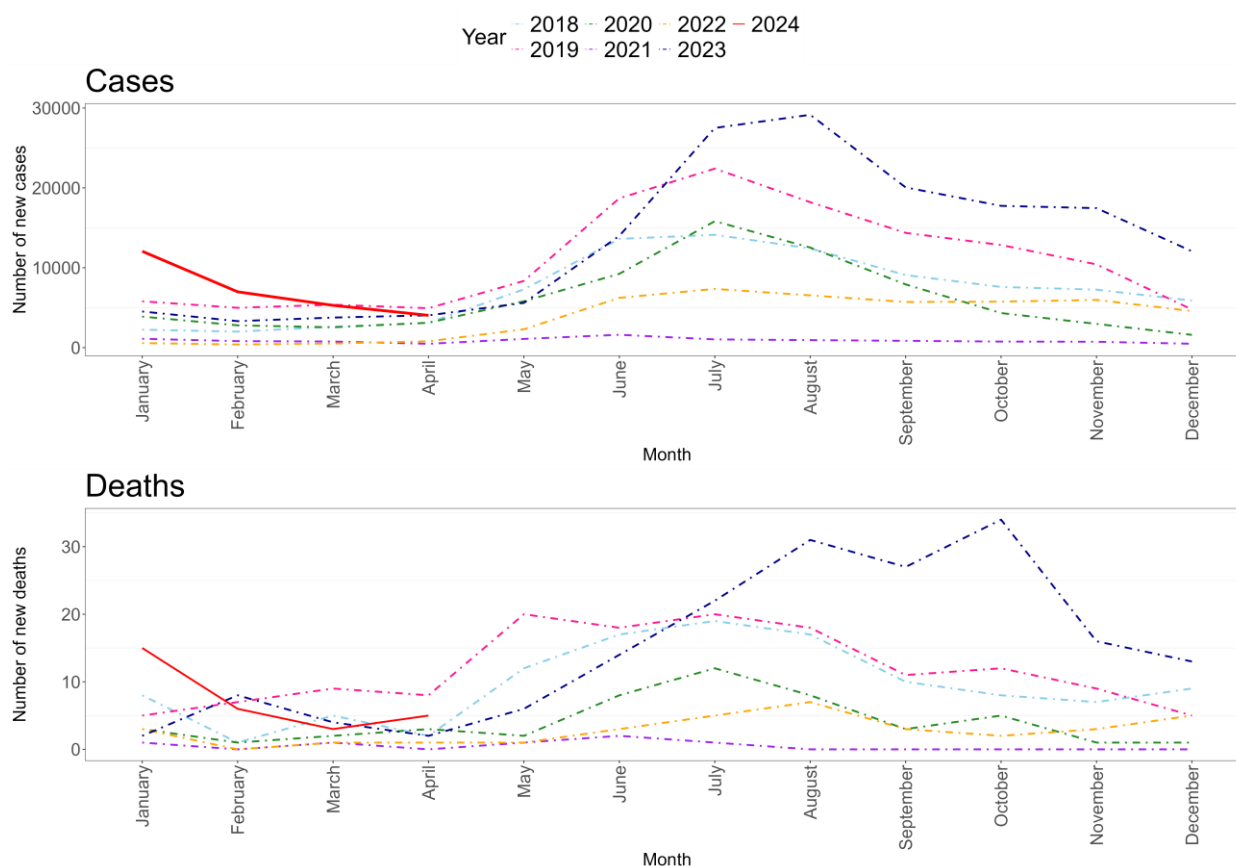
<https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB> (2021 to 2024)

<sup>14</sup> <https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB>

## Thailand <sup>15 16 17</sup>

- During April (as of 12 May 2024), a total of 269 dengue cases (inclusive of dengue (n=218, 81%), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DH) (n=48, 17.8%) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS) (n=3, 1.1%)) were reported while there were no new dengue deaths reported.
- During 2024, (as of 12 May) a total of 28 638 cases including 29 deaths (CFR=0.1%) have been reported. This compares to 21 231 cases reported between January and May in 2023.

**Figure 11. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by month in Thailand from January 2018 to April 2024**



Source: Ministry of Public Health, Thailand <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/index.php>

<sup>15</sup> <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=66>

<sup>16</sup> <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=26>

<sup>17</sup> <http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=27>



## Influenza

### Situation as of 12 May 2024

- According to the data submitted to the FluMart of the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response system (GISRS), in the WHO South-East Asia Region, in epidemiological week 18 in 2024 (29 April to 5 May), the weekly test positivity was at 12.06% and the most frequently reported strains were influenza A/H1N1pdm09, influenza A/H3, and influenza B (Victoria lineage) (Figure 12).
- 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](#) and [WHO SEARO monthly updates](#).

**Figure 12. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in WHO South-East Asia Region during 2023 and 2024 (as of week 29 April – 5 May 2024)**

