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.

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Key events and updates

Joint FAO/WHO/WHOAH preliminary assessment of recent influenza A(H5N1) viruses

https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/joint-fao-who-whoah-preliminary-assessment-of-recent-influenza-a(h5n1)-viruses
26 April 2024

- Since the beginning of 2021, 28 detections of A(H5N1) in humans have been reported to WHO, including a case who had exposure to dairy cattle in the United States of America presumed to be infected with A(H5N1) virus. Among these cases, there has been no reported human-to-human transmission. Of the human cases, where the haemagglutinin (HA) H5 clade is known, 13 have been caused by clade 2.3.4.4b viruses.
- Investigations are ongoing to understand the risk to humans from consuming milk contaminated with A(H5N1) virus. It is important for people to continue to follow safe food practices. Many dangerous zoonotic pathogens can be transmitted through unpasteurized milk, and FAO and WHO strongly advise the consumption of only pasteurized milk and to avoid consuming raw milk.
- At the present time, based on available information, WHO assesses the overall public health risk posed by A(H5N1) to be low, and for those with exposure to infected birds or animals or contaminated environments, the risk of infection is considered low-to-moderate. This risk requires close monitoring and WHO and partners will continue to regularly assess and publish public health risk assessments for avian influenza.
- More information will be available in the coming days and weeks as investigations are actively ongoing in the United States and elsewhere. WHO and GISRS, jointly with FAO, WHOAH and OFFLU (Joint WHOAH-FAO Scientific Network on Animal Influenza) are working closely together to continuously assess the avian influenza situation.

Updates on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza by United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA)
26 April 2024

- Initial results received by the US FDA show about 1 in 5 of the retail samples tested are quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR)-positive for HPAI viral fragments, with a greater proportion of positive results coming from milk in areas with infected herds. However, qPCR-positive results do not necessarily represent actual virus that may be a risk to consumers.

Other related references

- WHO Disease Outbreak News (DON) on human case of Avian Influenza A(H5N1) - United States of America (9 April 2024): https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2024-DON512
- Cumulative number of confirmed human cases for avian influenza A(H5N1) reported to WHO, 2003-2024: https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/cumulative-number-of-confirmed-human-cases-for-avian-influenza-a(h5n1)-reported-to-who--2003-2024-28-march-2024
COVID-19
Status as of 28 April 2024

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, from 15 to 28 April 2024, 4,389 new COVID-19 cases, an increase of 39.4% and 24 deaths, a decrease of 27.3%, were reported compared to the previous 14 days (Table 1).
  - From 15 to 28 April 2024, Thailand (2,676 new cases, +64.9%), India (1,380 new cases, +13.8%), Bangladesh (242 new cases, +15.8%) and Myanmar (79 new cases, +27.4%) reported an increase in the number of new cases, while Indonesia (12 new cases, -68.4%) 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 61,281,343 COVID-19 cases, including 808,638 deaths (Table 1).
- During week 14 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 2% (Bangladesh) to 6% (Nepal) (Figure 2).
- Please refer to the [WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard](https://data.who.int/dashboards/covid19/cases) for further information of COVID-19 in WHO South-East Asia Region.
- Globally, 775,335,916 COVID-19 cases, including 7,045,569 deaths have been cumulatively reported, as of 14 April 2024. Please visit [WHO COVID-19 dashboard](https://covid19situationreport.who.int/) for global situation of COVID-19.

Table 1. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the weekly change in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week from 15 to 28 April 2024

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cumulative cases</th>
<th>New cases</th>
<th>% change in new cases</th>
<th>New cases per 1M pop</th>
<th>Cumulative deaths</th>
<th>New deaths</th>
<th>% change in new deaths</th>
<th>New deaths per 1M pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>4,774,304</td>
<td>2,676</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>56,602</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-71.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>45,936,053</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>583,585</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2,049,970</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>29,494</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>642,002</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>19,494</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>6,828,959</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-58.4</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
<td>162,058</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>971,754</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>16,899</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>62,697</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>186,094</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1,003,450</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12,931</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>23,450</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAR Total</td>
<td>61,281,343</td>
<td>4,389</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>808,638</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-27.3</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 data were for the period from 14 to 27 April 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, Sri Lanka data as of 7 April 2024 and Indonesia data as of 20 April 2024.

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1 Data as 14 April 2024 link: [https://data.who.int/dashboards/covid19/cases](https://data.who.int/dashboards/covid19/cases)
**Figure 1. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the previous ten weeks (19 February to 28 April 2024) in the WHO South-East Asia Region**

* Data of Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal and Timor-Leste are not available. Sri Lanka data as of 7 April and Indonesia data as of 20 April 2024.

**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 eight weeks (from 12 February 2023 to 7 April 2024) in selected counties* (as of 28 April 2024)

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

- WHO is currently tracking several SARS-CoV-2 variants and their sub-lineages including:\n  - Five variants of interest (VOIs): XBB.1.5; XBB.1.16; EG.5; BA.2.86 and JN.1
  - As of 28 April 2024, no variant is under monitoring.
- Information on the current status of the global SARS-CoV-2 variants can be found from the WHO COVID-19 dashboard.
- United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention “Nowcast” projections estimate a quickly emerging JN.1 descendant, KP.2 (also called JN.1.11.1.2), to account for approximately 25% of new COVID-19 cases in the United States of America.\(^3\)

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

- As of 27 April 2024, the sequence data submitted to GISAID\(^4\) by countries in the South-East Asia region in the last 60 days by date of collection are shown in Figures 3a and 3b. Only a small number of sequences have been submitted from countries and therefore the data should be interpreted with caution; however, JN.1* continues to dominate in most countries in the Region.
- In the last 60 days:
  - In India, 179 sequences were submitted, with JN.1* accounting for 43%. Proportion of KP.2 (JN.1 descendant variant) has been increasing and accounted for 30%.
  - In Indonesia, 39 sequences were submitted, with JN.1* also continuing to account for the large majority (87.2%, n=34).
  - In Thailand, 83 sequences were submitted with JN.1* accounting for 90.4% (n=75) followed by BA.2.86* (4.8%, n=4).
  - Other countries have not submitted sequences recently to GISAID.

Figure 3a. Number of SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 27 April 2024 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions)\(^1\)

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4. [https://gisaid.org/](https://gisaid.org/)
Figure 3b. Proportion of SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest sequences submitted to GISAID within the past 30 and 31-60 days as of 27 April 2024 by date of collection (countries with recent submissions) ¹

* indicates the sub-lineage of each variant.
¹ 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 27 April 2024.
mpox

Status as of 28 April 2024

- In epidemiological weeks 14 (1 April to 7 April 2024) and 15 (8 April to 14 April 2024), one new mpox cases were reported from Indonesia and 9 from Thailand.
- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 879 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases (including two deaths) have been reported since 14 July 2022 (Figure 4).
- Figure 5 shows the weekly number of cases reported in Indonesia and Thailand since 1 January 2023.
- Table 2 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 4. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification* (14 July 2022 - 28 April 2024)

![Graph showing number of mpox cases by date of notification](image)

* Cases are plotted as per the week of notification (based on the date on which the case was notified to the public health authority). Where the date of notification is missing for 85 cases in Indonesia, this was replaced with the date of diagnosis.

Figure 5. Weekly number of mpox cases reported in Indonesia (n=85) and Thailand (n=747) since 1 January 2023 by date of notification* (as of 28 April 2024)

![Graph showing weekly number of mpox cases](image)

* Cases are plotted as per the week of notification (based on the date on which the case is notified to the public health authority). Where the date of notification is missing for cases in Indonesia, this was replaced with the date of diagnosis.
Table 2. 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 28 April 2024)

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

**Bangladesh**

- During week 17 (22 April 2024 to 28 April 2024), a total of 154 new dengue cases were reported in Bangladesh, a 10.5% decrease compared to 172 cases reported during week 16 (15 April 2024 to 21 April 2024).
- During week 17, no new dengue death was reported in Bangladesh, compared to one death reported during week 16.
- During 2024 (as of 28 April 2024), a total of 2157 dengue cases and 24 dengue related deaths have been reported. This compares to 2.3 times the number of cases (n=945) and 2.2 times the number of deaths (n=11) reported during the same period in 2023.

Figure 6. Number of new cases of, and deaths from dengue by month in Bangladesh from January 2019 to April 2024 (as of 28 April 2024)


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6 [https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20240428_dengue_all.pdf](https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20240428_dengue_all.pdf)
During March 2024, a total of 119 cases of dengue were reported in Maldives, a 3.5% increase compared to February 2024 (n=115).

For the first 3 months of 2024, a total of 379 cases of dengue have been reported, compared to 621 cases during the same period in 2023. A total of 3,417 cases were reported in the entirety of 2023.

Figure 7. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Maldives from January 2022 to March 2024

Nepal

- During week 15 (08 to 14 April 2024), a total of 44 new dengue cases were reported via the Early Warning and Reporting System (EWARS) in Nepal, a 26.7% decrease compared to 60 cases reported during week 14 (01 to 07 April 2024).

- Between weeks one and 15 in 2024, a total of 613 dengue cases were reported via EWARS compared to 503 and 31 during the same period in 2023 and 2022, respectively.

Figure 8. 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 15 of 2024


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Sri Lanka

- During week 16 (15 to 21 April 2024), a total of 526 new dengue cases (suspected and confirmed) were reported in Sri Lanka, a 11.4% increase compared to 472 cases reported during week 15 (08 to 14 April 2024).
- Between weeks one and 16 in 2024, a total of 21,584 cases (suspected and confirmed) were reported compared to 27,600 and 16,303 during the same period in 2023 and 2022, respectively.

Figure 9. Number of new suspected cases of dengue by week in Sri Lanka from epidemiological week (EW) 1 of 2017 to EW 15 of 2024

Sources: Epidemiology Unit and National Dengue Control Unit, Ministry of Health.
https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/95b978f1-5c1a-44fb-a436-e19819e939c0/page/XRtTB (2021 to 2024)
Thailand

- During April (as of 25 April 2024), a total of 2 266 dengue cases (inclusive of dengue (n=1 653, 72.9%), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DH) (n=591, 26.1%) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS) (n=22, 1%) and no new dengue death was reported in Thailand.
- During 2024, (as of 25 April) a total of 26 527 cases including 22 deaths (CFR=0.08%) have been reported. This compares to 15 630 cases and 16 deaths reported between January and April in 2023.

Figure 10. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by month in Thailand from January 2018 to April 2024 (as of 25 April 2024)


10 [Link](http://doe.moph.go.th/surdata/disease.php?ds=66)
Influenza

Situation as of 28 April 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 16 in 2024 (15 to 21 April), the weekly test positivity was at 7.45% and the most frequently reported strains were influenza A/H1N1pdm09, B (Victoria lineage) and influenza A/H3 (Figure 11).

- 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 11. 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 15 – 21 April 2024)