WHO South-East Asia Region
Epidemiological Bulletin

WHO Health Emergencies Programme
WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia
1st edition (2025), 15 January 2025
Reporting period: 23 December 2024 to 12 January 2025

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.

Key events and updates

Sri Lanka: Leptospirosis

Situation as of 27 December 2024

- Cyclonic Storm Fengal caused significant flooding and damage across Sri Lanka in late November 2024; this was the most severe flooding in Jaffna district (Northern Sri Lanka) in over a decade.
- As of 27 December 2024, for this event, 185 patients have been admitted to Base Hospital Point Pedro, Teaching Hospital Jaffna, and District General Hospital Mullaitivu with fever, myalgia, and shortness of breath.
- Following a thorough investigation, an outbreak of leptospirosis was confirmed in Jaffna district, which had previously been considered non-endemic.
    - Of total patients admitted, 75 were clinically confirmed as leptospirosis.
    - Laboratory testing identified six Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)-positive and four Microscopic Agglutination Test (MAT)-positive samples, confirming the presence of leptospira as the etiological agent (a positive MAT result suggests that the patient has antibodies to the leptospira serovars).
    - Eight deaths were reported; all deceased patients presented with severe respiratory failure, progressing rapidly within 24 hours of hospital admission.
    - Laboratory analyses confirmed leptospirosis infection in three of the deceased.
    - Autopsy findings revealed pulmonary pneumonia and leptospirosis-related pulmonary hemorrhage as the primary causes of death for the five other deaths.

Response

- A national-level response was promptly initiated, including the establishment of an Incident Management Support Cell at the regional level.
- Teams from the central Epidemiology Unit provided on-site technical assistance and organized a symposium on leptospirosis for clinicians and public health staff in the Jaffna District.
- Chemoprophylaxis with doxycycline was administered to at-risk communities to control disease transmission.
- Primary care clinicians were equipped with a working case definition to facilitate timely referral and diagnosis.
- Hospitals adhered to national leptospirosis management guidelines to ensure optimal patient care.
- Environmental and animal-related factors contributing to the outbreak were addressed through coordinated efforts involving multiple sectors.
- The response highlighted the importance of a multisectoral approach in managing such outbreaks effectively.
- Sri Lanka aims to review the surveillance case definition in light of the observed atypical clinical presentation, marked by predominant respiratory manifestations and rapid clinical progression.

Thailand: Acute Watery Diarrhea/Cholera

Situation as of 10 January 2025 [1] [2] [3]

- Between 21 December 2024 and 04 January 2025, Tak Province reported a total of four confirmed cholera cases. The last case was reported on 24 December 2024. The cases included two Thai nationals and two foreign residents, all residing within the province. All cases fully recovered.
- According to the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, *Vibrio cholerae* serogroup O1, serotype Ogawa was detected among imported cases in December 2024.
    - A drug susceptibility test was conducted, revealing sensitivity to tetracycline-group antibiotics, including tetracycline and doxycycline.
    - Sequencing analysis is currently underway.
- Several public health measures have been implemented in Tak province including: [4]
    - Take urgent action to address sanitation issues at various settings, such as restaurants, markets and public toilets, as well as of the tap water.
    - Communicate information about cholera to the public through several communication channels.
    - Organize meetings on treatment guidelines for hospitals.
    - Inspect and control fresh foods and village water supply and provide health education. Prepare entrepreneurs and vendors in Ban Tak district for a possible cholera outbreak.
    - Conduct contact tracing.

[1] https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=942439168071374&set=a.245625921086039
[2] https://www.dmsc.moph.go.th/th/detailAll/2887/nw/25
[3] https://www.ddc.moph.go.th/brc/news.php?news=49162&deptcode=brc
[4] https://web.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=935357998779491&set=a.245625921086039

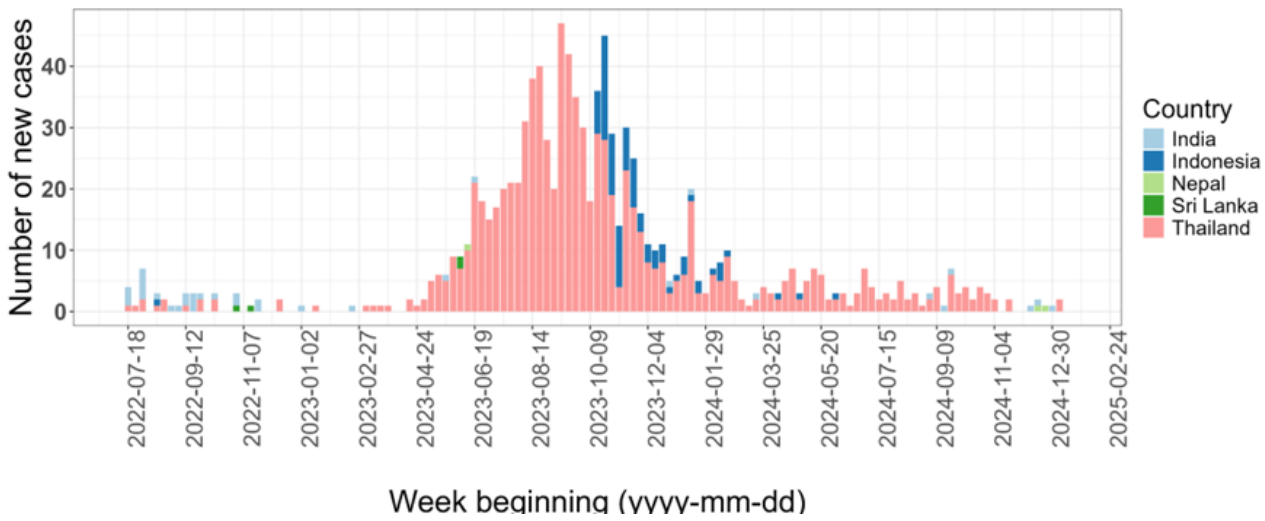
Mpox

Situation in WHO South-East Asia Region

As of 12 January 2025

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, cumulatively since 14 July 2022, as of 12 January 2025, a total of 998 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases, including 11 deaths, have been reported (Figure 1).
- In 2024, a total of 203 mpox cases have been reported in the Region - 178 from Thailand, 15 from Indonesia, 8 from India and two from Nepal. One death was reported from Thailand.
- In 2025, during the epidemiological weeks one and two (from 30 December 2024 to 12 January 2025), one new mpox case was reported from India and two from Thailand.
- So far, two mpox cases with Clade Ib infection have been detected in the Region, one case in Thailand and another case in India. Both cases had recent international travel history and were symptomatic during the air travel. Both countries implemented robust public health measures, including contact tracing, and no subsequent transmission has been detected. Both cases were notified to WHO through the respective National International Health Regulations (IHR) Focal Point.

Figure 1. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification* (14 July 2022 – 12 January 2025)



* 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 87 cases in Indonesia for which the date of notification is missing, the date of diagnosis was used.

- For information on global epidemiological situation of mpox, please see:
  - WHO mpox surveillance dashboard

Mpox cases in Nepal [5] [6] [7]

As of 8 January 2025

- On 21 and 30 December 2024, the National IHR Focal Point of Nepal notified mpox cases to WHO, who both reported recent travel from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).
  - **Case 1**: a 36-year-old male returned from KSA to Nepal on 19 December and visited a hospital, with symptoms including multiple papules and nodules over different parts of his body. The National Laboratory confirmed mpox through PCR on 20 December.
  - **Case 2**: a 44-year-old man returned to Nepal from KSA on 28 December. He sought medical attention on 29 December, presenting with a history of fever, sore throat, malaise and multiple pustular rashes over his body. The National Laboratory confirmed mpox through a PCR test on the same day. An informal media article indicated that he lived with other migrant workers, and some others in his room had similar symptoms.
- Epidemiological investigations and contact tracing were conducted for both cases.
- The samples of both cases were identified as the Clade IIb.

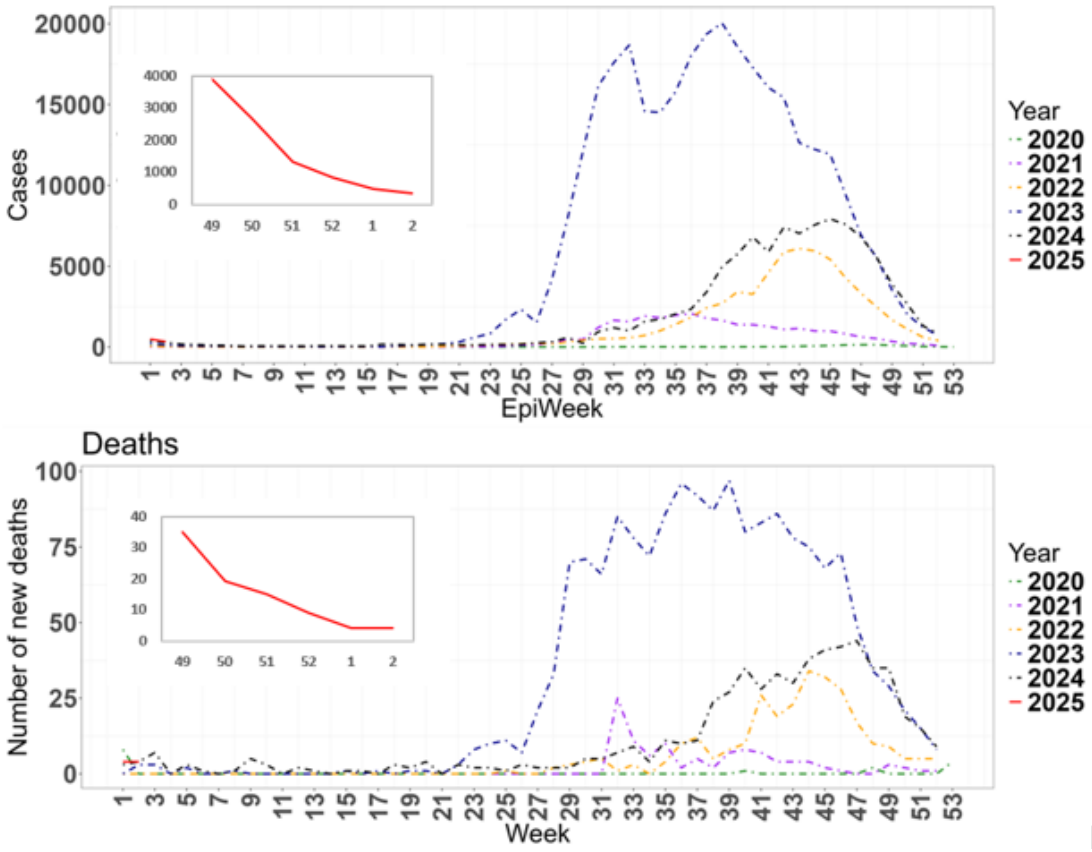
[5] https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=910107037922014&set=a.185649387034453
[6] https://thahakhabar.com/news/218299/
[7] https://kathmandupost.com/health/2025/01/03/migrant-workers-living-conditions-in-focus-after-new-mpox-cases-in-nepal

Dengue

Bangladesh [1] [2]

- In Bangladesh, both dengue cases and deaths are showing declining trend in the recent weeks.
- During week two (from 06 to 12 January 2025), a total of 343 new dengue cases were reported in Bangladesh, a 29.3% decrease compared to 485 cases reported during week one (from 30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025).
- During week two, a total of four new dengue deaths were reported in Bangladesh, which are similar to the deaths reported in week one (n=4).
- In 2025, as of week two, a total of 828 dengue cases and eight dengue related deaths have been reported. This is 124% of the number of cases (n= 670) and 114% of the number of deaths (n=7) reported at the same time (week two) in 2024.

Figure 2. Number of new cases and deaths from dengue by week in Bangladesh from week 1 of 2020 to week 2 of 2025



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

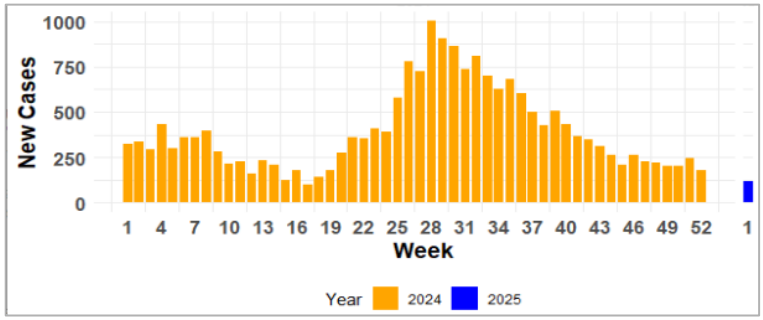
[1] Bangladesh Dengue press releases
[2] Bangladesh daily Dengue press release 12 January 2025

India

Kerala [3]

- Kerala State continues to show declining trend in dengue cases, after the peak around the week 28.
- During week one (from 30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025), a total of 119 new dengue cases were reported in Kerala, a 32% decrease compared to 176 cases reported during week 52 (from 23 to 29 December 2024).
- A total of 20 550 dengue cases were reported in the entirety of 2024.

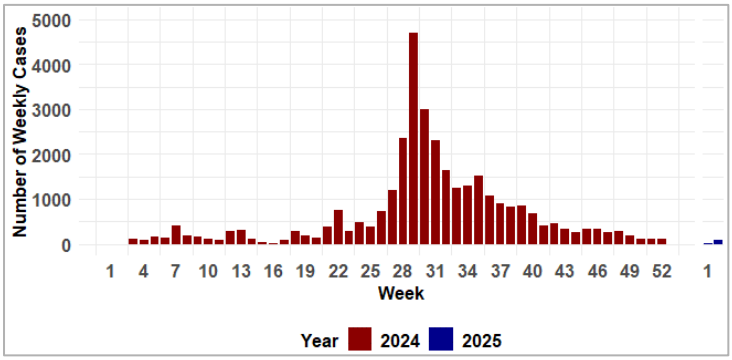
Figure 3. Number of new dengue cases by week in Kerala from week 1 of 2024 to week 1 of 2025.



Karnataka [4]

- Karnataka State also shows declining trend in dengue cases.
- During week two of 2025 (from 06 to 12 January 2024), a total of 93 new dengue cases were reported in Karnataka, a 389% increase compared to 19 cases reported during week one (from 30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025).
- In week one and week two in 2025, a total of 112 dengue cases were reported.
- A total of 32 789 dengue cases were reported in the entirety of 2024.

Figure 4. Number of new dengue cases by week in Karnataka from week 1 of 2024 to week 2 of 2025

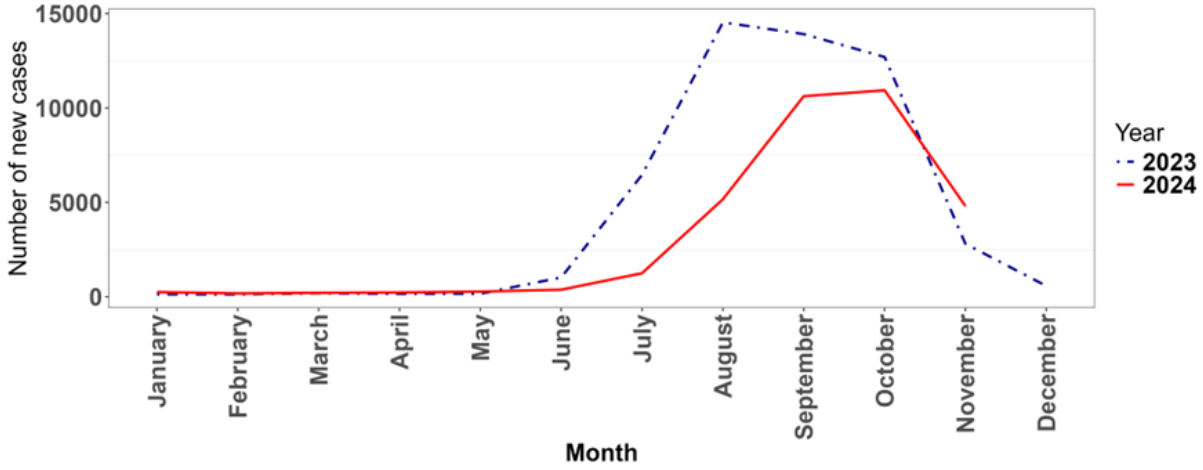


[3] Kerala
[4] Karnataka

Nepal [5]

- In Nepal, the number of dengue cases in December has not been made available. In November 2024, a total of 4 802 dengue cases have been reported, a 56.1% decrease compared to October 2024 (n=10 936).
- In 2024, as of 30 November, a total of 34 315 cases and 13 deaths have been reported, affecting 76 districts.

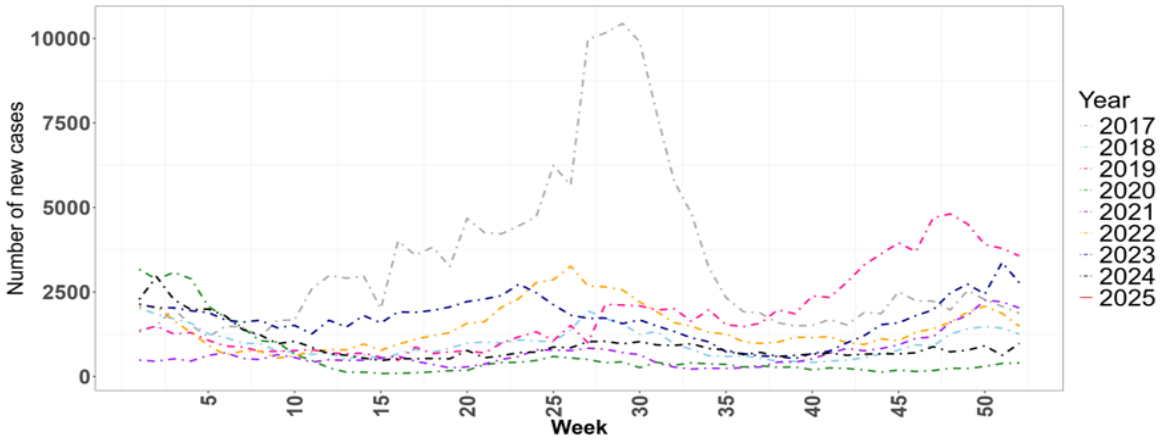
Figure 5. Number of new cases of dengue by month reported by the EWARS in Nepal from January 2023 to November 2024.



Sri Lanka [6]

- During week one (from 30 December 2024 to 05 January 2025), a total of 1 138 new dengue cases were reported in Sri Lanka, a 16.2% increase compared to 979 cases reported during week 52 (23 to 29 December 2024).
- In week one in 2025, a total of 1 138 cases were reported compared to 2 279 cases and 2 142 cases during the same period in 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Figure 6. Number of new dengue cases by week in Sri Lanka from week 1 of 2017 to week 1 of 2025.



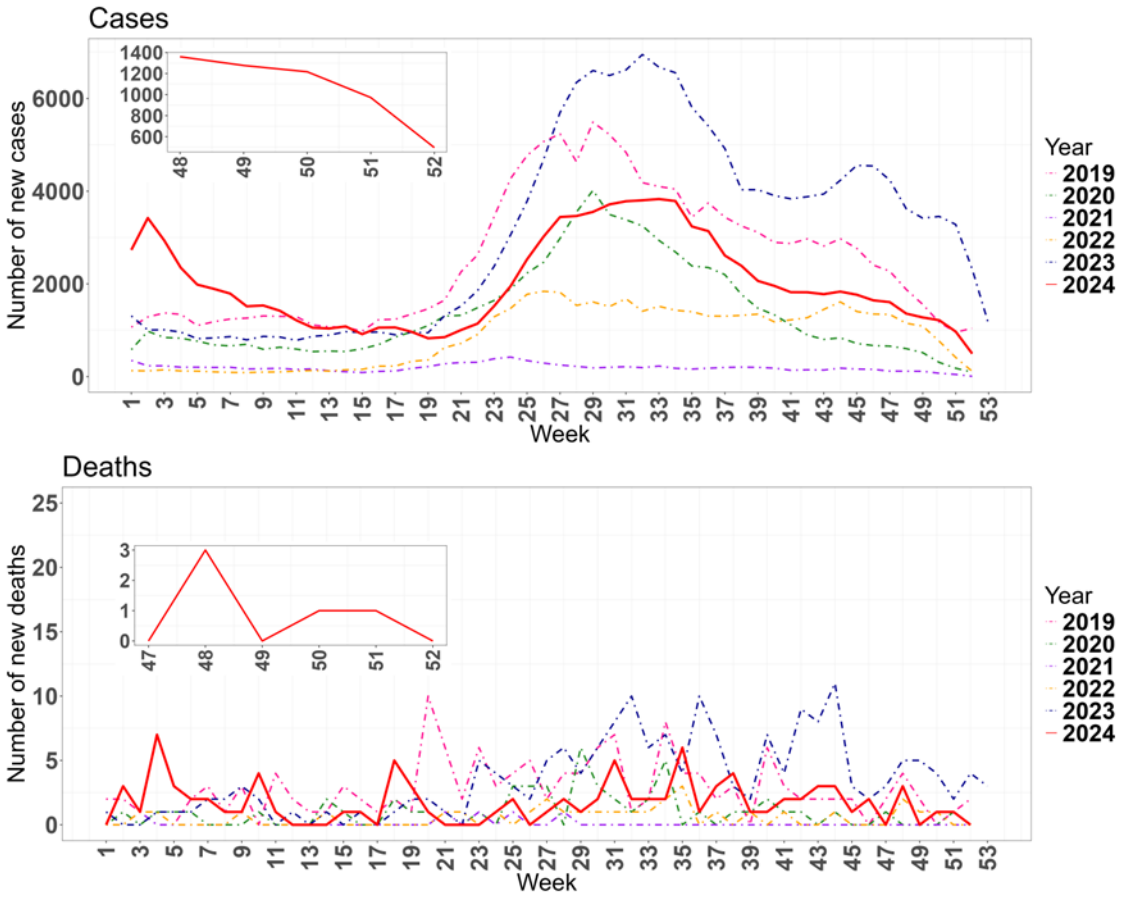
Sources: Epidemiology Unit and National Dengue Control Unit, Ministry of Health - 2017 to 2020; 2021 to 2024

[5] https://edcd.gov.np/news/20241203dengue-situation-update
[6] Sri Lanka National Dengue Control Unit

Thailand [7] [8] [9]

- During week 52 (from 23 to 29 December 2024), a total of 496 new dengue cases were reported in Thailand, a 49% decrease compared to 972 cases reported during week 51 (from 16 to 22 December 2024).
- During weeks 52, no new dengue deaths were reported while there was one death reported in week 51.
- In 2024, as of week 52, a total of 105 206 cases including 90 deaths (CFR=0.09%) have been reported. This compares to 161 524 cases including 181 deaths (CFR=0.11%) reported from week one to week 52 in 2023.

Figure 7. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by week in Thailand from 2019 to week 52 of 2024



Source: Ministry of Public Health, Thailand

[7] Thailand Ministry of Public Health
[8] Thailand Ministry of Public Health
[9] Thailand Ministry of Public Health

COVID-19

Situation in WHO South-East Asia Region

As of 12 January 2025

- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, in weeks one and two (from 30 December 2024 to 12 January), 97 new COVID-19 cases, a decrease of 41.2% and one death, a decrease of 87.5% were reported, compared to the previous 14 days (Table 1).
- The Region has recorded a cumulative total of 61 327 104 COVID-19 cases, including 808 868 deaths (Table 1).
- During week one in 2025, the proportion of respiratory samples collected at influenza sentinel surveillance sites in the selected countries that tested positive for COVID-19 ranged from 0% to 18.9% (Indonesia) (Figure 9).
- Please refer to the WHO SEARO COVID-19 dashboard for further information of COVID-19 in WHO South-East Asia Region.
- Globally, 777 126 421 COVID-19 cases, including 7 079 925 deaths have been cumulatively reported, as of 29 December 2024[10]. Please visit the WHO COVID-19 dashboard for the global situation of COVID-19.

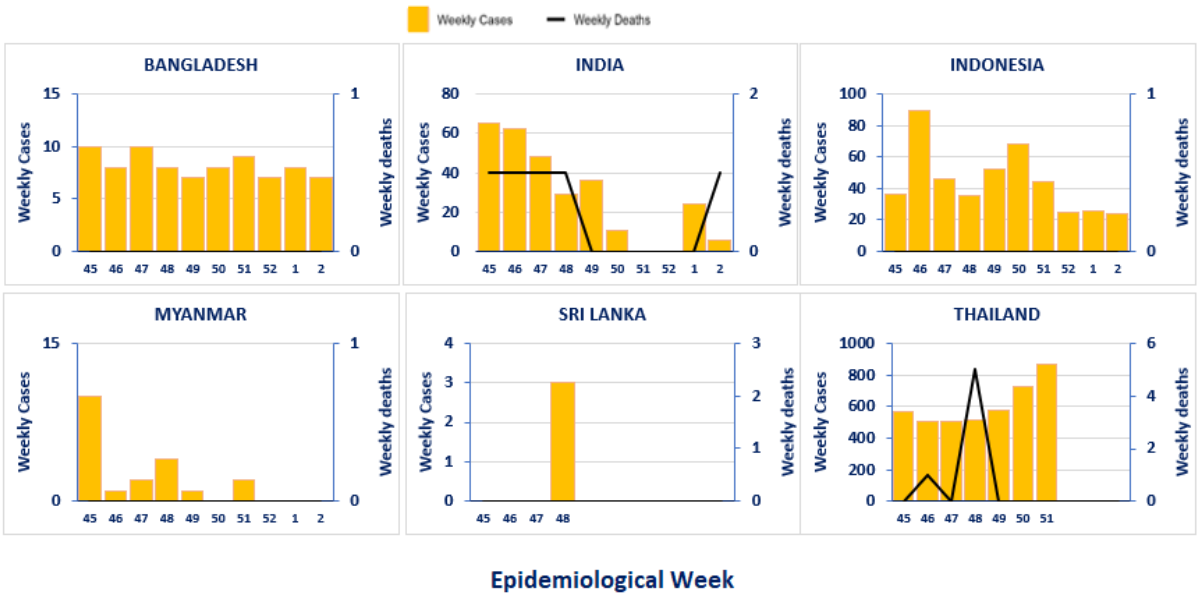
Table 1. COVID-19 cases, deaths, and the change in new cases in countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region in the week as of 12 January 2025.

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		4,808,454	NA	NA	NA	34,741	NA	NA	NA
India		45,044,579	30	76.5	0.0	533,662	1	-66.7	0.0
Bangladesh		2,051,558	15	-6.3	0.1	29,499	0	0.0	0.0
Myanmar		643,241	0	-100.0	-	19,494	0	0.0	0.0
Indonesia		6,830,159	52	-29.7	0.2	162,059	0	0.0	0.0
Sri Lanka		672,812	NA	NA	NA	16,907	NA	NA	NA
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		61,327,104	97	41.2	NA	808,868	1	-87.5	NA

Notes:
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.
Indonesia data were for the period from 29 December 2024 to 11 January 2025 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 30 November and Thailand data as of 21 December 2024.

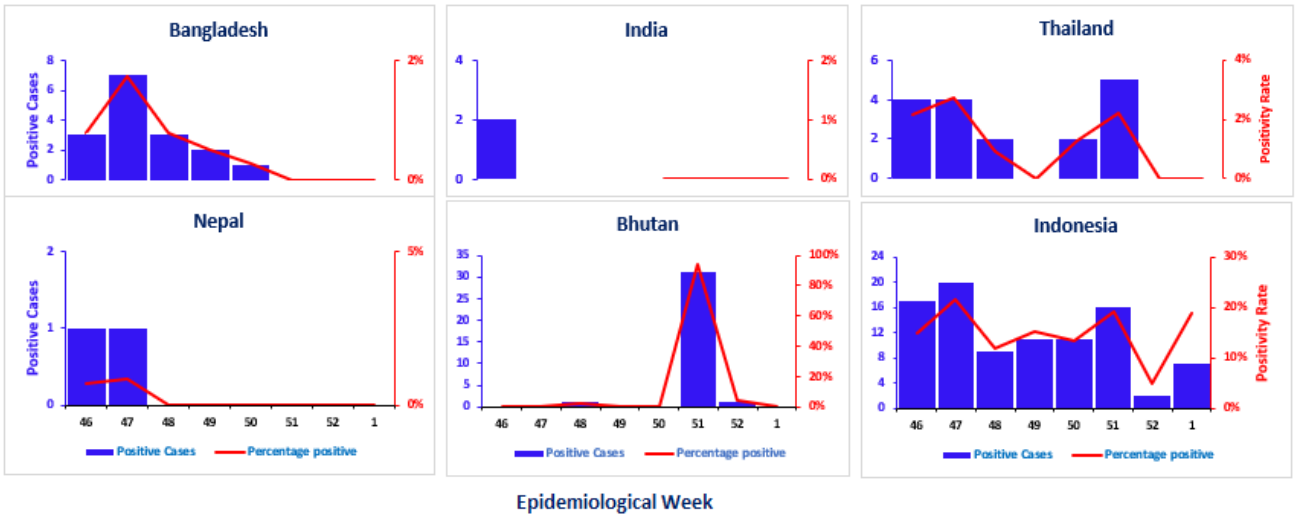
[10] Global Dashboard Data as 29 December 2024

Figure 8. Weekly number of new COVID-19 cases reported during the recent ten weeks (as of 12 January 2025) in the WHO South-East Asia Region*.



* Data for Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, and Timor-Leste are not available. Sri Lanka data were as of 30 November and Thailand data were as of 23 December 2024.

Figure 9. Weekly number of SARS-CoV-2 positive samples and test positivity from integrated influenza-SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance systems in the recent eight weeks in selected countries* (as of 5 January 2025).



* Countries routinely conducting SARS-COV-2 testing of the samples collected through influenza sentinel surveillance sites (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand).

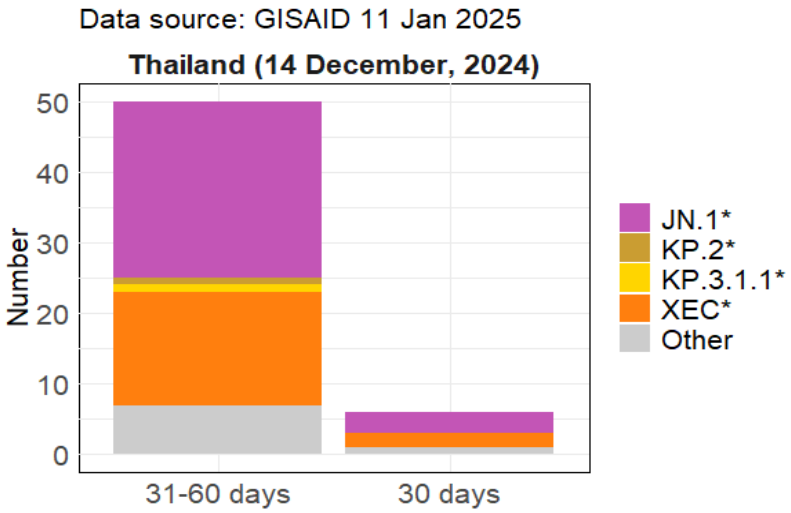
Global circulation of SARS-CoV-2 variants

- WHO is currently tracking several SARS-CoV-2 variants and their sub-lineages including [11]:
  - One variant of interest (VOIs): JN.1
  - Six variants under monitoring (VUMs): KP.2; KP.3; KP.3.1.1; JN.1.18, LB.1 and XEC
- Information on the current status of the global SARS-CoV-2 variants can be found from the WHO COVID-19 dashboard.

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

- The genomic sequence data submitted to GISAID [12] by countries in the South-East Asia region in the past 60 days by date of collection are shown in Figure 10 (as of 11 January 2025). Only a small number of genomic sequences have been submitted from Thailand and therefore the data should be interpreted with caution.
- In the last 60 days:
  - In **Thailand**, 56 genomic sequences were submitted with JN.1* accounting for 50% (n=28) followed by XEC* accounting for 32.1% (n=18). One genomic sequence each corresponding to KP.2* and KP.3.1.1* were also submitted.
  - Other countries have not submitted genomic sequences recently to GISAID.

Figure 10. Number of genomic sequences submitted in last 60 days.



[11] https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/covid-19-epidemiological-update---24-december-2024
[12] https://gisaid.org/

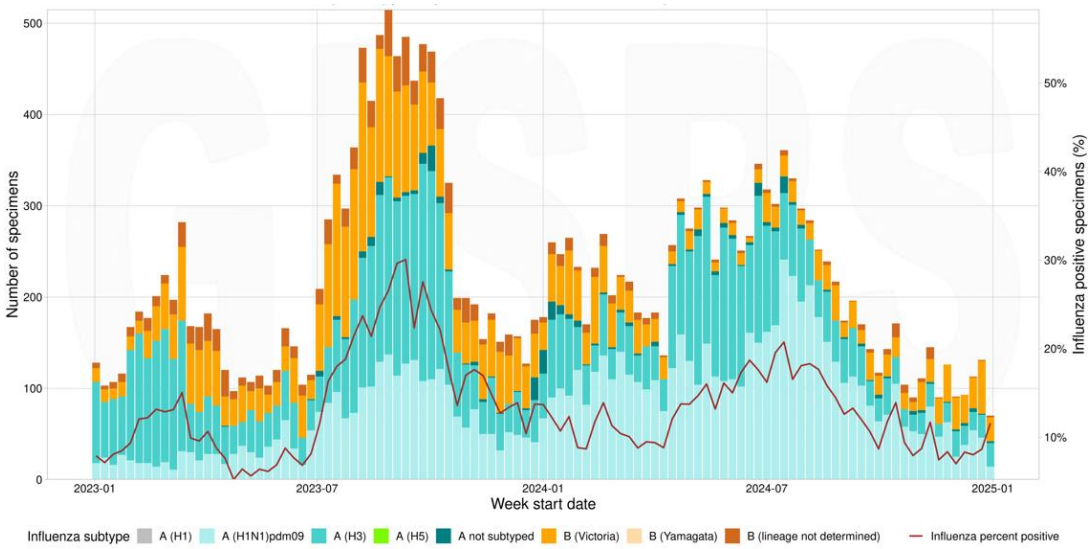
Influenza

WHO South-East Asia Region

Situation as of 5 January 2025

- 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 one (30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025), the weekly test positivity was at 6% and the most frequently reported strains were influenza B (Victoria) and influenza A(H3) (Figure 11).
- Data and information on influenza and SARS-CoV-2 using integrated influenza like illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) sentinel surveillance systems, are available at WHO Global FluNet Dashboard.

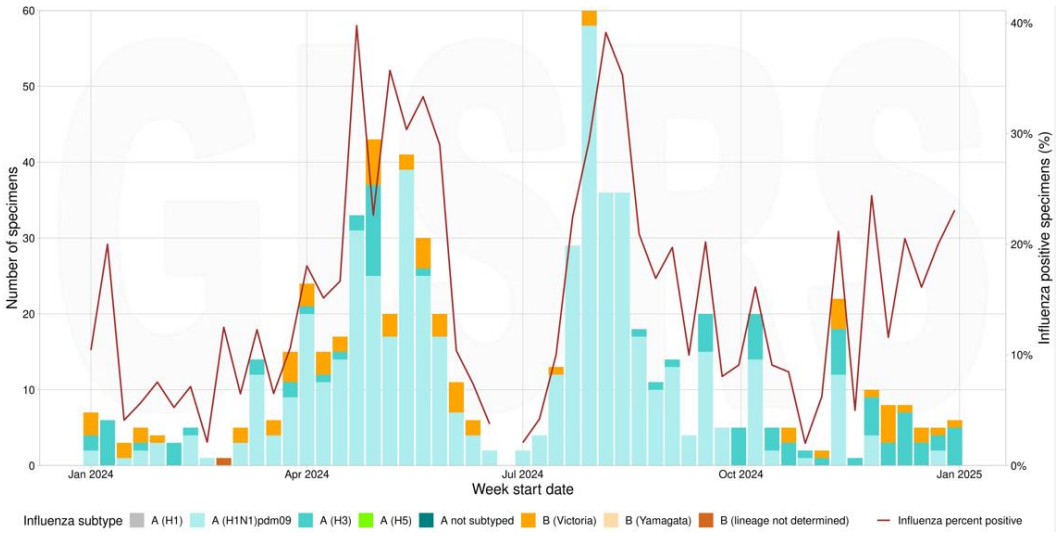
Figure 11. Detection of Influenza viruses by subtypes reported to the FluNet and the test positivity of specimens for influenza in WHO South-East Asia Region from 1 January 2023 to 5 January 2025.



Bhutan

- As of 5 January 2025, 26 samples were tested for SARS-CoV-2 & influenza leveraging the integrated ILI and SARI sentinel surveillance platform in week one (30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025). The weekly test positivity was at 23.1%.
- Six samples were tested positive for influenza, of which 83.3% (n=5) were influenza A(H3) and 16.7% (n=1) was influenza B(Victoria).

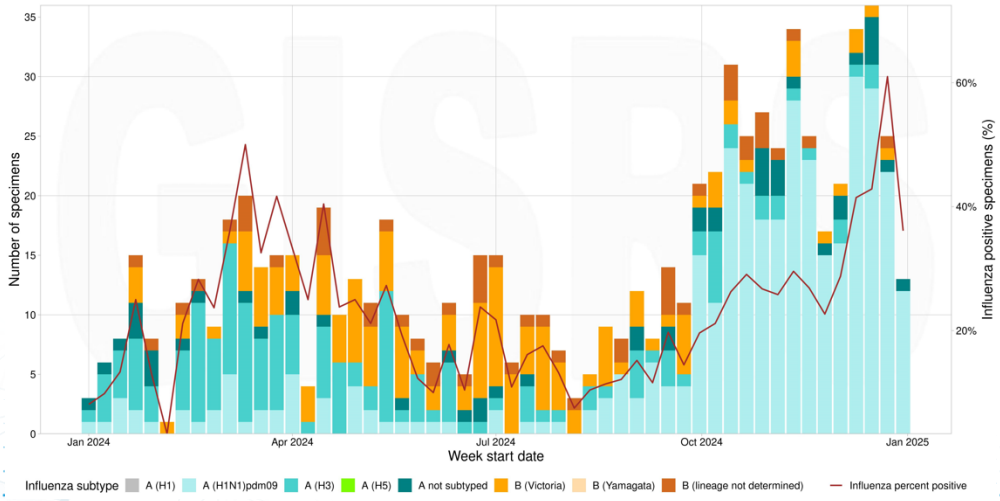
Figure 12. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity in Bhutan from week 1 of 2024 to week 1, 2025.



Indonesia

- As of 5 January 2025, 36 samples were tested for SARS-CoV-2 & influenza leveraging the integrated ILI and SARI sentinel surveillance platform in week one (30 December 2024 to 5 January 2025). The weekly test positivity was at 36%.
- Thirteen samples were tested positive for influenza, of which 92.3% (n=12) were influenza A (H1N1)pdm09 and 7.7% (n=1) was influenza A (not subtyped).

Figure 13. Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtypes and the influenza test positivity from week 1 of 2024 to week 1 of 2025.



Annex

WHO resources on mpox

All current WHO interim technical guidance can be accessed on this page of the WHO website. WHO evidence-based guidance has been and will continue to be updated in line with the evolving situation and updated scientific evidence. The selected publications are listed below for easier reference, along with other relevant resources.

- **IHR Emergency Committee, Temporary Recommendations and Standing Recommendations**
  - Second meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the upsurge of mpox 2024 (28 November 2024)
  - First meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee regarding the upsurge of mpox 2024 (19 August 2024)
  - Standing recommendations for mpox issued by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) in accordance with the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR)

- **Strategic planning**
  - Mpox global strategic preparedness and response plan (26 August 2024, updated on 6 September 2024)
  - Strategic framework for enhancing prevention and control of mpox (2024-2027) (May 2024)

- **General information on mpox**
  - Mpox fact sheet
  - Monkeypox outbreak page (2022)
  - Mpox (monkeypox) health topic page
  - Mpox (monkeypox) Q&A

- **Epidemiological situation**
  - Dashboard: https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/mpx_global/
  - Multi-country outbreak of mpox, External situation report #45 - (11 January 2025)
  - Genomic epidemiology of monkeypox virus (Nextstrain)

- **Technical documents**
  - Surveillance, case investigation and contact tracing for mpox: interim guidance (27 November 2024)
  - Considerations for wastewater and environmental surveillance for monkeypox virus: interim guidance (25 November 2024)
  - Technical Brief (interim) and Priority Actions: Enhancing Readiness for mpox in WHO South-East Asia Region (13 September 2024)
  - Diagnostic testing for the monkeypox virus (MPXV): interim guidance (10 May 2024)
  - Risk communication and community engagement readiness and response toolkit: mpox (23 April 2024)
  - Clinical characterization of mpox including monitoring the use of therapeutic interventions: statistical analysis plan (13 October 2023)
  - Smallpox and mpox (orthopoxviruses): WHO position paper (August 2024)
  - SAGE on mpox vaccines (page 16)
  - Vaccines and immunization for monkeypox: Interim guidance, 16 November 2022
  - Annexes to the Vaccines and immunization for monkeypox interim guidance
  - Background document for the SAGE October 2022 session on monkeypox vaccines

- **Data collection tools**
  - Case report form: Word
  - Case investigation form: PDF

- **Mass gathering**
  - Public health advice for gatherings during the current monkeypox outbreak
  - Interim advice for public health authorities on summer events during the monkeypox outbreak in Europe, 2022
  - Catalogue of resources on mpox mass and large gathering event preparedness