WHO South-East Asia Region
Epidemiological Bulletin

WHO Health Emergencies Programme
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HEALTH EMERGENCIES programme
World Health Organization
South-East Asia Region

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

India: Substandard (contaminated) oral liquid medicines

- On 13 October 2025, WHO issued Medical Product Alert N°5/2025 regarding substandard (contaminated) oral liquid medicines identified in India and reported to WHO on 8 October 2025 [1].

Alert summary

- On 8 October the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) of India reported to WHO the presence of Diethylene Glycol (DEG) in at least three oral liquid medicines. This followed information identified by WHO on 30 September 2025 of localized clusters of acute illness and child fatalities in India. CDSCO informed WHO that the contaminated products were reportedly consumed by the affected children.
- The contaminated oral liquid medicines have been identified to be specific batches of COLDRIF, Respifresh TR and ReLife, manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceutical, Rednex Pharmaceuticals, and Shape Pharma.
- CDSCO has confirmed that relevant state authorities have ordered an immediate halt to production at implicated manufacturing sites and have suspended product authorizations. In addition, a recall of the contaminated products has been initiated by relevant state authorities.
- The CDSCO has informed WHO that none of the contaminated medicines have been exported from India and there is currently no evidence of illegal export.
- Nevertheless, WHO encourages National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) to consider targeted market surveillance, with particular attention to informal and unregulated supply chains where products may circulate undetected. NRAs are also advised to carefully evaluate the risks associated with any oral liquid medicines originating from the same manufacturing sites—particularly those produced since December 2024.
- WHO continues to collaborate closely with Indian health authorities to monitor the situation, identify the source of the contamination and mitigate any potential public health risks.

Risks

- These contaminated products pose significant risks to patients and can cause severe and potentially life-threatening illness. Diethylene glycol is toxic to humans when consumed and can prove fatal. The contaminated oral liquid medicines referenced in this alert are unsafe and their use, especially in children, may result in serious injury or death. Toxic effects can include abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, inability to pass urine, headache, altered mental state and acute kidney injury which may lead to death.
- To protect patients, it is essential to detect and remove these contaminated products from circulation.

Advice to health-care professionals, regulatory authorities and the public

- Health-care professionals should report the detection of these substandard products and any incident of adverse effects, or lack of expected effects to their National Regulatory Authorities or National Pharmacovigilance Centre. WHO advises increased surveillance and diligence within the supply chains of countries and regions likely to be affected by these substandard products. Increased surveillance of the informal/unregulated market is also advised.
- National regulatory authorities/health authorities, and law enforcement authorities are advised to immediately notify WHO if these products are detected in their country.
- If you are in possession of any of these products, WHO recommends that you do not use them. If you, or someone you know, has, or may have, used these products, or suffered an adverse event or unexpected side-effect after use, seek immediate medical advice from a health-care professional or contact a poisons control centre.
- **Annex: Products subject of WHO Medical Product Alert N°5/2025**

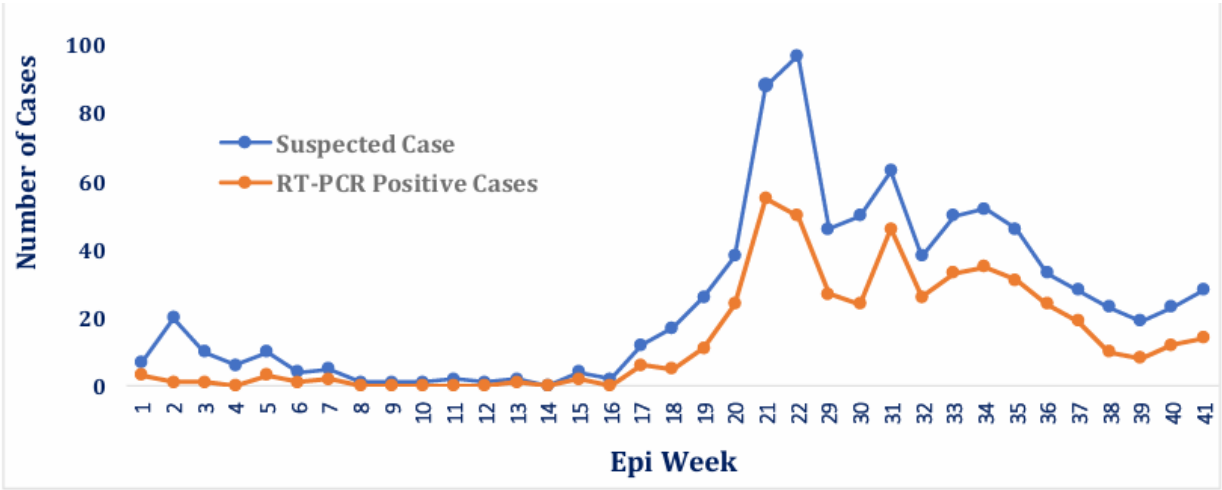
[1] https://www.who.int/news/item/13-10-2025-medical-product-alert-n-5-2025--substandard-(contaminated)-oral-liquid-medicines

Bangladesh: Chikungunya

Situation as of 21 October 2025[2]

- Between 1 January and 10 October 2025, a total of 879 suspected chikungunya cases in Dhaka were reported by the Institute of Epidemiology and Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), of which 483 were laboratory confirmed by RT-PCR. A peak was observed in epi-week 22.
- Cases were detected across both Dhaka North and South City Corporations, indicating widespread urban transmission, with additional reports from Chattogram, the second-largest city of the country.
- Given the absence of a routine national surveillance system for chikungunya, limited diagnostic capacity, and the clinical presentation similar with dengue, the reported numbers likely underestimate the true burden of the disease.
- IEDCR is closely monitoring the situation and made the following recommendation.
  - Healthcare providers are urged to stay vigilant for chikungunya and consider differential diagnosis with dengue.
  - Diagnostic testing for chikungunya should be prioritized for acute febrile cases with arthralgia, especially in affected localities.
  - Public awareness campaigns should be intensified to promote mosquito control and personal protection.
  - Surveillance should be expanded to identify new hotspots and monitor disease trends.
  - The public is advised to take preventive measures to avoid mosquito bites and reduce mosquito breeding sites, particularly in and around homes.

Figure 1. Suspected and confirmed chikungunya cases in Dhaka from 1 January to 10 October 2025



[2] IEDCR. Chikungunya Outbreak in Dhaka. Available from: https://iedcr.portal.gov.bd/site/annual_reports/30de3cdd-66c2-4557-a85c-22182fd83f6a

Influenza

Situation in the WHO South-East Asia Region

Situation as of 22 October 2025 [3]

- Figure 2 show the influenza data from the WHO FluNet platform, accessed on 22 October 2025.
- During weeks 40–42, there were 419 influenza positive samples from 3 047 samples in the SEARO region, with an overall positivity at 14%.
- Sri Lanka (64%) and Thailand (39%) have shown an increased trend in test positivity proportion, with 37% and 34% respectively in weeks 40 to 42.

Figure 2. Weekly trends of specimens tested at National Influenza Centers (NIC) and laboratory confirmed influenza in the WHO South-East Asia Region (2025)

Source: Respimart/FluNet/FluID

[3] WHO. Influenza surveillance outputs [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 cited 2025 October 22]. Available from: https://www.who.int/teams/global-influenza-programme/surveillance-and-monitoring/influenza-surveillance-outputs

Influenza virus subtypes and lineages Week 40-42 2025[4]

- Table 1 presents the distribution of influenza virus subtypes and lineages in ten countries within the WHO South-East Asia Region for epidemiological weeks 40 to 42 of 2025, using data obtained from WHO's RespiMart platforms on 22 Oct 2025. The latest data submission was on 5 Oct 2025.
- A total of 3 047 samples were tested in the region, with 419 (14%) testing positive for influenza. The subtype results for these positive samples are shown in Table 1.
- A(H3) was predominant strain overall in the Region (63%), and in Bhutan (94%), India (57%), Sri Lanka (57%) and Thailand (74%).
- The B(Victoria) lineage represented 22% of all influenza virus detections in the region, with high proportions reported in Bangladesh (86%) and Maldives (70%).
- Nepal had 16 influenza positive samples but most (75%) were not subtyped.
- DPR Korea and Timor-Leste did not submit data during these weeks. Myanmar had only four influenza positive samples.

Table 1. Distribution of influenza virus subtypes in the WHO South-East Asia Region (weeks 40-42, 2025)

Country	Total Samples Tested	Number of Influenza Positive	Positivity Rate %	A (H1) %	A (H3) %	A (H5) %	A (H1N1)pdm09 %	A (Unsubtype) %	B (Yamagata) %	B (Victoria) %	B (Lineage not Determined) %
All Country	3,047	419	14%	0%	63%	0%	9%	5%	0%	22%	1%
Bangladesh	240	21	9%	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	86%	0%
Bhutan	151	36	24%	0%	94%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%
DPR Korea	0	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
India	1,725	111	6%	0%	57%	0%	3%	0%	0%	40%	1%
Maldives	92	10	11%	0%	20%	0%	10%	0%	0%	70%	0%
Myanmar	28	4	14%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nepal	159	16	10%	0%	19%	0%	0%	75%	0%	0%	6%
Sri Lanka	76	28	37%	0%	57%	0%	4%	32%	0%	0%	7%
Thailand	576	193	34%	0%	74%	0%	16%	0%	0%	11%	0%
Timor-Leste	0	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

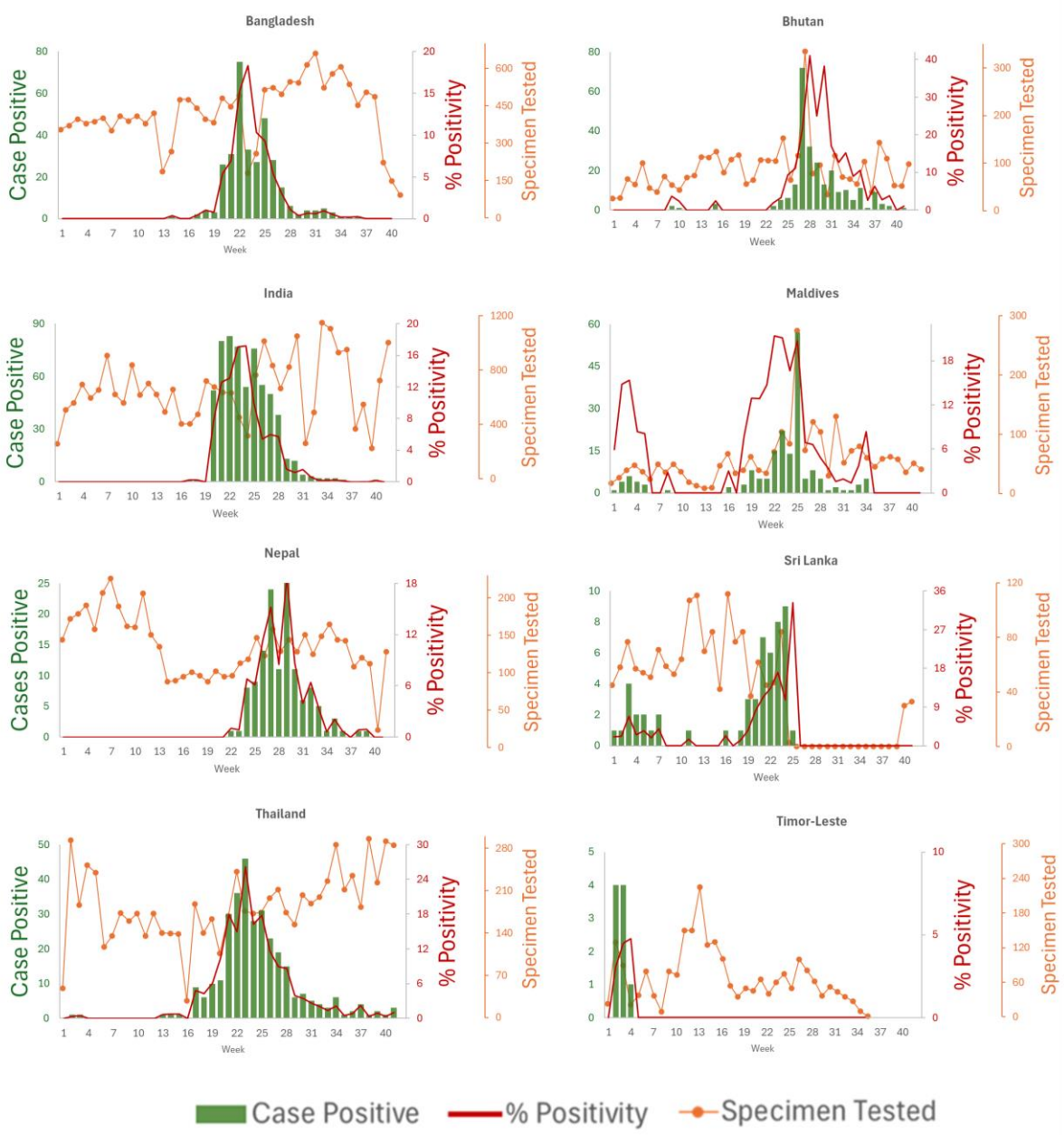
[4] WHO. Influenza surveillance outputs [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2025 [cited 2025 Oct 21]. Available from: https://www.who.int/teams/global-influenza-programme/surveillance-and-monitoring/influenza-surveillance-outputs

COVID-19

Regional Situation: COVID-19

- Based on data from the integrated influenza-SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance system, Figure 3 summarizes weekly trends of eight countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Timor-Leste - including the number of positive COVID-19 cases, the test positivity proportion and the number of specimens tested.

Figure 3. The number of COVID-19 positive case, % positivity and specimen tested from integrated influenza-SARS CoV-2 sentinel surveillance systems (as on 21 October 2025)



Source: WHO Integrated Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses, 21 October 2025

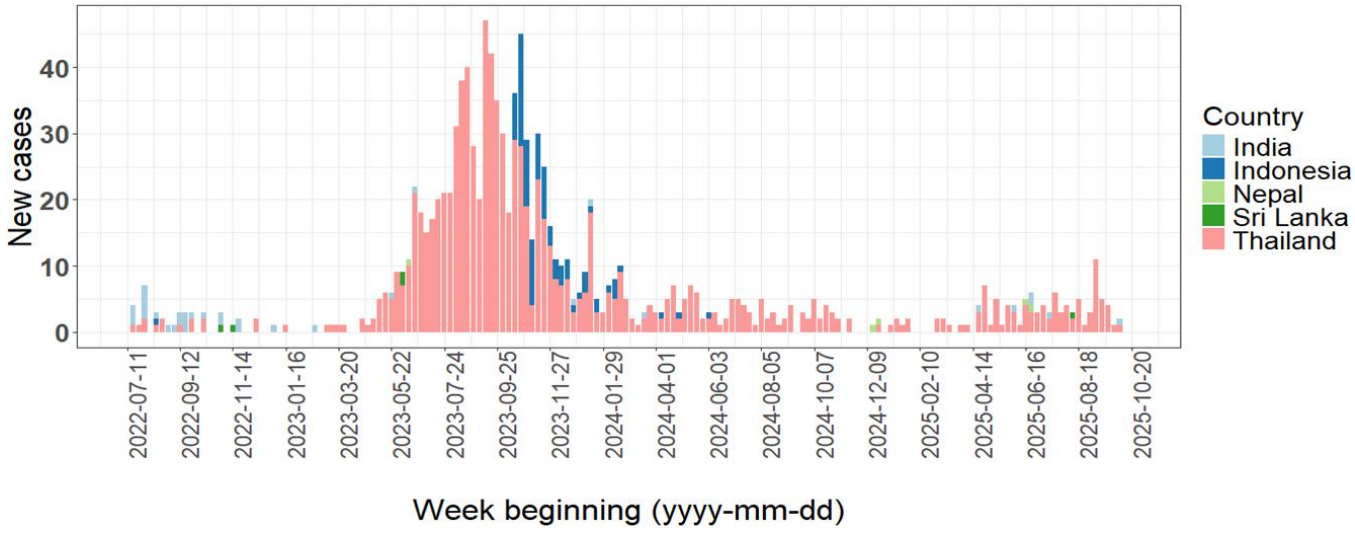
Mpox

Situation in the WHO South-East Asia Region

Situation as of 19 October 2025

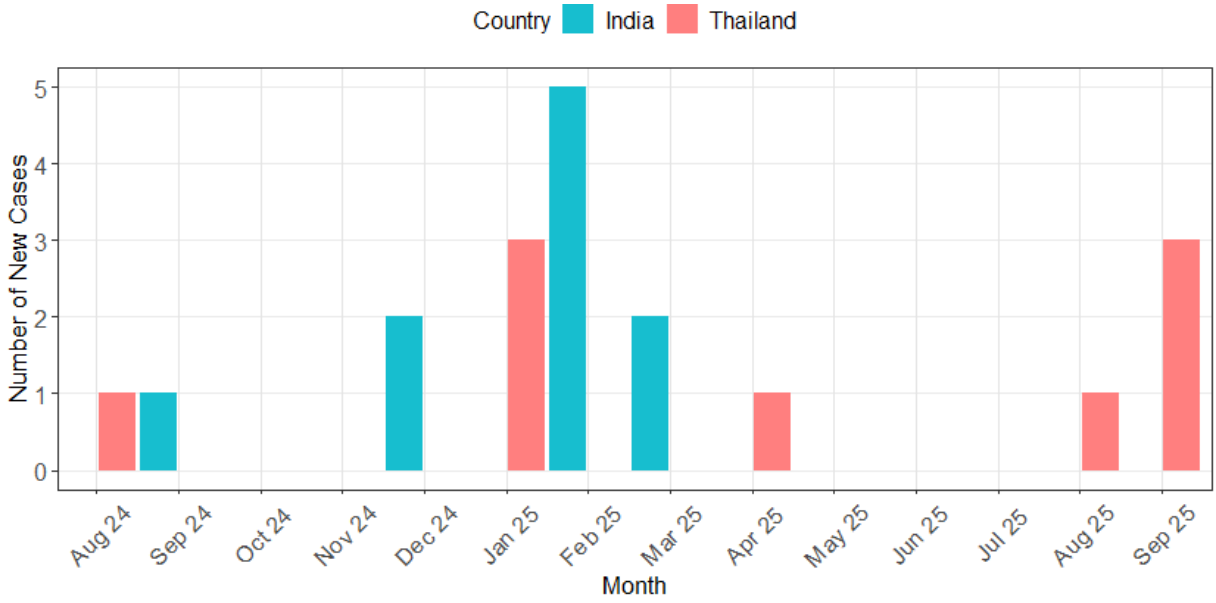
- In week 41 and 42 (06 to 19 October 2025), one new mpox case from India and one from Thailand were reported.
- As of 19 October, 2025, in the WHO South-East Asia Region, a total of 1 112 laboratory-confirmed mpox cases including 14 deaths, have been reported since 14 July 2022 (Figure 4).
- Nineteen cases with mpox virus (MPVX) clade Ib were reported in the Region to date – ten from India and nine from Thailand. Please see Figure 5 for the trend of MPVX Ib cases detected in the Region.
- For information on global epidemiological situation of mpox, please see: [WHO mpox surveillance dashboard]

Figure 4. Number of mpox cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by date of notification* (14 July 2022 – 19 October 2025)



* Cases are plotted per week of notification - the date on which the case is notified to the public health authority.
** Where the date of notification is missing, this has been replaced with the date of diagnosis. Following the reassignment of Indonesia from the WHO South-East Asia Region to the WHO Western Pacific Region, data of Indonesia after 27 May 2025 will no longer be reflected in the graph.

Figure 5. Number of MPXV clade Ib cases reported in WHO South-East Asia Region by month of notification (as of 19 October 2025) *



* Cases are plotted as per the month of notification (based on the date on which the case was notified to the public health authority). For 10 cases in India of which the month of notification is missing, the month of diagnosis was used.

Table 2. Profile of the 19 confirmed MPXV clade Ib cases reported in the WHO South-East Asia Region, for which case-based information is available since August 2024 (as of 19 October 2025)

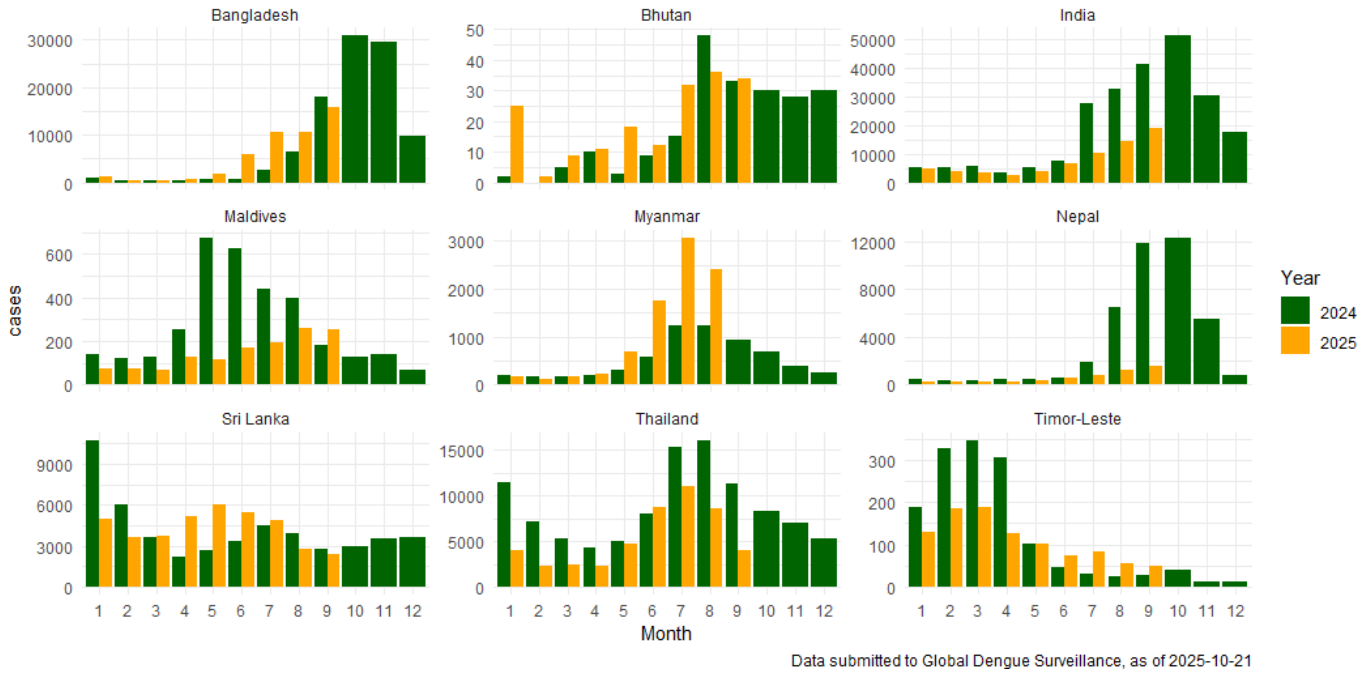
	Total (n = 19)
Country	
India	10 (52.6%)
Thailand	9 (47.4%)
Recent travel	
Yes	18 (44.4%)
No	1 (13.3%)
Age group (years)	
Less than 18	0 (0.0%)
18-29	5 (26.3%)
30-39	10 (52.6%)
40-49	3 (15.8%)
50 and over	1 (5.3%)
Gender	
Female	7 (36.8%)
Male	12 (63.2%)

Dengue

Situation in the WHO South-East Asia Region [5]

- In September 2025, India reported 18 803 cases, followed by Bangladesh with 15 866 and Thailand with 4 012 cases. Data for September were not available for Myanmar. (Figure 6)

Figure 6. Reported dengue cases by country, January 2024 – September 2025

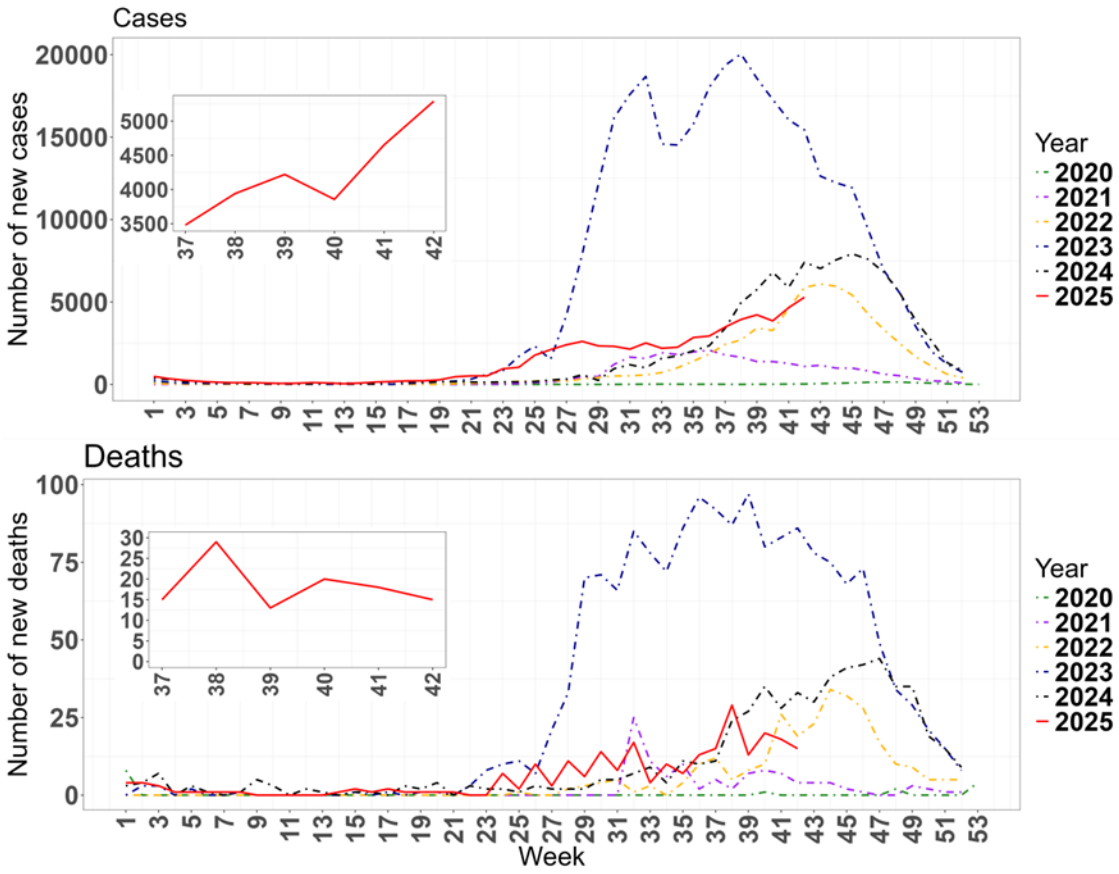


[5] World Health Organization. Global dengue surveillance. https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/dengue_global/

Bangladesh [6]

- During week 42 (13 to 19 October 2025), a total of 5 290 new dengue cases were reported in Bangladesh, a 13.7% increase compared to 4 652 cases reported during week 41 of 2025 (6 to 12 October 2025).
- During week 42, 15 new dengue deaths were reported in Bangladesh, a 16.7% decrease compared to 18 deaths reported during week 41 of 2025.
- In 2025, as of week 42, a total of 60 538 dengue cases and 248 dengue-related deaths have been reported. This is 121% of the number of cases (n= 49 880) and 93% of the number of deaths (n=267) reported till week 42 in 2024.

Figure 7. Number of new dengue cases and deaths by week in Bangladesh from week 1 of 2020 to week 42 of 2025



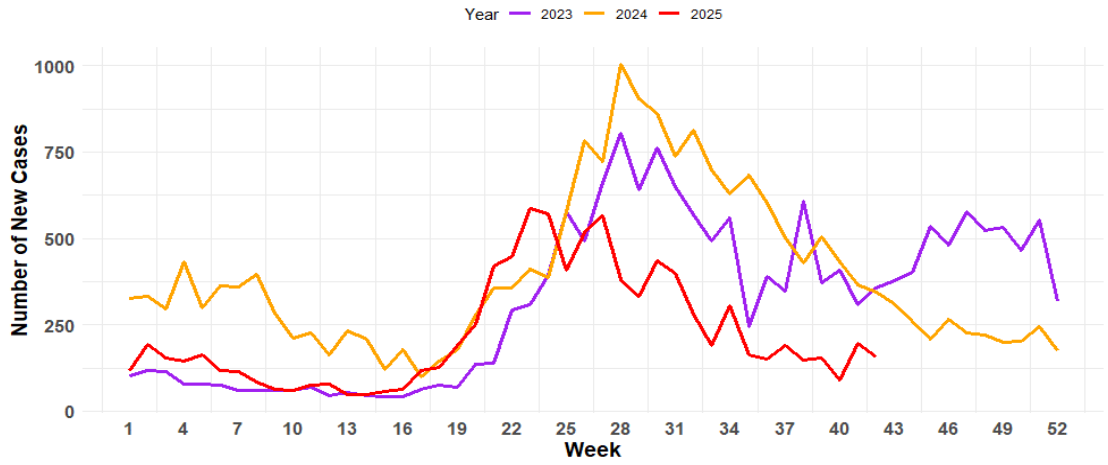
[6] Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Bangladesh. Daily Dengue Status Report [Internet]. Dhaka: DGHS; 2025 Available from: https://old.dghs.gov.bd/index.php/bd/home/5200-daily-dengue-status-report

India

Kerala[7]

- In 2025, cases increased steadily from week 17, but the case number has declined since week 27.

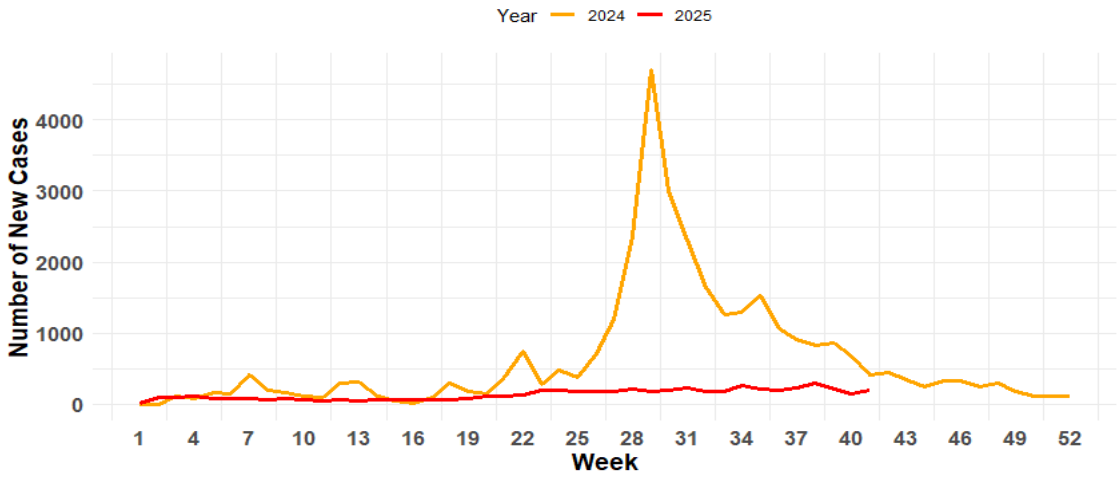
Figure 8. Weekly number of new dengue cases in Kerala state from week 1 of 2023 to week 42 of 2025



Karnataka[8]

- In Karnataka, in 2024, dengue cases peaked at over 4 500 in week 29, while in 2025, case number remains low as of week 41.

Figure 9. Weekly number of new dengue cases in Karnataka state from week 1 of 2024 to week 41 of 2025



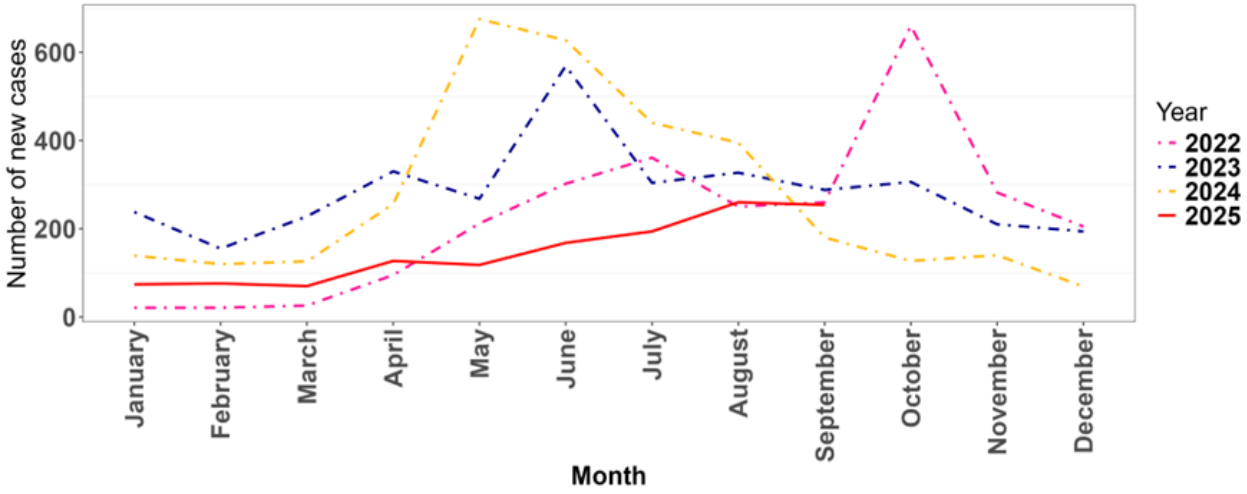
[7] Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala. Health Dashboard – Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) [Internet]. Thiruvananthapuram: DHS Kerala; 2025 Available from: https://dashboard.kerala.gov.in/

[8] Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka. PRISM-H Disease Surveillance Dashboard [Internet]. Bengaluru: DHFW-GoK; 2023 Available from: https://hfwcom.karnataka.gov.in/info-4/Weekly%20Infectious%20Disease%20Report/en

Maldives[9]

- During September 2025, a total of 254 cases of dengue were reported in the Maldives, a 2.3% decrease compared to August 2025 (n=260).

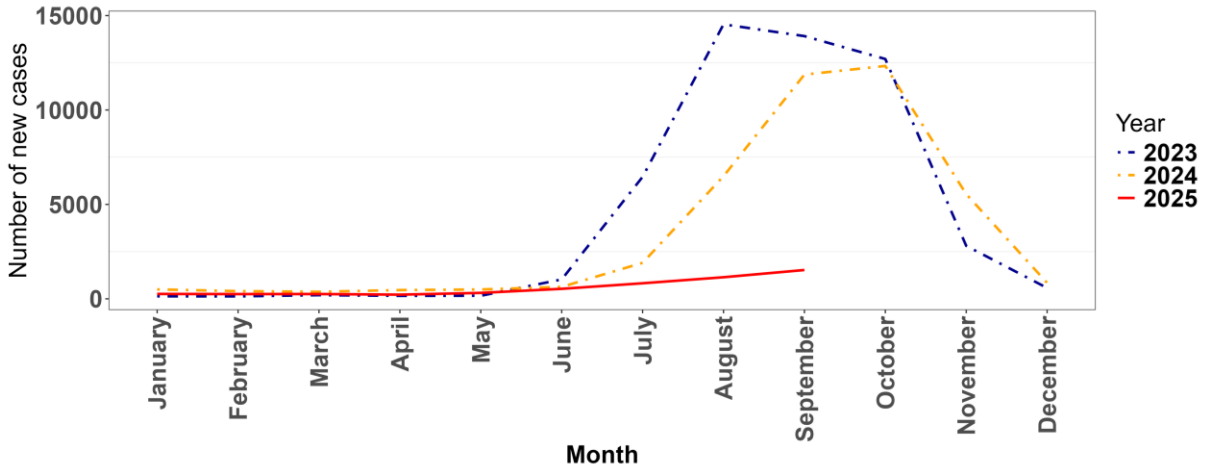
Figure 10. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Maldives from January 2022 to September 2025



Nepal [10]

- During September 2025, a total of 1 526 dengue cases were reported in Nepal, a 33.5% increase compared to August 2025 (n = 1 143).
- In 2025, as of 30 September, a total of 5 323 cases of dengue have been reported compared to 23 145 cases during the same period in 2024. A total of 41 865 dengue cases and 15 deaths were reported throughout 2024.

Figure 11. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Nepal from January 2023 to September 2025

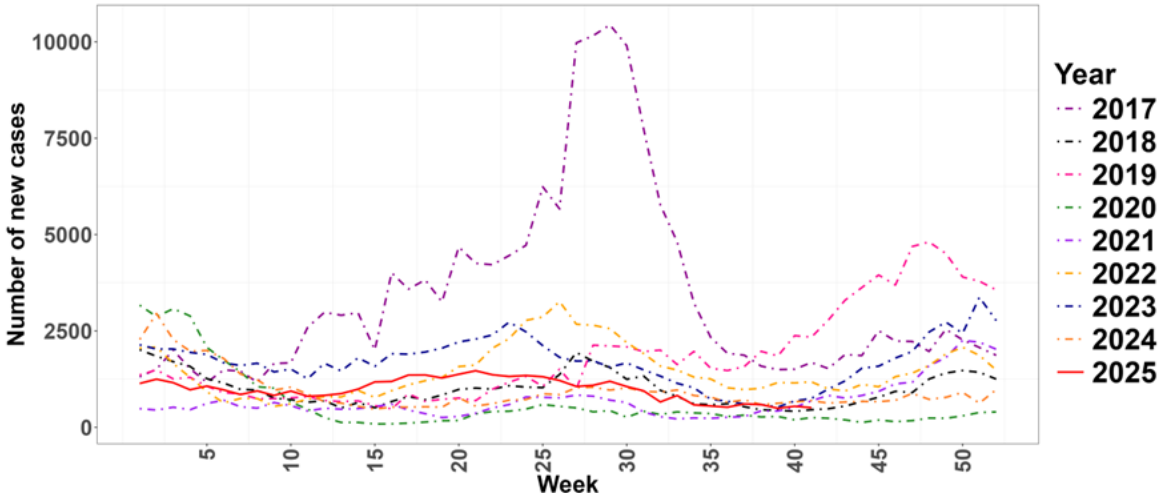


[9] World Health Organization. Global dengue surveillance. https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/dengue_global/
[10] SEARO CDS

Sri Lanka [11]

- During week 41 (06 to 12 October 2025), a total of 511 new dengue cases were reported in Sri Lanka, a 6.4% decrease compared to 546 cases reported during week 40 (29 September to 05 October 2025).
- From week one to week 41 in 2025, a total of 40 637 cases were reported compared to 40 658 cases and 65 667 cases during the same period in 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Figure 12. Number of new dengue cases by week in Sri Lanka from week 1 of 2017 to week 41 of 2025.



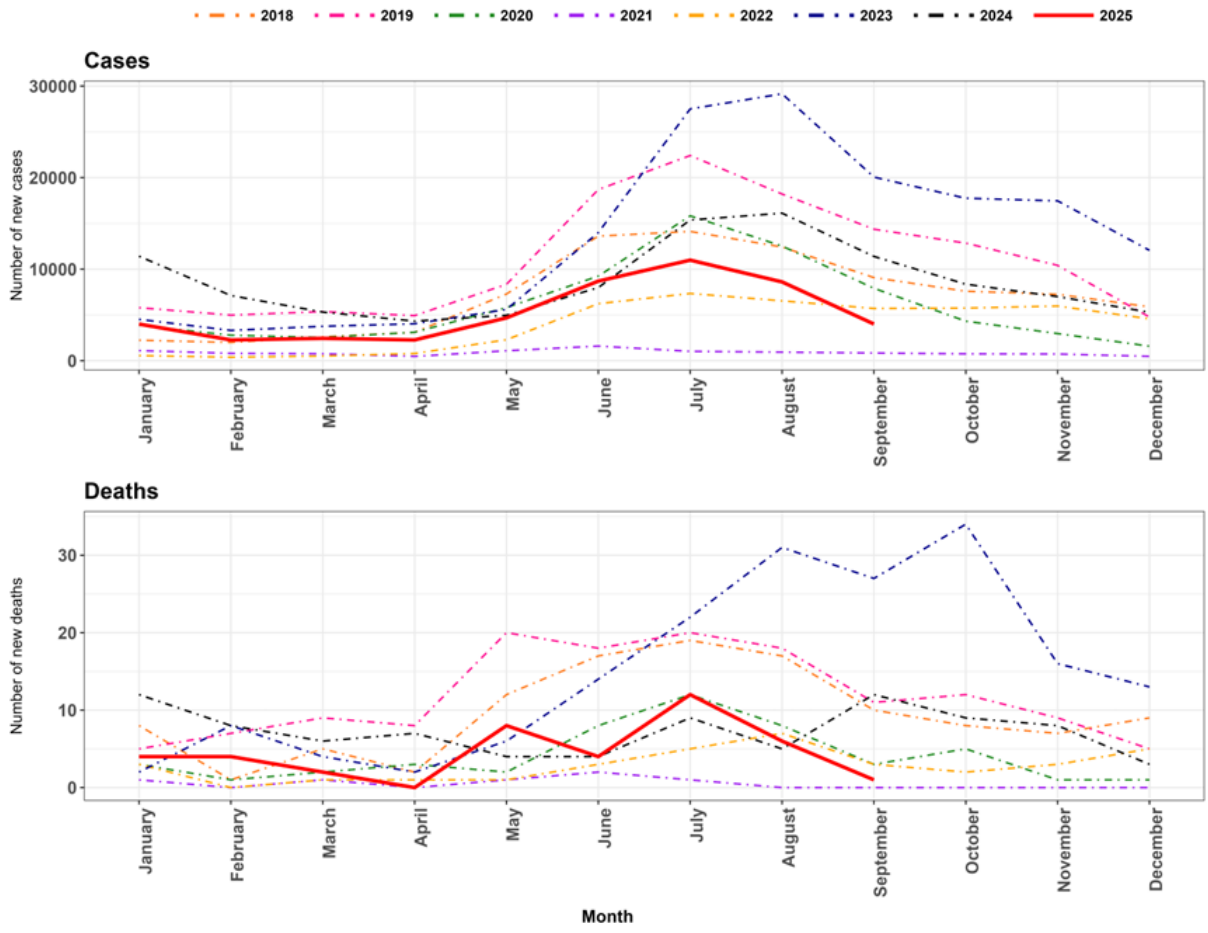
Sources: Epidemiology Unit and National Dengue Control Unit, Ministry of Health - 2017 to 2020; 2021 to 2025

[11] National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU), Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka. National Dengue Control Unit [Internet]. Colombo: MoH; 2025 [cited 2025 October 21]. Available from: https://www.dengue.health.gov.lk/web/index.php/en/

Thailand [12]

- During September 2025, a total of 4 012 cases of dengue were reported in Thailand, a 53% decrease compared to August 2025 (n=8 610).
- During September 2025, one dengue death was reported, an 83% decrease compared to August 2025 (n=6).
- In 2025, as of 30 September, a total of 47 981 dengue cases and 41 dengue-related deaths have been reported. This is 57% of the number of cases (n=84 023) and 61% of the number of deaths (n=67) reported during the same period in 2024.

Figure 13. Number of new cases of dengue by month in Thailand from January 2018 to September 2025.



[12] World Health Organization. Global dengue surveillance. https://worldhealthorg.shinyapps.io/dengue_global/