

ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center

Media Monitoring for Infectious and Emerging Diseases

ASEAN REGION

January 11 – 12, 2024



This report is the result of media monitoring on infectious and emerging diseases happening around the world and among the ASEAN Member States. In order to improve pandemic and epidemic preparedness and response in the ASEAN Region. We provide this report three times a week starting 2024.

Global Situation

COVID-19

- **India** has reported 514 new COVID-19 cases, with active cases declining to 3,422. Three deaths have been reported in a 24-hour span (PTI, 2024). The number of daily cases dropped to double-digits until December 5, 2023, but increased after the emergence of the new sub-variant, JN.1, and cold weather conditions. Around 92% of active cases are recovering under home isolation. India has experienced three waves of COVID-19, with the peak incidence occurring during the delta wave in April-June 2021. [\[Full article\]](#)
- The **United Kingdom**: The community risk index for COVID-19 in the Peterborough, Ontario, region remains high for the 11th week in a row, with active lab-confirmed cases dropping from 161 reported on January 3 to 219 reported on December 20, 2023 (Davis, 2024). The health unit reported the first confirmed case of the BA.2.86 variant in the region in September. The risk index for other respiratory viruses remains "high," including the influenza case rate and test percent positivity. As of January 8, there were 10 inpatients with COVID-19 at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, and cumulative lab-confirmed cases have reached 12,636 since the pandemic began. Outbreaks have been reported, with 297 outbreaks since the pandemic was declared, four more since Jan. 3. Approximately 82% of area residents have two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, known as the "primary series count," and approximately 28,000 doses have been administered since September 14, 2023. [\[Full article\]](#)
- The **United States (US)**: The JN.1 COVID-19 variant is now the most prevalent globally and in the U.S., accounting for 62% of cases (Carbajal, 2024). The virus has experienced rapid growth, with JN.1 making up about 21% of U.S. cases a month ago. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported nearly 10,000 COVID-19 deaths in December, with a 42% increase in hospitalizations and a 62% increase in ICU admissions. A study led by Ohio State University suggests that BA.2.86 and JN.1 may be linked to increased disease severity, as they can infect human cells lining the lower lung. The WHO classified JN.1 as a "variant of interest" due to its rapid spread, but there is no evidence of JN.1 causing more severe disease. [\[Full article\]](#)



- **China:** Health officials in Wuhan reported the first new COVID-19 case on January 11, 2020, with 61 people being hospitalized due to severe Covid-19 symptoms (Deutsche Welle, 2024). The World Health Organization (WHO) reported around 10,000 cases of COVID-19 in December 2023, with 42% of cases in 50 countries, mainly Europe and America. The WHO also reported a 62% increase in cases in intensive care units, up from November. The WHO urges governments to take action and protect people from the virus, including flu, rhinovirus, and pneumonia. The WHO has declared COVID-19 as the pandemic for the first time in three years. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **Bangladesh** has recorded 46 new cases of dengue fever in a day, increasing the number of infections to 590 this year (Desk, 2024). The death toll remains at four, with no fatalities. In 2023, Bangladesh recorded 321,179 hospitalizations and 1,705 deaths from the virus. Dhaka hospitals admitted 14 more patients, while other districts recorded 32 new cases. [[Full article](#)]
- **India:** Two new dengue cases were reported in Punjab, bringing the total to 13 (Desk, 2024). In 2024, 13 confirmed cases were recorded across Punjab, with seven currently being treated. Punjab Health Secretary urged citizens to maintain clean and dry surroundings for preventive measures. [[Full article](#)]

Measles

- **Israel:** An unvaccinated child and another adult from the north contracted measles, the Health Ministry reported on Thursday (Staff J.P, 2024). So far, five cases of measles have been uncovered in Israel's north in the last month. Following an epidemiological investigation conducted in the region, a link was found between the cases. The source of the illness is a person who contracted measles abroad about a month ago and stayed in the emergency room at Furia Hospital, Israeli media added. [[Full article](#)]
- **UK:** Measles cases in Birmingham are increasing rapidly, with 133 lab-confirmed cases in the West Midlands since October 1 last year, and another 96 likely cases (Horner, 2024). Birmingham's acting cabinet member for health and social care, has declared a National Incident, indicating a measles outbreak intensifying. The city has seen 80% of cases in Birmingham and 10% in Coventry, with other areas also affected. The outbreak has reached 180 cases in Birmingham, with a surge expected as children return to school after the Christmas break. The situation is expected to worsen as children return to school. [[Full article](#)]
- **US:** Delaware health officials have identified 20-30 people who were exposed to a measles patient at Nemours Children's Hospital in Wilmington last month (Staff 6ABC, 2024). The patient was not showing symptoms but was infectious. Those exposed should contact the Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology or the state's 24-hour reporting line for testing, guidance, and limit exposures. Those ill should see immediate healthcare and notify healthcare providers. The MMR vaccine is proven safe and effective, with testing showing it is 97% effective for those who have received two doses. [[Full article](#)]

Mpox

- The **Israeli** Ministry of Health has reported new cases of monkeypox and measles in the country (Menafn, 2024). The ministry has urged anyone experiencing fever and rash or in close contact with a suspected case to contact a doctor. Measles has been infrequently reported in Israel, except for an unusual outbreak in 2018. In 2023, 11 cases were reported, nine from a kindergarten outbreak in Tel Aviv. [[Full article](#)]



- **New Zealand:** Seven confirmed cases of mpox have been reported in Auckland since late December, with one case returning home overseas (News, R., 2024). The virus, which was previously known as 'monkeypox', spread through skin-to-skin contact. The global outbreak began in May 2022 and was declared over in May 2023. Health advice is advised for those experiencing skin rash, bumps, blisters, or sores. [[Full article](#)]

Regional Situation

COVID-19

- **Indonesia:** COVID-19 cases in South Sumatra have surged after the Christmas and New Year holidays, with 15 people testing positive for the virus (Wadrianto, 2024). One patient died after treatment, and now there are only 14 active cases. The South Sumatra Health Service has received 1,665 vials of COVID-19 vaccine from the Ministry of Health, with plans to send additional doses to 17 districts and cities. The public is advised to use masks and maintain a healthy lifestyle. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **Indonesia:** In 2023, 1,742 Riau residents were attacked by dengue hemorrhagic fever (DBD), with 15 deaths (Frislidia, 2024). The most cases were found in Dumai City, with 450 cases and four deaths. Dengue fever is a disease transmitted through mosquitoes and can cause serious bleeding, blood pressure drop, and even death. Symptoms usually appear four to ten days after being bitten by a mosquito. The most cases occurred in October 2023, with the most cases occurring in October. The Riau Health Office urges residents to carry out preventive measures during the rainy season to prevent dengue fever. [[Full article](#)]

Leptospirosis

- **Indonesia:** The Bantul District Health Office reported a higher number of leptospirosis cases in 2023 compared to 2022, with 11 deaths (Ria S.R., 2024). The health service urged the public to be aware of the spread of the disease, warning against standing water and rat nests. Symptoms include fever, nausea, headache, diarrhea, red eyes, and muscle aches. The disease should be checked at the nearest health service facility if symptoms are mild. Early detection can make treatment easier, and people should not visit health facilities in severe conditions or with decreased consciousness. The Bantul District Health Office has conducted outreach to the district community to increase public awareness and suppress the spread of the disease. [[Full article](#)]

Malaria

- **Indonesia:** Malaria cases in Pohuwato District, Gorontalo are increasing daily, with the first case originating from miners (Wahyono, 2024). The disease's center is in the gold mining area. As of 2023, 800 cases have been reported, with many miners testing positive. Malaria, caused by mosquitoes, is a disease that infects humans, with one mosquito producing 200 eggs in just two weeks. [[Full article](#)]

Rabies

- **Malaysia:** A dog infected with rabies bit 11 people in Kuching, Sarawak, within 24 hours (Pilo, 2024). The victims were aged 11 to 81. The majority of rabies deaths were due to victims' failure to report being bitten by dogs. The mayor of South Kuching City Council urged the public to seek treatment immediately if bitten by dogs or cats. Sarawak has reported 73 cases since the outbreak in July 2017, with 66 deaths. [[Full article](#)]



Tuberculosis

- **Singapore:** Business at ABC Brickworks Market and Food Centre in Bukit Merah fell by up to 50% after news of active tuberculosis cases emerged last week (Ting, 2024). Mandatory screening for the disease began on Thursday, with 93% of those identified for mandatory screening having registered. The exercise is expected to cover around 3,000 people in Bukit Merah, with the Ministry of Health and the National Centre for Infectious Diseases conducting door-to-door screenings. The exercise aims to identify undetected cases and prevent transmission of TB. [[Full article](#)]

Zika

- **Thailand:** Zika cases in Thailand have risen by almost 300 per cent last year, with over 750 people infected and at least 13 babies born with birth defects in 2023 (Newey, 2024). The virus, carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, has long circulated in the southeast Asian nation, but cases jumped by almost 300% last year. The virus is generally mild but dangerous if contracted during pregnancy, as it can cause miscarriages, premature births, congenital malformations in newborns, limb contractures, eye abnormalities, and hearing loss. In Thailand, 13 babies were born with these health issues last year. The increase in Zika cases comes as dengue fever cases have erupted globally, with major outbreaks in countries such as Peru, Burkina Faso, Bangladesh, and Thailand. The World Health Organization declared a global health emergency in 2016 when at least 1.5 million people contracted Zika in an unprecedented outbreak in South America. [[Full article](#)]

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