

ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center

Media Monitoring for Infectious and Emerging Diseases

ASEAN REGION

January 16 – 17, 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 from January 2024.

Global Situation

COVID-19

- **India** has reported 180 new COVID-19 cases, with active cases dropping to 2,804. The Ministry of Health reported three fatalities in Maharashtra (TIMESOFINDIA, 2024). The JN.1 variant has not shown an exponential increase in new cases or hospitalizations. India has experienced three COVID-19 waves, with the Delta wave peaking in April-June 2021. Since the pandemic's onset in early 2020, over 45 millions infections and 530,000 deaths have been recorded. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Pakistan** has confirmed 15 cases of the JN.1 coronavirus strain, classified as a "variant of interest" by World Health Organization (WHO) (Shabbir S, 2024). The country has reported over 1.5 million cases since the pandemic began in late 2019, with 30,371 deaths. The JN.1 variant has been reported in over 60 countries and has been administered at least 278,150,849 doses. Pakistan has advised social distancing, mask-wearing, and proper sanitation to prevent the spread of the new strain. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Russia:** Irkutsk district registered 263 COVID-19 cases, 112.1% higher than previous week, with 389,731 confirmed cases since pandemic start (IRK.ru, 2024). 378,852 people recovered. Airports monitor passengers and crews 24/7, with 127 flights inspected since 2024. [\[Full article\]](#)
- The **United States (US):** Oregon has seen the emergence of a new COVID-19 variant, JN.1, which is an Omicron subvariant (Wilk, 2024). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that JN.1 may make up two-thirds of US cases. In Oregon, the variant reached 58% share in mid-December, and state officials expect this figure to continue rising. The Oregon Health Authority's Medical Director for Communicable Diseases and Immunizations, believes JN.1 may be evading some immunity. Although there is no firm evidence JN.1 has contributed, vaccination remains the best option to protect against severe cases. [\[Full article\]](#)

Dengue

- **Bangladesh:** A person has died and 30 more people have been admitted to the hospital due to dengue in the last 24 hours, according to a press release from the Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room of the Department of Health (Pratidin B, 2024). In the first 15 days of the new year, eight people died due to dengue. A total of 733 people have been infected with dengue till January 16, with 529 patients receiving clearance. [\[Full article\]](#)



- **Sri Lanka** has reported over 5,000 dengue cases in January, with 5,829 reported in the first half of the month (Xinhua, 2024). The Western Province had the highest number of cases, followed by the Northern Province. Last year, 88,398 cases and 57 deaths were reported. The Ministry of Health declared a nationwide dengue prevention week earlier this year. [\[Full article\]](#)

Malaria

- **Papua New Guinea:** A second outbreak of malaria in Kikori, Gulf, has resulted in six confirmed deaths, with over 400 people infected and in desperate need of medical help (National T, 2024). The Haia Health Centre, which lacks of medical officer and is not operational, could lead to more deaths due to the remoteness of the village and the lack of medical help. Patients are treated with local herbs. [\[Full article\]](#)

Measles

- **Australia:** New South Wales Health Office has confirmed a measles case in Sydney, involving a nine-month-old infant who returned from Asia due to an outbreak in Pakistan and India (Health N, 2024). The infant was exposed to the case at Emirates flight EK416, Sydney Airport Terminal 1, and Five Star Coffee and Nuts in Lakemba. Symptoms include fever, sore eyes, a cough, and a red, blotchy rash. People should be alert for the infection. [\[Full article\]](#)

Tuberculosis

- **Canada:** In Northern Quebec, tuberculosis (TB) cases have surged, with 81 reported cases in 2023, a significant increase from 58 in July (Khandelwal, 2024). The increase is partly due to augmented community screening clinics since the summer, which resumed in 2022. The health board emphasizes the importance of early detection and treatment for all communities, as TB is treatable with medication and the Bacillus Calmette-Guèrin (BCG) vaccine. Residents are encouraged to participate in screenings and campaigns to prevent the spread of the disease. [\[Full article\]](#)

Regional Situation

COVID-19

- **Indonesia:** The East Kalimantan Province Health Office reported four new cases of COVID-19, indicating a continuing spread of the virus (Rasad, 2024). The new cases were found in Kutai Kartanegara, Penajam Paser Utara, and Balikpapan. However, four recovered patients were also reported. The accumulated COVID-19 cases in East Kalimantan reached 111, with 74 recovered and three deaths. 17 patients are still undergoing self-isolation, while 17 are being treated in health facilities. The health service urges public compliance with health protocols. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Thailand** has detected the COVID-19 variant JN.1*, with 40 cases reported so far (Rose, 2024). The XBB.1.16* hybrid strain was the dominant strain until September 2023, but began to decline. The XBB.1.9.2* variant has since replaced it, and recent genome sequencing results show a decrease in the hybrid strain. The Omicron variant is currently the main strain spreading in Thailand. [\[Full article\]](#)



Dengue

- **Indonesia:** Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF) has caused a significant increase in deaths in 2024, with one 13-year-old child in Gunung Telihan Village dying (Halim A, 2024). The patient had received medical treatment since January 8, but his condition continued to decline, and his life could not be saved. Since the beginning of the year, 41 cases of DHF have been reported in Bontang City, with the highest cases in certain sub-districts. The Head of Disease Prevention and Control at the City Health Office urges the public to pay attention to surrounding conditions and to clean areas that may become breeding grounds for the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Malaysia:** Sarawak recorded 1,091 dengue cases in 2023, despite having the third lowest number of dengue cases nationwide in 2023 (Aubrey, 2024). The state recorded 0.9% of dengue cases in Malaysia, with Selangor and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur accounting for 61.1% and 11.5% of cases respectively. Despite the increase, 123,133 dengue cases were reported last year, an 86.3% increase from 66,102 cases in 2022. He also announced the release of Wolbachia-infected *Aedes* mosquitoes in 10 new localities to help address dengue cases, costing RM4 million annually. [\[Full article\]](#)

MPox

- **Vietnam** has reported 121 mpox infections, six deaths, with most cases in Ho Chi Minh City and some central highlands and southern provinces (Giòi, 2024). The disease is classified as Group B infectious by the Ministry of Health. It is transmitted through close contact and symptoms include sudden rashes. Most recover after 10-14 days, but can cause serious complications or be life-threatening for immunocompromised individuals. [\[Full article\]](#)

Rabies

- **Indonesia:** A case of rabid dog bites has been reported in Pupuan Sub-district, Tabanan District, Bali (Irwan A.F, 2024). A male was bitten by his pet dog, which tested positive for rabies. The owner, suspected of not being vaccinated, was taken to the nearest health center for further treatment. This year, there have been five cases of rabid dog bites, with four found in Padangan Kelod Hamlet and one in Padangan Kaja Hamlet. Emergency vaccinations are planned to suppress rabies cases. [\[Full article\]](#)

Zika

- **Thailand:** Public health authorities are preparing for a potential Zika virus outbreak in Nakhon Ratchasima province, following 19 reported cases in the lower Northeast district (Pattaya Mail, 2024). The virus, transmitted by mosquitoes, has affected 758 individuals across 36 provinces, with Chanthaburi, Phetchabun, and Trat experiencing the highest number of infections. Symptoms include rashes, fever, headaches, and joint and muscle pains. Pregnant women and those planning pregnancy should seek medical attention. [\[Full article\]](#)



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