

ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center

Media Monitoring for Infectious and Emerging Diseases

ASEAN REGION

January 23 – 24, 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

- **Canada:** New Brunswick has reported two more COVID-19 deaths, raising its official pandemic death toll to 1,000 (Mackinnon, 2024). The province has counted only hospital-acquired deaths since September. The two deaths between January 7 and January 13 were both aged 65 or older. Public Health has reported 1,000 COVID-19 deaths since March 2020, including 64 during the current respiratory illness season. The total number of COVID-19 deaths prior to this season was 936. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **India** has registered 236 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, raising the overall COVID-19 total cases to 45,024,190 (Service S.N, 2024). Karnataka reported 161 cases, Maharashtra 22 and Kerala 12. Three more people died, raising the death toll to 533,439. Recovery tally rose to 44,488,720, with active cases at 2,031. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Kyrgyzstan** registered 9,295 cases of acute respiratory viral infection (ARVI) and influenza, as well as five COVID-19 cases from January 15 to 21 (Bengard, 2024). The incidence rate decreased by 8.1% compared to the previous week, with 67.1% of patients being children under 14. High incidence was observed in Bishkek, Osh, and Chui regions, while all cases were registered in the capital. The epidemiological situation is under control. [\[Full article\]](#)
- **Pakistan:** Nine new COVID-19 cases were reported in Pakistan in the last week, with a case positivity ratio of 0.33% (Ali, 2024). No patients were in critical condition, and no deaths were reported. The government strengthened the role of Border and Health Services, implementing surveillance systems at all entry points, including airports, and rapid tests and screening of passengers. 90% of the population has already received the COVID-19 vaccine. [\[Full article\]](#)
- The **United States (US):** The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated COVID-19 subvariant JN.1 to account for 85.7% of cases in the US as of January 19 (Reuters, 2024). JN.1 is the most widely circulating variant of SARS-CoV-2 globally and there is no evidence that it causes more severe disease than other variants. Currently available vaccines are expected to increase protection against the variant. JN.1 was classified a "variant of interest" by the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 2023. [\[Full article\]](#)



Dengue

- **Bangladesh:** Dengue cases in Bangladesh have risen to 907 this year, with 14 deaths in the first 23 days of 2024 (Report S.D, 2024). 143 patients are still undergoing treatment, with 750 released. Last year, the country had 1,705 deaths and 321,179 cases. [[Full article](#)]

Measles

- **Russia:** Three cases of measles have been confirmed in the Pskov region, according to the chief sanitary doctor of the region (PSKOV, 2024). The disease is transmitted by airborne droplets and is highly contagious. Symptoms include intoxication, conjunctivitis, maculopapular rash, and temperature. The main preventive measure is vaccination, which is carried out for children from one year old. The regional Rospotrebnadzor department is under special control for measles incidence. The department is currently investigating the outbreak and contact tracing. All patients were hospitalized in an infectious diseases hospital, and two people have been discharged. [[Full article](#)]
- The **United States (US):** Nearly a dozen measles cases have been reported in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Georgia in recent weeks, with experts pointing to international travel and declining global vaccination rates as the main reasons (Musa & Hassan, 2024). The Philadelphia Department of Public Health confirmed at least nine cases of measles over the past month, leading to a Philadelphia day care outbreak involving at least five children. The number of measles cases in the United States has climbed to 764 in 23 states, with 60 new cases reported in the past week, breaking recent records. [[Full article](#)]
- The **United Kingdom (UK):** The West Midlands reported the highest number of cases of measles, with 36 reported in the week leading up to 14 January, up from 27 the previous week (Sky News, 2024). London saw a decrease in cases, while the East of England saw a decrease in suspected cases. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) weekly report only shows suspected cases. [[Full article](#)]

Pertussis

- **Maldives:** Three cases of whooping cough, also known as pertussis, have been discovered on the Villingili Island of Gaaf Alif Atoll (Zalif Z, 2024). The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has urged parents who have not given vaccine doses to children under seven years of age to complete their vaccination at the earliest. The disease is transmitted through the respiratory tract and can cause intense and chronic coughing after a week, lasting for two months or more. Babies under three months are at the highest risk of complications, hospitalization, and even death. The most common complication observed in the illness is pneumonia or lung infection. Vaccination can reduce the chance of getting infected and getting sick. The Pentavalent Vaccine can be administered to babies at two, four, and six months of age, and DPT boosters are administered at the age of four. [[Full article](#)]
- **Russia:** The Ministry of Health reported an increase in whooping cough cases in Yaroslavl since 2022, with 397 cases recorded in 2023 and 62 hospitalizations (News S, 2024). In 2024, three cases were registered, one hospitalized, and three unvaccinated. No deaths were reported during this period. [[Full article](#)]



Regional Situation

COVID-19

- **Thailand:** Last week, the COVID-19 variant JN.1 in Thailand increased, leading to an increase in hospitalizations and over ten deaths (Wipatayotin, 2024). Most hospitalized patients were elderly and did not receive a vaccine or boosters. The Department of Disease Control reported 718 new cases and 11 deaths in the week ending January 20. Out of these, 209 patients suffered severe pneumonia, with 149 requiring endotracheal intubation. All deceased patients belonged to the group of elderly people with chronic diseases. [[Full article](#)]

Chikungunya

- **Timor-Leste:** Vice Minister for Institutional Health Strengthening, confirmed the presence of the chikungunya virus in the country (Ermera D, 2024). The virus, transmitted by the same mosquitoes as dengue and yellow fever, causes fever and severe joint pain. The virus has been detected in 55 infected people in Dili, Ermera, and Bobonaro municipalities. Despite eradicating malaria in 2018, eight cases were registered in Covalima in 2023. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **Indonesia:** As of January 20, 2024, Banjar District have reported 177 cases of Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF), with one death (Radio Suara Banjar, 2024). The increase is a significant concern, as it is more than the 51 cases in January 2023. To combat the spread of DHF, the Banjar District Health Office is urging residents to maintain cleanliness and follow proper procedures, such as exterminating larvae and Mosquito Nest Eradication. Additionally, residents are encouraged to clean around breeding areas and stagnant water. [[Full article](#)]
- **Malaysia:** Dengue fever cases in Malaysia have increased to 3,525 cases from January 7 to 13, with two deaths reported (Ani, 2024). The Ministry of Health warns that persistent rainy weather is contributing to the problem, with the southwest monsoon season from November to March increasing potential breeding areas for aedes mosquitoes. The number of hotspots has risen from 130 to 136. [[Full article](#)]
- **Singapore:** The National Environment Agency (NEA) reported six dengue deaths in 2023, with a total of 2,546 cases reported in the fourth quarter (Chan G, 2024). Singapore recorded 19 dengue deaths in 2022, the second-highest number in a year on record. Local dengue cases have risen for the seventh consecutive week, with 410 cases recorded from January 14 to 20. January 2024 saw 1,180 cases, the highest in the last three years. There are over 80 active dengue clusters. [[Full article](#)]

Malaria

- **Indonesia:** As of January 2024, malaria cases in Pohuwato District reached 837 cases, attributed to unhealthy lifestyles and miners' activities in several villages (Halid R, 2024). The problem is more about parasites that have developed in the body, spreading quickly. Prevention can be achieved through screening, a healthy lifestyle, and regularly consuming medicines from local health centers. The spread of malaria in Pohuwato District are 16 cases per week. Efforts have been made to build screening posts in several malaria transmission centers, but operational funds are a challenge. Regular screenings are crucial to combat the spread of malaria in the region. [[Full article](#)]



Mpox

- **Cambodia** has reported a new Mpox case, raising the total number of infections to four since December (Xinhua, 2024). The Ministry of Health confirmed the latest case, which has been undergoing proper treatment at a hospital. [[Full article](#)]

Rabies

- **Philippines:** A one-year-old boy in Moises Padilla, Negros Occidental, died from rabies after being bitten by their pet dog. The provincial health officer reported a drop in rabies cases in Negros Occidental last year, with only six cases compared to 10 in 2022. The Provincial Veterinary Office (PVO) detected 17 canine-positive rabies cases among dogs in the province, including its capital city. As of December 31, 2023, the PVO had vaccinated 123,000 dogs, but only 45% of the total dog population had been vaccinated. The PVO is lobbying for the purchase of rabies vaccines and is expecting a spike in rabies cases this year due to the effects of the El Niño phenomenon. [[Full article](#)]

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