

ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center

Media Monitoring for Infectious and Emerging Diseases

ASEAN REGION

28 – 29 May, 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

Avian Influenza (H5N6)

- **China:** A 52-year-old woman from Fujian province in China died from a fatal H5N6 avian flu infection, reportedly exposed to backyard poultry (Schnirring, L., 2024) . The woman's symptoms began on April 13 and she was hospitalized on April 20, 2024. [[Full article](#)]

COVID-19

- **Canada:** Two new variants of the Omicron virus, KP.2 and KP.3, have become the dominant strains in Canada, with 49.2% of COVID-19 cases involving one of these strains (Crowther, 2024). An infectious diseases specialist at Toronto General Hospital, predicts that these subvariants will cause predictable symptoms, with the impact of the virus varying based on individual factors. However, there is no indication that the subvariant has caused concern in the first few months. [[Full article](#)]
- **New Zealand:** The New Zealand Ministry reported 6,146 new cases of the COVID-19 virus and 19 deaths last week, a significant increase from the previous week's 3,922 cases. Hospitalizations were also up, with 35 people a day going to the hospital with the infection. One in three people are still contagious five days after testing positive. The government should continue funding booster shots, Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs), and anti-viral medication to maintain health and productivity. Prioritizing booster shots is important, as they activate parts of a person's immune system and prevent serious illness. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **France:** Dengue fever has reached record levels in metropolitan France since 2024, with 2,166 imported cases reported from January 1 to April 30, compared to 2,019 for 2023 (Thompson, 2024). This is more than 16 times the number of cases reported per year over the past five years. Most new cases were reported in people who had traveled to high-risk areas in the Antilles, where there is an epidemic in the Americas and Caribbean. From May 1 to 14, health authorities have been under "reinforced surveillance," resulting in 98 more cases of imported dengue identified. [[Full article](#)]



Pertussis

- **Canada:** The Bas-Saint-Laurent Public Health Department has reported an increase in cases of whooping cough in the MRCs of Kamouraska and Rivière-du-Loup, with the disease expected to spread in the coming weeks (Radio-Canada, 2024). The infectious diseases coordinator urges parents to be vigilant and stay home if a child has a fever and consult a health professional if symptoms persist. The provincial government recommends vaccination, particularly for pregnant women, to protect their unborn baby. Over 900 cases have been reported across Quebec since 2024, with 42 cases in Bas-Saint-Laurent since January. [[Full article](#)]
- **South Korea:** The number of whooping cough patients in Korea is rapidly increasing, with the 'doubling' phenomenon, where confirmed cases more than doubled every month, continuing (Jeong-ryeol, 2024). The medical community criticizes the government for its complacency in quarantine policies and calls for an epidemiological investigation to accurately determine the reason for the largest outbreak in 10 years and to re-establish vaccine policies. [[Full article](#)]

Regional Situation

COVID-19

- The **Philippines** remains low risk for COVID-19, despite an increase in cases in other countries caused by FliRT variants, according to the Department of Health (DOH) (Locus, 2024). Latest data from the DOH showed the average number of daily reported coronavirus cases in the Philippines from May 14 to May 20 is 202—fewer than the 500 cases per day reported earlier this year and the 1,750 daily COVID-19 cases year-on-year. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **Indonesia:** Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF) cases in Klaten District have reached 570, with 26 deaths as of 20th Sunday (Haq, 2024). The Health Department is working to clean mosquito larvae, with the highest number of positive cases found in Trucuk District. The majority of patients are under 11 years old, with the majority aged 35 and 55 years old. [[Full article](#)]
- **Malaysia** has recorded 42 dengue fever deaths this year, compared to 28 in 2023 (Xinhua, 2024). The cumulative number of cases is 59,681, with Selangor state being the worst hit. Preventative measures are being implemented in schools to eradicate mosquito breeding spots. [[Full article](#)]
- **Vietnam:** The Lam Dong Provincial Department of Health reported an increase in dengue fever cases to 1,372 as of May 26, with a peak expected in June and July (Huong, 2024). The province is also at risk of an outbreak in September. The Department of Health has requested the Provincial Center for Disease Control to strengthen inspection and support of units, and to maintain good environmental sanitation. The department recommends strict diagnosis and treatment of dengue fever, following the Ministry of Health's guidance. Additionally, the department has requested the establishment of an expert group on intensive resuscitation, emergency care, and treatment for patients with severe, pre-existing dengue hemorrhagic fever. [[Full article](#)]



Diphtheria

- The **Philippines**: Diphtheria cases have risen by 75%, with 110 reported as of May 4, compared to 63 last year. The highest number was recorded in Metro Manila, followed by Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and Central Luzon and Mimaropa. The DOH reported 14 deaths this year, with five deaths in BARMM, four in Metro Manila, and two in Ilocos. Pentavalent vaccines are recommended for prevention. [[Full article](#)]

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

- **Indonesia**: HFMD, a contagious infection, has been confirmed in Jember District, with 226 toddlers exposed to the virus (Saputra, 2024). The majority of HFMD patients are aged 0-4 years. The Health Office reported a significant increase in cases in 2024, particularly during weeks 16 to 20. The virus can be recovered with prompt and appropriate treatment. Early prevention involves keeping the environment clean, especially in children's playing areas, and washing hands and feet after playing. [[Full article](#)]

Melioidosis

- **Vietnam**: From 2014 to May 2024, Hue Central Hospital diagnosed about 267 cases of Whitmore (positive specimen culture for *Burkholderia pseudomallei* bacteria), with 50% coming from out-of-province areas (T. Thanh, 2024). In the first nine months of 2020, the hospital recorded only 11 patients, but in mid-November 2020, due to a major flood in Thua Thien Hue and the Central region provinces, 28 patients were recorded. [[Full article](#)]

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