

ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center

Media Monitoring for Infectious and Emerging Diseases

ASEAN REGION

December 31, 2023 – January 03, 2024



With Support by:

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

Global Updates

COVID-19

- **Bangladesh** reported 18 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, with a total of 2,046,330 cases (Health Desk, 2024). The country's total fatalities remained unchanged at 29,477, and the number of COVID-19 cases reached 2,046,330. A total of 474 samples were tested, with a positivity rate of 3.80%. The country reported its first case on March 8, 2020, and its first death on March 18. [[Full article](#)]
- **India** has reported 573 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, with active cases increasing to 4,565 (Mehrotra, 2024). Two new fatalities have been reported, each from Haryana and Karnataka. A total of 197 cases of the COVID-19 sub-variant JN.1 have been detected in the country. The number of daily COVID-19 cases dropped to double-digits until December 5 last year, but cases have increased due to the emergence of a new variant and cold weather conditions. The World Health Organisation has classified JN.1 as a separate "variant of interest" due to its rapidly increasing spread, but posing a "low" global public health risk. [[Full article](#)]
- The **United States (US)**: COVID-19 cases in the US are on the rise, with Region Seven being the worst-affected area (Kim, 2024). Hospitals are recommending mask mandates for employees and visitors, but not for the entire health system. Low vaccination rates and a recent spike in cases have raised concerns about the impact of boosters on severity. Health care providers expect cases to increase following Christmas and New Year's Eve. [[Full article](#)]

Dengue

- **Bangladesh**: Dengue continues to spread, with another fatality reported in the past 24 hours. 60 more patients were hospitalized, with 13 in Dhaka (UNB, 2024). Since January 1, 1,145 cases have been reported. Last year, 1,705 people lost their lives to dengue, making it the deadliest year on record. [[Full article](#)]
- **Sri Lanka**: In December 2023, the highest number of dengue cases was 11,498, with 87,986 recorded, with the highest in Colombo District (Fernandopulle, 2024). The Western Province had the highest number of cases, with 39,784 cases. Director of the National Dengue Control Unit, expressed concern over the daily average of over 250 cases and urged to proactively ensure cleanliness in their surroundings, eliminating potential mosquito breeding sites to effectively counter the spread of dengue. [[Full article](#)]



Measles

- **Ukraine:** Two laboratory-confirmed cases of measles among children aged three and eight years in Odesa have been reported (Krystyna, 2024). The Odesa Regional Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that about 25 million people in Ukraine are not vaccinated, which is dangerous as it guarantees protection against serious diseases, protects those who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons, and helps stop the spread of infectious diseases. Since July, 18,678 children and adolescents have been vaccinated against measles in the Odesa region as part of a catch-up campaign. [[Full article](#)]
- **Russia:** Measles is an acute infectious disease spread through airborne droplets, causing serious complications like pneumonia, nasopharynx, and otitis media to death (Хоменко and Ярошенко, 2024). Symptoms include acute weakness, lack of appetite, dry cough, conjunctivitis, and elevated body temperature. In the Amur Region, hospitals and clinics have the necessary vaccine and immunoglobulin supply, and the drug began being imported in May 2023 for immunization. Vaccinations are given to unvaccinated residents and those without vaccinations. [[Full article](#)]

Regional Updates

COVID-19

- **Indonesia's** Health Ministry has announced that COVID-19 vaccines will be free for two vulnerable groups starting January 1, 2024 (Bhwana, 2024). The first group includes elderly people who have not received the first injection of the vaccine, while the second group includes elderly people who have just received the first jab. The free vaccination program is also available to pregnant women, those aged 12 or above, and immunocompromised individuals. Residents with moderate or highly weakened immune systems are also eligible. The Jakarta Health Office has reported 517 active COVID-19 cases as of December 28, 2023, with 300 residents undergoing self-isolation and 217 hospitalized. [[Full article](#)]
- **Malaysia** experienced a quadruple increase in COVID-19 deaths, reaching nearly four a day, during a short epidemic wave that has begun to decline (CodeBlue, 2024). The virus has been affecting the country since last June 2023, with confirmed cases, hospital admissions, and deaths rising since November 2023. However, the epidemic seems to be abating, with infections dropping since last Christmas Eve. [[Full article](#)]
- **Philippines:** In December 2023, the number of new COVID-19 infections in the Philippines nearly doubled, reaching 5,284 cases, a 90% increase from the previous month (GMA Integrated News, 2024). The increase is attributed to the relaxed implementation of health protocols during the holiday season, with daily cases averaging 170. [[Full article](#)]
- **Thailand** is experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases, with hospitalizations up 7% after the New Year holiday (Vna, 2024). The number of people reporting respiratory problems also increased by 6.2%, the largest increase in four months. The number of COVID-19 patients requiring breathing assistance rose 13.8%. New cases are expected to remain around 4,243-5,893 per day this week. [[Full article](#)]



Dengue

- **Malaysia:** Dengue fever in Johor increased by 28% during the 52nd Epidemic Week for last year, ending yesterday (Tan, 2024). The highest number of cases was reported in Johor Baru, followed by Kulai and Kluang. The highest number of cases was reported in Muar, Kota Tinggi, Batu Pahat, Pontian, and Tangkak and Segamat. The state has 29 new outbreak localities reported in the last week, with no deaths reported. The Covid-19 situation in the state is currently at 406,683 with 403,581 involving local infections and 3,102 being imported cases. [\[Full article\]](#)

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