

EVENT SUMMARY

- Based on ABVC weekly monitoring, we found that there is an increase of COVID-19 cases in the last three months of 2023 among ASEAN Member States started from October 2023 such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, and Thailand.
- Some of ASEAN Member states hospitalized patients has increased. However, COVID-19 deaths remain stable.
- In average, AMS has COVID-19 vaccination coverage above 71% for full dose and 48.90% for booster.
- In ASEAN region, COVID-19 variants dominated by Omicron B.1.1.529, EG.5, HK.3, and JN.1.
- Per November 2023, JN.1 and JN.1.1 which is descendand lineage of BA.2.86 have been found in several ASEAN Member States (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore).
- As of 18 December 2023, JN.1, a sub-lineage of BA.2.86 Omicron variant has been designated a separate variant of interest (VOI) apart from its parent lineage BA.2.86 due to its rapid increase in prevalence in recent weeks. Globally, EG.5 remains to be the most reported VOI.

Situation in ASEAN Region

Our weekly monitoring data on emerging diseases as displayed in Figure 1 showing increase of weekly trend of COVID-19 since October 2023. The increase prominently pictured in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, and Thailand (Figure 2).

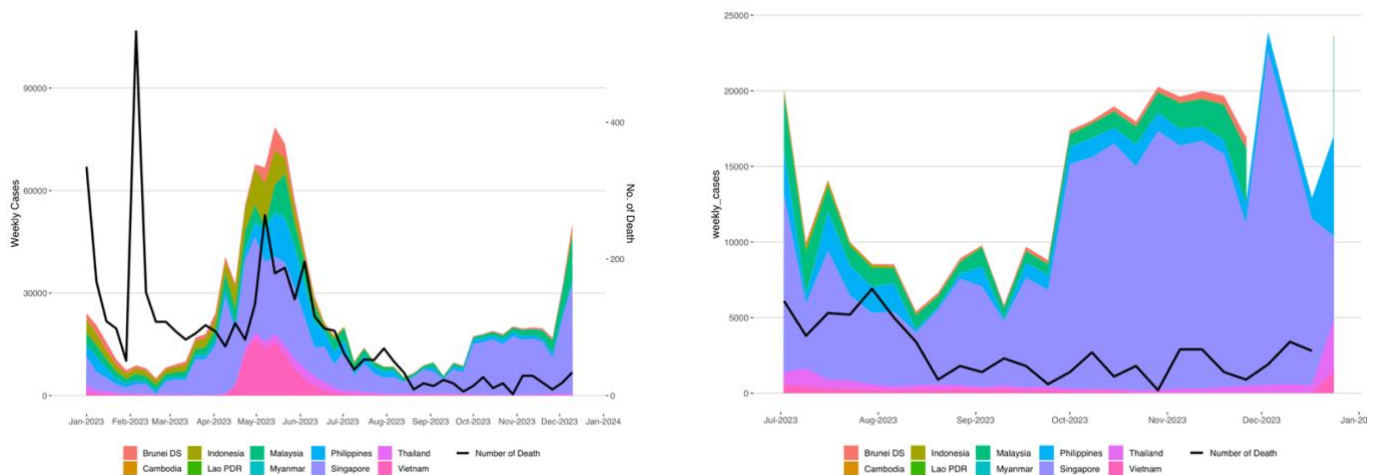


Figure 1. Weekly COVID-19 cases and death in ASEAN Region (data per 23 December 2023). (Mathieu et al., 2020; World Health Organization, 2023)

COVID-19 Trends among ASEAN Member States for the last six months in 2023

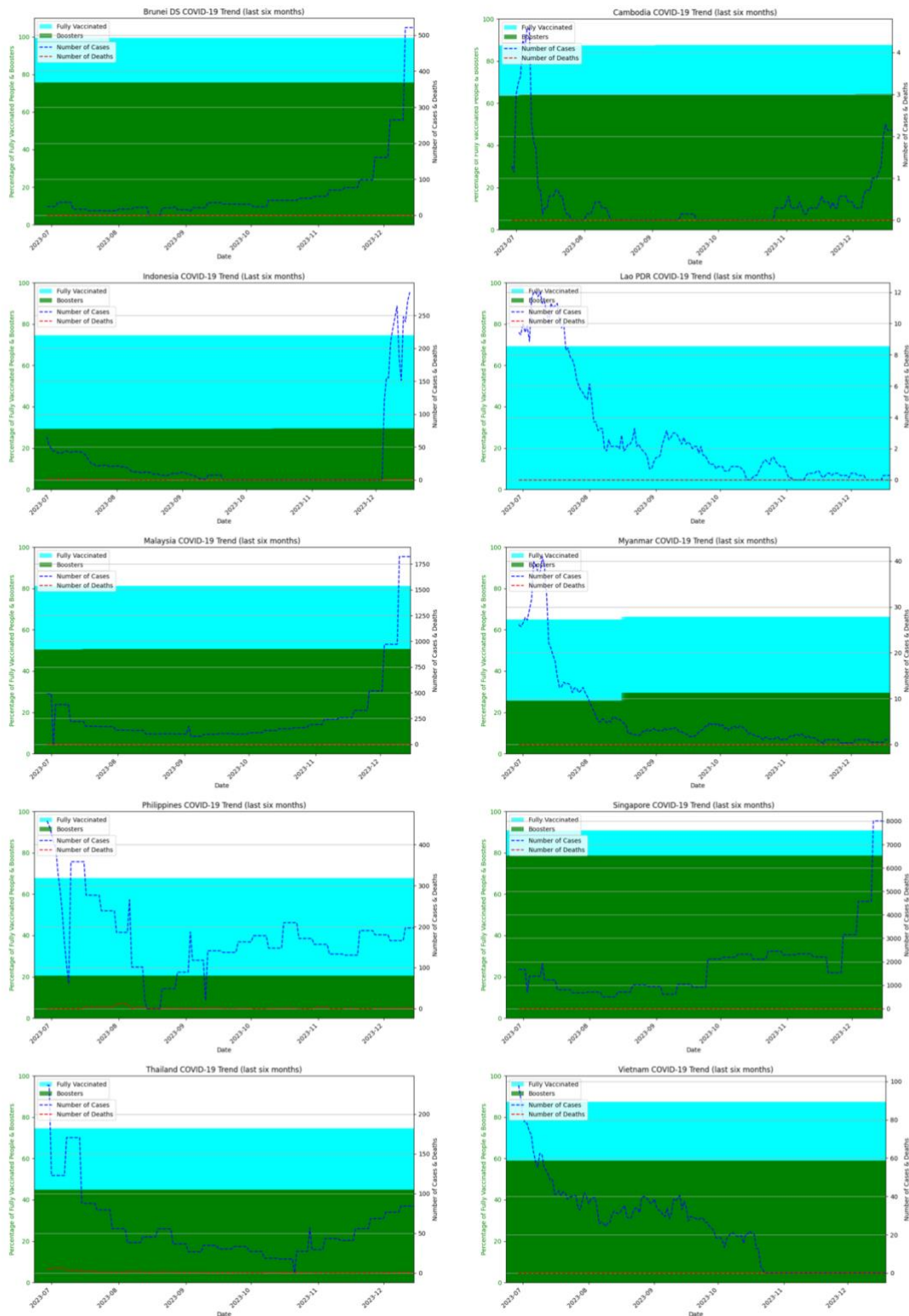


Figure 2. Trend of COVID-19 daily cases and vaccine coverage among ASEAN Member States (Mathieu et al., 2020; World Health Organization, 2023)

Hospitalised Patient among ASEAN Member States in 2023

Malaysia

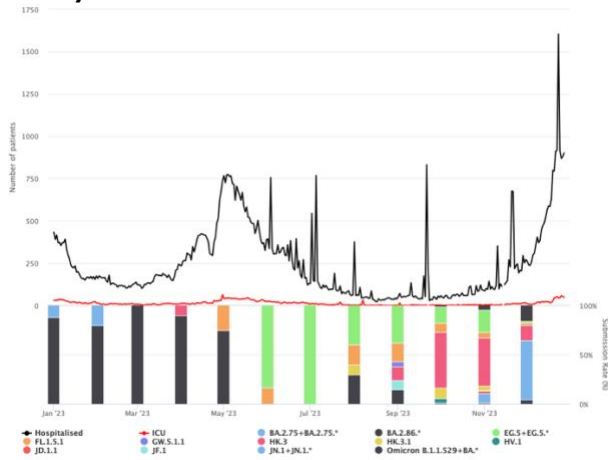


Figure 3. Hospitalised patients of COVID-19 and Variants in Malaysia from January to December, 2023. (Khare et al., 2021; Mathieu et al., 2020)

Singapore

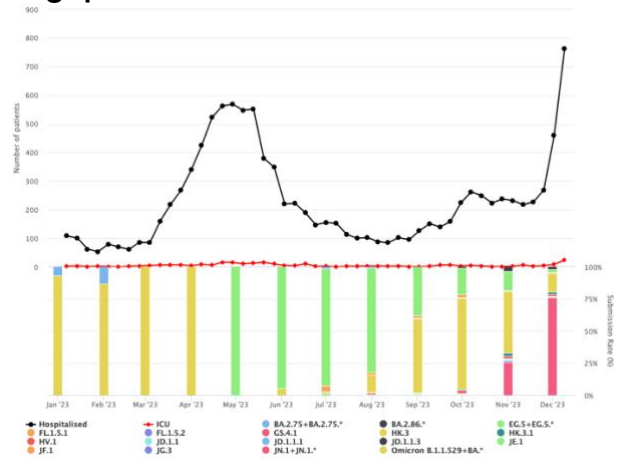


Figure 4. Hospitalised patients of COVID-19 and Variants in Singapore from January to December, 2023. (Khare et al., 2021; Ministry of Health Singapore, 2023)

COVID-19 Variant Distribution in ASEAN Region

COVID-19 Cases and Relative Frequency of COVID-19 Variants among The ASEAN Member States As of December 2023

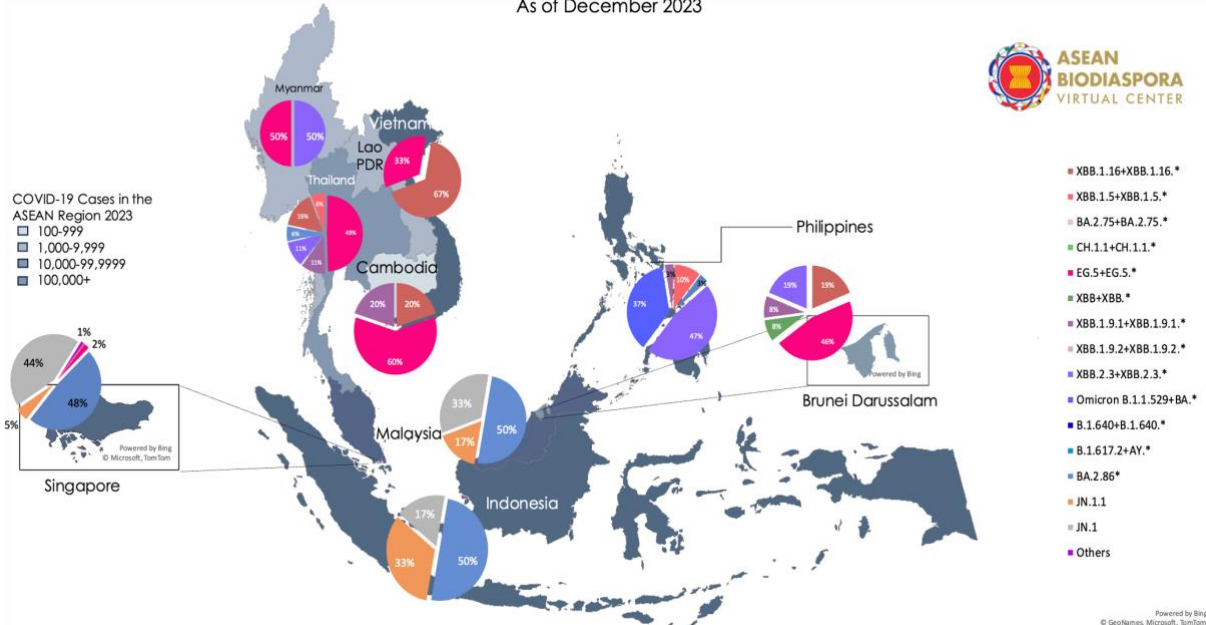


Figure 5. Distribution of Variant in ASEAN Region in December 2023. (Khare et al., 2021)

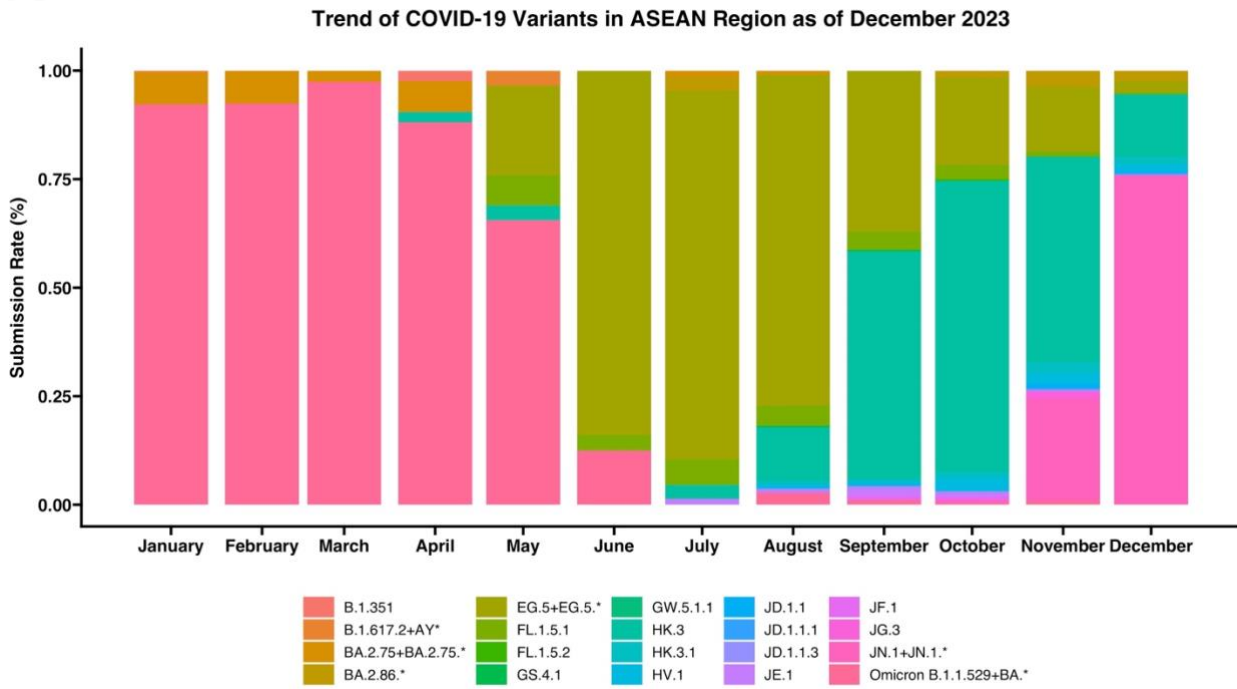


Figure 6. Trends of COVID-19 Variants in ASEAN region from January to December, 2023. (Khare et al., 2021)

Trends of COVID-19 Variants among AMS from January to December, 2023

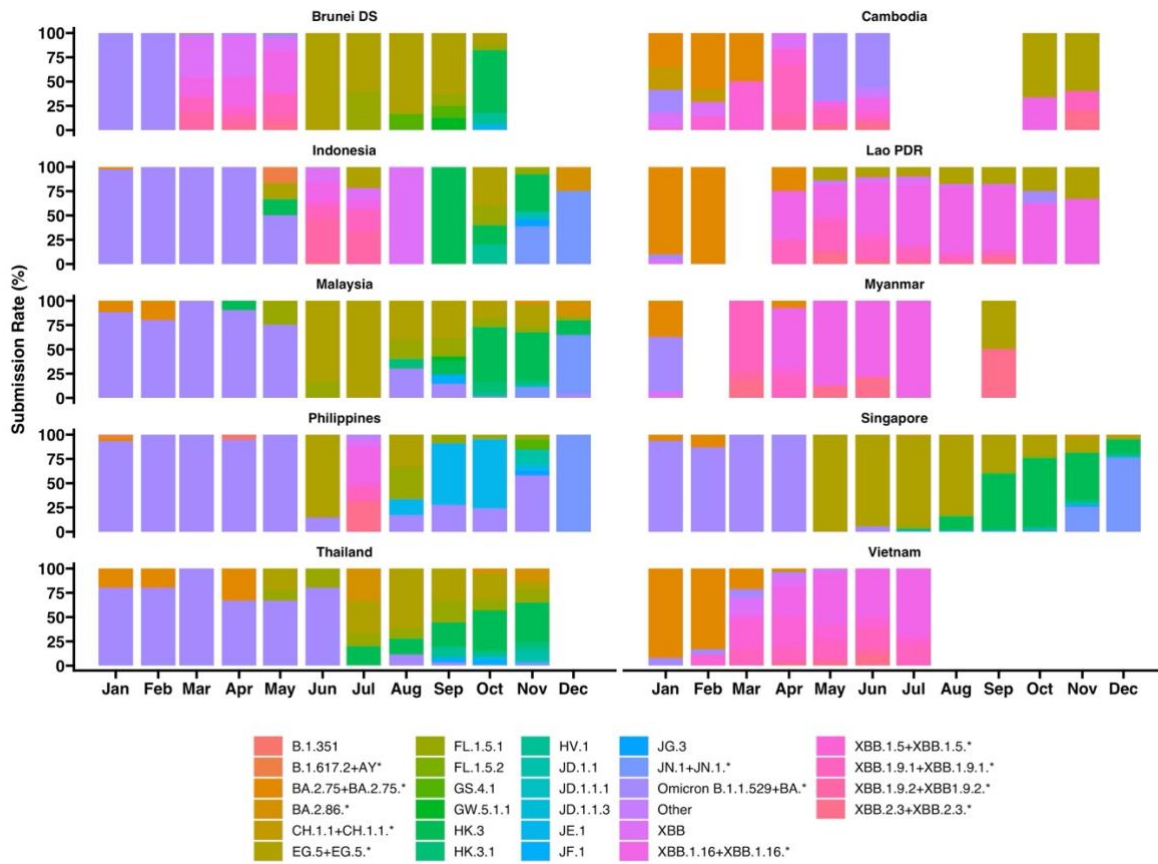


Figure 7. Trend of COVID-19 variants from January to December, 2023 (Khare et al., 2021)

Recommendation

Based on the new guideline from WHO on Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (September, 2023), there are 5 core components of WHO's Strengthening global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response, and Resilience. Those are: coordination, collaborative surveillance, community protection, safe and scalable care, and countermeasures and research. For more details please follow this [link](#).

The World Health Organization is asking countries in South-East Asia to strengthen surveillance and for people to take protective measures due to the increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases and the new sub-variant JN.1. The WHO urges countries to strengthen surveillance and sequencing, and ensure sharing of data. JN.1 is a variant of interest that has been spreading rapidly globally. While the additional public health risk posed by JN.1 is currently evaluated as low, it is anticipated that this variant may cause an increase in COVID-19 cases, especially in countries entering the winter season. People are advised to take protective measures, such as seeking timely clinical care when unwell, and get vaccinated against COVID-19 and influenza.

Reference

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- Mathieu, E., Ritchie, H., Rodés-Guirao, L., Appel, C., Giattino, C., Hasell, J., Macdonald, B., Dattani, S., Beltekian, D., Ortiz-Ospina, E., & Roser, M. (2020). Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). *Our World in Data*.
- Ministry of Health Singapore. (2023). *COVID-19 Weekly Stats—Data.gov.sg*. <https://beta.data.gov.sg/collections/522/view>
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