

COVID-19, Mpox, and Travel Advisories Situational Report in the ASEAN Region

-ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Center (ABVC)

March 31, 2023 | Issue No. 467



ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS



ASEAN BIODIASPORA VIRTUAL CENTER (ABVC)





GLOBAL PARTNERS







Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency



Table of Contents

COVID-19	1
Highlights and Situation Overview	1
<u>Global Update</u>	1
<u>Regional Update</u>	1
Vaccine Update	2
<u>Research Update</u>	2
ASEAN Travel Advisories	4
COVID-19 Cases and Deaths Table	5
COVID-19 Cases in ASEAN Region Table	5
Epi curve Among ASEAN Countries	6
Vaccination Status in ASEAN	7
Мрох	8
Mpox Cases Global Map	8
Mpox Daily Trend Globally	9
Highlights and Situation Overview	10
Mpox Cases in ASEAN Region Table	10
Mpox Cases in Asia-Pacific Region Table	10
Top 5 Countries with Most Mpox Cases Globally	10
Mpox Cases per Region	11
Research Update	11
References	12



COVID-19: Highlights and Situation Overview

Global Update

- Worldwide, there have been over 683 million cases and over 6 million deaths attributed to COVID-19.
- China: Chinese officials plan to have random and spot checks at medical facilities in the country to track incomplete and under-reported COVID-19 data.¹ In new measures announced by the National Health Commission, provincial governments will be tasked with daily random supervision and inspections covering an array of areas that include vaccination management at medical and health institutions, including checking the receipt and storage of new COVID-19 vaccines.¹ Furthermore, the governments have been asked to monitor whether virus infection reports have been concealed, delayed, or misreported; and step up the management of medical waste and biosecurity management of pathogenic microbiology laboratories.¹ [Full article]
- India: New Delhi, India will ramp up testing for COVID-19 and encourage the increased use of masks, according to the local minister on March 30 (Thursday) after India recorded its highest daily case count in nearly six months.² India recorded 3,016 new cases of COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours on Thursday, its highest daily case count since October 3.² The local government said late on Wednesday that the national capital territory of New Delhi recorded 300 new cases in a day, the highest since August last year.² [Full article]
- Australia reported an increasing COVID-19 cases for the seventh-straight week, with every state and territory today reporting more infections than last week.³ 26,531 new COVID-19 confirmed cases were reported across the country this week, up from 23,661 last March 24, while the number of new deaths reported from the virus increased from 76 to 90.³ Hospitalizations remained relatively steady, rising to 1508 from 1467, but the number of people in intensive care has dropped from 35 to 33.³ New South Wales recorded the most cases, with 9,684, followed by Victoria (5225) and Queensland (3650).³ Western Australia and South Australia also both reported more than 3,000 new infections.³ Cases of COVID-19 have been slowly but steadily rising in Australia since mid-February.³ [Full article]
- **France**'s public health authority Haute Autorite de Sante (HAS) said on March 30 (Thursday) that the government has eased its vaccination guidelines for professionals in the health sector, saying the shot was no longer mandatory, but still strongly recommended, in light of recent epidemiological data.⁴ According to HAS, this recommendation to lift the obligation to vaccinate against COVID-19 does not in any way call into question its previous recommendations which were made in a different healthcare-related and epidemiological context.⁴ [Full article]

Regional Update

• **Thailand:** The Thai Ministry of Public Health is keeping a close eye on the spread of the novel XBB.1.16 COVID-19 subvariant in India.¹⁰ According to Public Health Permanent Secretary Dr. Opart Karnkawinpong, it has not yet been found in Thailand.¹⁰ On March 30(Thursday), he stated that the leading sub-variant in Thailand is currently BA.2.75, but the number of instances is decreasing while XBB.1.5 and XBB.1.9.1 are on the rise.¹⁰ According to Dr. Opart, the XBB.1.16 sub-variant is fast increasing in India and is expected to become the main sub-variant in the country, but there is no evidence that it is more severe than other sub-variants.¹⁰ [Full article]



Vaccine Update

Singapore: Despite revised World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations, the Ministry of Health (MOH) maintains its COVID-19 immunization policy for children and adolescents.⁹ WHO's most recent update identified three priority-use categories for COVID-19 immunization, with healthy children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years rated as low priority.⁹ It also suggested that they might not need to have a COVID-19 shot.⁹ It did, however, advise governments contemplating immunization for this age range to base their decisions on "contextual factors.⁹" In response to CNA's inquiry, the Ministry of Health stated on Thursday (March 30): "By designating healthy children and adolescents aged 6 months to 17 years as a low priority group for COVID-19 vaccination, WHO is advising countries to base their decisions on their own context, including factors such as health priorities and costs.⁹" [Full article]

Research Update (Published and peer-reviewed studies)

- The study **Transmissible SARS-CoV-2 variants with resistance to clinical protease inhibitors** found that several naturally occurring variants of Mpro, the main protease of SARS-CoV-2 that is essential for virus replication and is the main target of antivirals, carry amino acid mutations that confer resistance to nirmatrelvir (the main component of Paxlovid) and ensitrelvir, which received regulatory approval in Japan in February.⁵ Phylogenetic analysis indicates that these variants predate the use of these drugs, have appeared multiple times independently in different parts of the world, and are capable of spreading.⁵ According to the authors of the study, while it's unclear what magnitude of resistance will be needed for treatment failure in a clinical setting, ongoing SARS-CoV-2 transmission, continuous evolution of the virus, and widespread use of the drugs means the variants may serve as an "evolutionary stepping stone" that could develop into variants with full drug resistance, adding that this could be addressed by developing new antiviral drugs with different resistance profiles and by using a multi-drug approach.⁵ [Full text]
- The introduction of strict travel restrictions on incoming air and sea passengers, long compulsory quarantine periods for the few residents allowed to enter Taiwan, and a vast public acceptance of safety measures resulted in a delay in the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Taiwan compared with other countries.⁷ Until April 2022, there were only limited outbreaks, all of which were quickly contained.⁷ This country provides a unique opportunity to explore what happened when the Omicron variant finally evaded the controls put in place by the Taiwan government and began to spread through the country's population.⁷ By the time SARS-CoV-2 began to spread widely in Taiwan April 2022, there had been around 17,000 recorded cases of COVID-19 in the country, mostly due to the Alpha variant.⁷ Vaccination rates of Taiwan's population at that time were 82.7% having received 1 dose, 78% having received 2 doses, and 59.1% having received 3 doses.⁷ Early in 2022, several Omicron infection clusters were noted, first in northern Taiwan, and new cases quickly followed, soon exceeding 50,000 per day, with outbreaks affecting the entire country.7 This study Emergence and Persistent Dominance of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron BA.2.3.7 Variant, Taiwan monitored viral evolution using a genomic surveillance protocol at the National Taiwan University Hospital Hsinchu Branch.⁷ Whole-genome sequencing on nasal swab samples detected by PCR to be positive for SARS-CoV-2 was performed.⁷ Almost all cases in the study had not been infected with SARS CoV-2 before.7 Using high-throughput sequencing of the SARS-CoV-2 genome, 2,405 PCR-positive swab samples from 2,339 persons were analyzed, and the Omicron BA.2.3.7 variant was identified as a major lineage within recent community outbreaks in Taiwan.7 [Full text]



The World Health Organization has designated five variants of concern (VOC) for SARS-• CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Omicron1.6 These VOC and emerging variants remain a significant obstacle in eliminating the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.⁶ The use of Next generation sequencing (NGS) and accompanying metadata has allowed for a greater understanding of how VOC spread between hosts.⁶ The Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data (GISAID) has cataloged over 12 million SARS-CoV-2 sequences to date.⁶ This study on the genomics of viral infection and reinfection from Omicron and its sub-lineages, Analysis of well-annotated nextgeneration sequencing data reveals increasing cases of SARS-CoV-2 reinfection with **Omicron**, analyzed the Danish COVID-19 Genome Consortium accessible through GISAID that examined individual cases of host reinfection across VOCs and sub-lineages and included 21,708 reinfection entries available spanning March 1st 2020 to August 28th 2022.6 Each entry reported the exact collection date of both the initial infection and reinfection for the same individual, along with NGS sequences for the second infection's viral genome.⁶ The primary infection and reinfection time-points were recorded, allowing for the period between infections to be measured.⁶ There was an increasing reinfection frequency favoring reinfection with the Omicron VOC (p < 0.0001, Chi squared test).⁶ 26% of individuals infected with the original viral strain showed increasingly higher reinfection frequencies with subsequent variants.⁶ Those initially infected with the Alpha variant had no cases of reinfection due to Alpha; however, increasing frequencies of reinfection from Delta (2.3%, 169 cases) and Omicron (25.1%, 1875 cases) were observed.⁶ For those initially infected with Delta, reinfection due to the Delta variant was limited (<1%, 18 cases), but 41% (3060 cases) were reported for Omicron variant reinfections.⁶ A higher number of individuals initially infected with Omicron report a reinfection due to Omicron sublineages (4.6%, 340 cases).⁶ There is a high frequency of reinfection with Omicron among all those reinfected since March 2020, during which time a total of 93.2% reinfections were due to Omicron.⁶ These results suggest that a primary infection with either the Original, Alpha, or Delta variant does not provide sufficient protection against reinfection, in particular for an Omicron reinfection.⁶ [Full text]



ASEAN Travel Advisories (new update/s)

as of 31 March 2023

ASEAN Country	Published	Foreign travelers allowed	COVID-19 vaccination requirement	Required COVID-19 testing for fully vaccinated	Required COVID-19 testing for NOT fully vaccinated	Quarantine upon arrival	Health insurance requirement	Arrival health declaration/ registration/ documents
Brunei Darussalam	December 1, 2022	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Cambodia	October 6, 2022	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Indonesia	March 6, 2022	Yes	Yes – fully vaccinated* certificate for 18 years old and above.	No, but may be subject to RT-PCR upon arrival	Foreign travelers who are not fully vaccinated may not be allowed to enter Indonesia or may be subjected to RT-PCR test upon arrival	No	No	Traveler is required to download and register at SatuSehat app (<u>Android</u> / <u>iOS</u>) before departure.
Laos	December 29, 2022	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Malaysia	August 2, 2022	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Myanmar	March 22, 2023	Yes	Yes – fully vaccinated* certificate for 12 years old and above.	Passengers are subject to medical screening and could be subject to a test upon arrival.	Foreign travelers who are not fully vaccinated are not allowed to enter or transit Myanmar.	No	Required to obtain <u>Myanmar</u> Insurance	Passengers must present a Health Declaration Form upon arrival.
Philippines	March 30, 2022	Yes	Yes – fully vaccinated* with booster dose certificate for 15 years old and above.	No	Yes – COVID-19 rapid antigen test upon arrival.	No	No	Traveler is required to download and register at <u>E-arrival card</u> at most 3 days before departure for those without visa.
Singapore	February 13, 2023	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Thailand	March 1, 2023	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Vietnam	May 16, 2022	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No

Reference: <u>IATA Travel Centre</u>

• *Fully vaccinated – at least 14 or 15 days from 2nd dose for two-dose vaccine or 14 or 15 days from a single dose vaccine upon arrival.

Cases and Deaths as of 31 March 2023

- As of 31 March 2023 (1PM, GMT+7), worldwide, there were **683,756,346** confirmed cases, including **6,830,329** deaths. Globally, Case Fatality Rate (CFR) was **1.0%**.
- 35,662,255 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the ASEAN Region.
- The Case Fatality Rate in the ASEAN Region is range between 0.1 to 3.1%

COVID-19 cases in ASEAN region

REGION	COUNTRY	FIRST CONFIRMED CASE(S)	LATEST REPORT ON CONFIRMED CASE(S)	TOTAL CONFIRMED CASES	NEW CASES	TOTAL DEATHS	NEW DEATHS	CUMULATIVE CASES/ 100,000	CUMULATIVE VACCINATED	CUMULATIVE FULLY VACCINATED	CUMULATIVE BOOSTERED	FULLY VACCINATED/ 100
ASEAN	Brunei Darussalam	10 Mar 20	30-Mar-23	283,345	-	225	-	64,053	450,404	445,929	338,987	99.3
REGION	Cambodia	27 Jan 20	28-Mar-23	138,725	-	3,056	-	841	15,244,858	14,609,937	10,433,215	87.1
	Indonesia	02 Mar 20	31-Mar-23	6,746,118	109	161,023	11	2,490	203,657,535	172,693,321	67,952,274	62.7
	Lao PDR	24 Mar 20	30-Mar-23	218,035	-	758	-	3,041	5,888,649	5,222,417		69.4
	Malaysia	25 Jan 20	28-Mar-23	5,049,268	-	36,979	-	15,788	28,125,245	27,536,657	17,056,957	81.1
	Myanmar	23 Mar 20	29-Mar-23	634,078	-	19,490	-	1,173	34,777,314	27,545,329	2,227,351	50.8
	Philippines	30 Jan 20	30-Mar-23	4,080,957	-	66,364	-	3,771	78,369,243	73,937,435	21,341,197	64.0
	Singapore	23 Jan 20	17-Mar-23	2,255,812	-	1,722	-	39,049	5,161,990	5,120,768	4,440,289	90.8
	Thailand	13 Jan 20	27-Mar-23	4,728,632	-	33,935	-	6,791	57,005,497	53,486,086	32,143,431	74.6
	Vietnam	23 Jan 20	30-Mar-23	11,527,285	-	43,186	-	11,950	90,450,881	85,848,363	57,452,750	87.4
		ASI		35,662,255	109	366,738	11	148,946	519,131,616	466,446,242	213,386,451	

*There have been no tests reported in the last 14 days in the ASEAN Region.

REGION	TOTAL CONFIRMED CASES	NEW CASES	TOTAL DEATHS	NEW DEATHS
ASIA	193,548,429	10,466	1,200,531	10
AFRICA	12,810,157	-	258,662	
AMERICAS	193,989,883	-	2,974,479	
EUROPE	247,745,622	-	2,029,919	-
TOTAL	648.094.091	10.466	6.463.591	10

COVID-19 Epi curve among ASEAN Countries

From January 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023



COVID-19 Vaccination Status in ASEAN

as of 09 March 2023



*Last update in COVID-19 vaccination status in ASEAN was on March 9, 2023.

Mpox (Monkeypox) Cases Reported Globally

as of March 29, 2023





Mpox Daily Trend Globally

as of March 29, 2023





Mpox: Highlights and Situation Overview

- As of 29 March 2023 (1PM, GMT+7), worldwide, there were **86,759** confirmed cases, including **112** deaths. Globally, Case Fatality Rate (CFR) was **0.13%**.
- **46 confirmed cases** in the ASEAN region, with CFR of **0%**.
- **86,713 confirmed cases** of Mpox have been reported in other **5 regions** (other than ASEAN region):

Mpox cases in ASEAN region

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Deaths	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
Indonesia	1	-	-	0.00%
Philippines	4	-	-	0.00%
Singapore	21	-	-	0.00%
Thailand	18	-	-	0.00%
Vietnam	2	-	-	0.00%
ASEAN Total	46	-	-	0.00%

Mpox cases in Asia-Pacific region

Country/Territory	Total Cases	New Cases	Deaths	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
Australia	144	-	-	0.00%
India	22	-	1	5.00%
Japan	80	17	-	0.00%
New Caledonia	1	-	-	0.00%
New Zealand	41	-	-	0.00%
People's Republic of China*	19	-	-	0.00%
Republic of Korea*	5	· · · · · · · -	-	0.00%
Sri Lanka	2	-	-	0.00%
Asia-Pacific Total	314	17	1	0.32%

*People's Republic of China – including Hong Kong (SAR), Macao (SAR), and Taiwan (Province of China)

Top 5 countries with most mpox cases globally

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Deaths	Case Fatality Rate (CFR)
United States of America	30,075	12	38	0.13%
Brazil	10,890	-	15	0.14%
Spain	7,546	-	3	0.04%
France	4,128	-	-	0.00%
Colombia	4,089	-	-	0.00%



Mpox cases per region

REGION	TOTAL CONFIRMED CASES SINCE JANUARY 1, 2022	NEW CASES SINCE THE PREVIOUS REPORT	TOTAL DEATHS	CASE FATALITY RATE
AFRICA	1,487	-	19	1.28%
AMERICAS	59,010	18	86	0.15%
ASEAN	46	-	-	0.00%
ASIA PACIFIC	314	17	1	0.32%
EUROPE	25,581	-	6	0.02%
MIDDLE EAST	321	-	-	0.00%
TOTAL	86,724	35	112	0.13%

Research Update (Published and peer-reviewed studies)

A study of JYNNEOS Vaccination Coverage Among Persons at Risk for Mpox – United States, May 22, 2022-January 31, 2023, approximately 30,000 cases of monkeypox (mpox) have been reported in the United States and >86,000 cases reported internationally.⁸ JYNNEOS is recommended for subcutaneous administration to persons at increased risk for mpox and has been demonstrated to provide protection against infection.⁸ To increase the total number of vaccine doses available, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) on August 9, 2022, recommending administration of the vaccine intradermally (0.1 mL per dose) for persons aged ≥18 years who are recommended to receive it; intradermal administration can generate an equivalent immune response to that achieved through subcutaneous injection using approximately one fifth the subcutaneous dose.⁸ As of January 31, 2023, 1-dose and 2-dose (full vaccination) coverage among persons at risk for mpox is estimated to have reached 36.7% and 22.7%, respectively.⁸ Despite a steady decline in mpox cases from a 7-day daily average of more than 400 cases on August 1, 2022, to five cases on January 31, 2023, vaccination for persons at risk for mpox continues to be recommended.⁸ Targeted outreach and continued access to and availability of mpox vaccines to persons at risk is important to help prevent and minimize the impact of a resurgence of mpox.⁸ [Full text]



References

- 1. Wang, Ethan, and Bernard Orr. "China Plans Random, SPOT Checks at Hospitals to Track Covid." *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 30 Mar. 2023, https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-plans-random-spot-checks-hospitals-trackcovid-2023-03-30/.
- 2. "India's Capital New Delhi to Boost Covid-19 Testing amid Jump in Daily Cases." *Channel News Asia*, 30 Mar. 2023, https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/indias-capital-new-delhi-boost-covid-19-testing-amid-jump-daily-cases-3385176.
- 3. Jeffrey, Daniel. "Covid-19 Cases Increase for Seventh-Straight Week, Deaths on Rise." 9News, 9News, 31 Mar. 2023, https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-updateaustralia-march-31-cases-deaths-rise/3b7076a5-3364-4998-9f61-1a1e2f6fc7c3.
- 4. "Covid-19 Vaccination for Health Workers in France No Longer Mandatory." *INQUIRER.net*, 31 Mar. 2023, https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1750524/covid-19-vaccination-for-health-workers-in-france-no-longer-mandatory.
- 5. Moghadasi, Seyed Arad, et al. "Transmissible SARS-COV-2 Variants with Resistance to Clinical Protease Inhibitors." *Science Advances*, 29 Mar. 2022, https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.08.07.503099.
- 6. Burkholz, Scott, et al. "Analysis of Well-Annotated next-Generation Sequencing Data Reveals Increasing Cases of SARS-COV-2 Reinfection with Omicron." Communications Biology, vol. 6, no. 1, 18 Mar. 2023, https://doi.org/10.1038/s42003-023-04687-4.
- Shao, Pei-Lan, et al. "Emergence and Persistent Dominance of SARS-COV-2 Omicron Ba.2.3.7 Variant, Taiwan." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 29, no. 4, Apr. 2023, pp. 792– 796., https://doi.org/10.3201/eid2904.221497.
- Owens, Lauren E., et al. "JYNNEOS Vaccination Coverage among Persons at Risk for Mpox — United States, May 22, 2022–January 31, 2023." MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, vol. 72, no. 13, 31 Mar. 2023, pp. 342–347., https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7213a4.
- 9. "Singapore Maintains COVID-19 Vaccination Stance for Children, Adolescents as Who Revises Recommendations." *Channel News Asia*, 31 Mar. 2023, https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/moh-covid-19-vaccine-childrenadolescents-revised-who-recommendations-3385516.
- "Health Ministry Says No XBB.1.16 Covid Sub-Variant Cases in Thailand Yet." *Thai PBS World*, 30 Mar. 2023, https://www.thaipbsworld.com/health-ministry-says-no-xbb-1-16-covid-subvariant-cases-in-thailand-yet/.





Report generated by **ASEAN Biodiaspora Virtual Center (ABVC)** in collaboration with **Bluedot Inc.** *Email: support@biodiaspora.org* Facebook: <u>https://facebook.com/ASEANBiodiaspora</u> Instagram: <u>https://instagram.com/ASEANBiodiaspora</u>