

COVID-19 Fact Sheet:

Asia-Pacific – May 29, 2020



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OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The number of COVID-19 cases in the Asia-Pacific region has risen by 24 percent over the past week to more than 416,500 and the death toll has increased by 16 percent to more than 13,800. In East Asia, the overall outbreak remains under control in several countries, although clusters of new cases are causing difficulties and leading to re-imposed restrictions in some areas. China, Japan, and South Korea all show the potential for regional clusters to develop following reopenings.

The situation in Southeast Asia is more varied from country to country. The outbreaks in Malaysia and Thailand remain under control, with the countries continuing to work toward lifting additional restrictions. The situations in Indonesia and the Philippines are less clear, although both countries are also loosening COVID-19 regulations. Singapore's outbreak remains largely unchanged and the government is continuing to evaluate the situation as it heads toward relaxing more restrictions.

In South Asia, the number of cases confirmed is continuing to rise sharply in India and Bangladesh. Although Nepal has fewer overall cases, its total infections have more than doubled over the past week. The Maldives is beginning to consider plans to restart its tourist industry. Elsewhere, Australia and New Zealand's outbreaks remain controlled.

Across the region, individuals are advised to expect ongoing disruptions related to COVID-19, to follow the guidance of medical personnel, and to comply with all local restrictions.

Confirmed Cases/Deaths in the Asia/Pacific Region as of Friday Morning, May 29

Country/Region	May 29: Cases	May 29: Deaths	May 21: Cases	May 21: Deaths	Case Increase Percentage	Death Increase Percentage
India	165,799	4,706	112,359	3,435	48%	37%
Mainland China	82,995	4,634	82,967	4,634	0%	0%
Bangladesh	40,321	559	26,738	386	51%	45%
Singapore	33,249	23	29,364	22	13%	5%
Indonesia	24,538	1,496	19,189	1,242	28%	20%
Japan	16,719	874	16,424	777	2%	12%
Philippines	15,588	921	13,221	842	18%	9%
South Korea	11,402	269	11,122	264	3%	2%
Malaysia	7,629	115	7,009	114	9%	1%
Australia	7,150	103	7,079	100	1%	3%
Thailand	3,065	57	3,034	56	1%	2%
Sri Lanka	1,530	10	1,028	9	49%	11%
Maldives	1,513	5	1,186	4	28%	25%
New Zealand	1,154	22	1,153	21	0%	5%
Hong Kong	1,066	4	1,055	4	1%	0%
Nepal	1,042	5	444	2	135%	150%
Taiwan	441	7	441	7	0%	0%
Vietnam	327	0	324	0	1%	-
Myanmar	206	6	199	6	4%	0%
Mongolia	179	0	140	0	28%	-
Guam	172	5	165	5	4%	0%
Brunei Darussalam	141	2	141	1	0%	100%
Cambodia	124	0	122	0	2%	-
French Polynesia	60	0	60	0	0%	-
Macau	45	0	45	0	0%	-
Bhutan	31	0	21	0	48%	-
Timor Leste	24	0	24	0	0%	-
Northern Mariana Islands	22	2	22	2	0%	0%
Laos	19	0	19	0	0%	-
New Caledonia	19	0	18	0	6%	-
Fiji	18	0	18	0	0%	-
Papua New Guinea	8	0	8	0	0%	-
Totals	416,596	13,825	335,139	11,933	24%	16%

Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and various media outlets/government sites

Region Spotlight: East Asia

Country/Region	May 29: Cases	May 29: Deaths	May 21: Cases	May 21: Deaths	Case Increase Percentage	Death Increase Percentage
Japan	16,719	874	16,424	777	2%	12%
Mainland China	82,995	4,634	82,967	4,634	0%	0%
South Korea	11,402	269	11,122	264	3%	2%

JAPAN

Japan's COVID-19 cases have remained low over the past week, with fewer than 50 new cases reported daily nationwide and some days significantly lower than that. There remain fears of a possible second wave of infections following the complete lifting of the state of emergency on May 26. In Tokyo, a new cluster of cases has been reported at a hospital in the Koganei area, although this cluster is believed to have begun prior to the state of emergency being lifted in Tokyo, and hospital-acquired infections are less likely to be prevented by general business restrictions. There has been a more significant recent rise in cases in the city of Kitakyushu in Fukuoka Prefecture. More than 40 cases have been reported over the last week following three weeks with no new cases in the city. The government is still attempting to trace how most of the new patients were infected. The country's testing rate remains low at around 3.4 tests for every 1,000 people, which could hamper the response to any potential second wave of infections, although the government is continuing efforts to increase testing. The government also plans to finish distributing face masks to all citizens by the middle of June. Although business shutdowns in Japan have been mostly voluntary, additional locations in Tokyo are expected to reopen on June 1, including gyms and movie theaters.

On May 26, government officials stated that plans are underway to begin easing some international travel restrictions by an unspecified date this summer. The lifting of restrictions will be done in phases, with the first phase being focused on allowing business travelers into the country, the second allowing international students into Japan, and the final phase approving general travelers, including tourists. Restrictions will also be lifted depending on the status of the outbreak in specific countries. Media sources report that officials plan to resume business travel first with Australia, China, South Korea, and the United States, with other countries to be added later.

CHINA

Although China's overall COVID-19 situation remains under control, the country continues to deal with pockets of infections in its northeast. Some restrictions are still in place in parts of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang Provinces, all of which border North Korea or Russia. Most recently, the Heilongjiang city of Mudanjiang has reported at least 11 domestically transmitted cases over the past few days, all of which were asymptomatic. The city has suspended the city's public transportation, closed schools, and reportedly quarantined some residential buildings. Various other cities in these provinces, including Jilin City and Shulan, have implemented restrictive measures in response to outbreaks this month, and it is possible that additional cities in the region may regulate travel to affected areas or put their own restrictions in place depending on how the situation unfolds.

SOUTH KOREA

Parts of South Korea, including Seoul and the surrounding region, have reinstated stricter distancing requirements following an outbreak at a Coupang Corp shipping facility in Bucheon, west of the capital. The country reported 79 new cases on May 27, which is the highest number in almost two months, with most of them being related to the Bucheon cluster. Another 58 new cases were confirmed on May 28. The increased restrictions will remain in place until at least June 14, and include such measures as increased inspections of virus response measures at logistics facilities like the one Bucheon, and the closure of schools, parks, museums, and other public locations. Although South Korea's overall situation remains under control except for clusters such as Bucheon, it is possible that restrictive measures will be expanded if the outbreak spreads or if other clusters are discovered.

Region Spotlight: Southeast Asia

Country/Region	May 29: Cases	May 29: Deaths	May 21: Cases	May 21: Deaths	Case Increase Percentage	Death Increase Percentage
Singapore	33,249	23	29,364	22	13%	5%
Indonesia	24,538	1,496	19,189	1,242	28%	20%
Philippines	15,588	921	13,221	842	18%	9%
Malaysia	7,629	115	7,009	114	9%	1%
Thailand	3,065	57	3,034	56	1%	2%

SINGAPORE

Singapore's new cases among its migrant worker population remain steady at several hundred per day, while new cases among Singaporean nationals and permanent residents are still low. As the country prepares to ease additional lockdown restrictions on June 2, Minister for National Development Lawrence Wong stated this week that the government will monitor conditions for two weeks after reopening and will decide at that point whether to bring forward the next stage of phased reopenings before the end of June, earlier than initially planned. This next phase would allow the reopening of additional retail locations and dine-in services at restaurants for up to five customers at a time, with the minister describing the measures as enabling a reopening for "almost the entire economy." After restrictions are lifted on June 2, however, if significant clusters of infection develop, the next phase of reopening will likely be pushed back to at least the middle of July. The government is also continuing discussions with several countries over the resumption of essential international travel, although a timeframe for such travel still has not been detailed. It is expected that Singapore will first allow travel to and from countries with comparable levels of control over their COVID-19 outbreaks.

INDONESIA

Indonesia's new cases remain steady at several hundred every day. The country has officially had 1,520 deaths; however, non-governmental organizations tracking the outbreak in the country report that as many as 4,000 additional people have died with COVID-19 symptoms without being officially

diagnosed. Continued low testing rates mean that both the number of deaths and infections in the country are likely higher than the official toll. There is a good chance that the situation will be exacerbated as lockdown restrictions are expected to be lifted in much of the country on June 4. As COVID-19 begins to spread more in the province of East Java, there have been media reports of hospitals being overwhelmed and forced to not admit patients in the provincial capital Surabaya. Most East Java cases have occurred in Surabaya, and some other medical facilities in the city have been forced to close after personnel were diagnosed with the virus. The rate of spread in East Java has recently been much higher than that in Jakarta, which has been the epicenter of Indonesia's outbreak to this point.

On May 28, Nissan announced that it was permanently closing its plant in Purwakarta in West Java due to restructuring associated with the global economic downturn related to COVID-19. The related closure of a plant in Barcelona sparked protests against Nissan in that city, and demonstrations are also possible in Indonesia.

PHILIPPINES

The number of new cases in the Philippines reached a record high of 539 on May 28. The country's Department of Health had earlier stated that new case numbers were likely to rise due to improvements in processes that allow confirmed cases to be categorized in official numbers more quickly. Beginning on June 1, lockdown conditions will be eased in some locations, including Metro Manila. For the capital region, additional businesses and retail locations will reopen, public transportation services will resume with reduced passenger capacity, gatherings with groups of up to ten people will be permitted, and additional movement in and out of the area will be allowed. Certain high-risk neighborhoods will continue to be placed under more strict quarantine conditions, and curfews and checkpoints are expected to remain in place for much of the region. Other regions where restrictions will be lowered on June 1 include Albay, Davao City, Pangasinan, 2, 3, and 4A.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia confirmed 103 new COVID-19 cases on May 29, higher than the country's average daily numbers, but lower than the nearly 200 reported on May 25 and 26. According to the government, most of May 29's new cases are related to the same cluster at an immigration detention center that led to the previous spikes. The government has recently increased security at its borders over fears that illegal crossings will import additional cases, with officials saying that more than 300 people were stopped while trying to enter during May.

The government has increased its COVID-19 testing capacity to around 30,000 tests per day. Officials are continuing to evaluate the country's situation and plan to decide on June 9 whether enough progress has been made for schools and additional business to resume operations.

THAILAND

The outbreak in Thailand remains under control, with most new daily cases over the past month being in the single digits. Beginning on June 1, additional restrictions will be lifted, which will allow movie

theaters, spas, zoos, and other locations to reopen with social distancing measures in place. Most remaining restrictions are expected to be lifted by July 1, but the government is still finalizing details.

Region Spotlight: South Asia

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Nepal	1,042	5	444	2	135%	150%
Maldives	1,513	5	1,186	4	28%	25%

INDIA

New daily cases in India remained at record levels of well above 7,000 on May 27, 28, and 29. On May 29, Maharashtra, which remains the most affected state in the country, confirmed more than 2,500 new cases itself, while Delhi confirmed more than 1,000. The country's current lockdown restrictions are still set to expire on May 31, although at least some restrictions are likely to be extended, which several states, including Goa and Haryana, have pushed for. Other states have moved to relax regulations, with Karnataka and West Bengal beginning to reopen religious sites, and West Bengal planning to allow businesses to operate with their full staffs on-site beginning on June 8.

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh's new daily cases reached another record high of more than 2,500 on May 29. The spread of the virus in the country shows no sign of slowing and test rates remain low, meaning that actual numbers are probably higher. Government officials have announced that lockdown restrictions will not be renewed after their expiration on May 31, although social distancing guidelines will remain in force until June 15 and a nightly curfew will stay in place. Some public transportation services are also expected to resume, and limited numbers of domestic flights will restart on June 1. Stock exchanges in Bangladesh will also resume operations on May 31.

NEPAL

Nepal confirmed another new record of 170 cases and a sixth death on May 29. The country's infections have more than doubled over the course of the past week as community transmission increases. The country's health system has already been stressed by the current cases and the increasing number will exacerbate the situation.

On Thursday, a protest was reported in Rautahat in Province 2 against the construction of a quarantine facility in the area. The demonstration ended in clashes, with police firing blanks in an attempt to disperse protesters. At least six officers were injured. It is possible that additional COVID-19-related protests will occur in the area or elsewhere in the country.

MALDIVES

New daily cases in the Maldives have hovered roughly between 20 and 60 over the past week, with most cases still affecting migrant workers in the capital, Malé. The government announced on May 27 that it is working on a plan to resume tourist arrivals, which the country's economy is heavily dependent on, possibly as early as July. According to media sources, such plans are likely to include stipulations that arriving tourists undergo COVID-19 testing and remain in the Maldives for no less than 14 days.

Region Spotlight: Oceania

Country/Region	May 29: Cases	May 29: Deaths	May 21: Cases	May 21: Deaths	Case Increase Percentage	Death Increase Percentage
Australia	7,150	103	7,079	100	1%	3%
New Zealand	1,154	22	1,153	21	0%	5%

AUSTRALIA

On May 29 federal, state, and territorial leaders held a meeting to discuss reopening timetables for different parts of the country. Australia is currently working its way through a three-phase reopening plan, with phase three being the final stage in which many restrictions will have been lifted, including prohibitions on interstate travel and gatherings of up to 100 people. As of May 29, the Northern Territory is expected to enter phase three on June 5, Western Australia by the middle of June, Queensland on July 10, Tasmania on July 13, the Australian Capital Territory by the middle of July, and Victoria by late July. No dates have yet been suggested for New South Wales or South Australia. New South Wales will reopen restaurants, bars, and cafes to up to 50 customers at a time beginning on June 1.

NEW ZEALAND

As of May 29, New Zealand has gone for one week with no new cases and there is only one active confirmed case in the country. Gatherings of up to 100 people were allowed to resume on May 29, including customers in restaurants.

About the Author

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