

Global Mission Partners (GMP) COVID-19 Update¹ #33

These updates incorporate all nations where GMP programs (COCOA, ICP and IMA) operate. GMP programs operate independently of one another, and adhere to their own processes and practices in line with the relevant oversight bodies.

Brackets indicate figures from (24/11).

Green = No cases, or situation under control.

Yellow = Cases growing or stable but well monitored, OR cases potentially getting out of hand and a serious situation is likely to occur.

Red = Situation out of control and/or official figures cannot be trusted.

There are 67.8m cases globally, and over 1.5m deaths. The 'second wave' has gripped the US and parts of Europe. In New Mexico (US), they have announced that their hospitals cannot deal with the amount of cases on hand, and that patients will be assessed on their likelihood of survival. California has announced a three-week lockdown. Russia and Turkey have overtaken Brazil in daily cases. South Korea has announced new restrictions in Seoul on the back of nine-month high case totals. The subcontinent and South America are slowly stemming the virus. Africa and the Pacific are in relatively good positions compared to other parts of the globe. The UK is rolling out vaccinations this week.

Australia (81^{*}): 908 deaths; 27,972 cases. (907 deaths; 27,835 cases). Testing: 397,956 per million.

Borders have opened. International flights have resumed to South Australia and Victoria, and Victoria has brought forward the easing of restrictions. Australia's second wave appears to be over, and there is hope that the vaccine may be introduced in the first quarter of 2021. **GMP Programs:** IMA, embody.

India (3): 140,994 deaths; 9,703,908 cases. (134, 251 deaths; 9,177,641 cases). T=106,639

The Times of India reports that there has been a 16% drop in cases over the past week, and that after approximately a month where cases and fatalities stubbornly held, this is positive news. The high point of early-mid September has certainly passed, and India appears to be slowly moving to a more controlled level with approximately 25-30,000 new cases per day (down on the 70-80,000 per day at the peak). To put India in context, it still has over 385,000 active cases. New Delhi's new cases have dropped to 2,500 per day – down from 7,500 the last time we reported. Given that it has been three weeks since Diwali, India may have dodged a second wave for the time being. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Bangladesh (32): 6,874; 479,743 cases. (6,416 deaths; 449,760 cases). T=17,398

Cases in Bangladesh are now more likely to total between 1,500-2,000 cases per day. Over 300 returning citizens who did not possess the appropriate COVID-19 negative certificate have been quarantined in Dhaka. The *Dhaka Tribune* reports that there has been a surge in cases in Chittagong and the surrounding districts; there is a fear from experts that a second wave is about to come through – there has also been a rise in dust pollution in Chittagong, and it has been established that the impacts on pollution on people's lungs makes them more prone to COVID-19 infections. On top of these health issues, there are the ongoing challenges presented by the Bangladeshi economy: for example, at least 10,000 workers in Bandarban are at risk of unemployment due to a significant drop in the price of rubber. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Vietnam (164): 35 deaths; 1,367 cases. (35 deaths; 1,312 cases). T=13,712 Since our last report, Vietnam has recorded cases of community transmission in Ho Chi Minh City. International flights have since been suspended, aside from repatriation flights. Reports from the *Vietnam Briefing* website indicate that Vietnam will begin conducting human trials of a locally produced vaccination program on December 10. Active cases are at 108. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

Indonesia (17): 17,867 deaths; 581,550. (16,002 deaths; 502,110 cases.) T=19,589 Since the last report, Indonesia has regularly posted record numbers of cases and fatalities which indicates that far from stabilising, the situation is getting far worse than the (heavily disputed) official numbers suggest. The Jakarta

¹ Obviously, these numbers change rapidly. This is current as of 1pm on 8/12/20, according to <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

² This number indicates – in terms of fatalities – where a nation is ranked of the 220 nations/territories/international conveyances that recorded cases of COVID-19.

administration has again extended the large-scale restrictions through to December 21, with a spike there coming after recent long weekend celebrations. According to an official quoted in the *Jakarta Post*, the “outbreak in Jakarta is still under control”. The *Post* also reported that the occupancy rate in 98 COVID-19 hospitals in Jakarta was at 79%, up from 56% a month ago. While figures are ‘fuzzy’ in Indonesia, there is no doubt that the outbreak in Jakarta is *not* under control. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

Fiji (190): 2 deaths, 44 cases. (2 deaths; 35 cases). T=18,574.

Cases have increased in the past fortnight, with there now being nine active cases in Fiji. Most cases are of people returning home from overseas, while two cases were from a cargo ship that docked in Suva. The 11pm-4am curfew is likely to stay in place throughout the upcoming festive season. **GMP Programs:** ICP.

Vanuatu (220) 0 deaths; 1 case. (0 deaths; 1 case).

There are no longer any active cases in Vanuatu. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP.

Thailand (151): 60 deaths; 4,107 cases. (60 deaths; 3,920 cases). T=13,994

The COVID-19 outbreak in neighbouring Myanmar has led to increases of cases in Thailand. Thai workers employed in Myanmar bars have crossed back to Thailand to avoid the outbreak, with some of them carrying the virus – there have been 36 cases in the past two weeks in Chiang Rai alone. There have been two local transmissions in the past 24 hours, according to the *Bangkok Post*. There are 179 active cases in Thailand. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

South Sudan (147): 60 deaths; 3,181 cases. (60 deaths; 3,064 cases). T=5,555

While the caseload seems to have stabilised and restrictions have eased, South Sudan is struggling with a range of social and economic challenges – many of which it is not in a position to combat. Education is one of them, with schools spending most of their time closed since the outbreak in April. As the *Juba Monitor* reports, it is not simply a lack of education that is the only issue facing young people, especially girls. Officials report that there has been an increase in teen pregnancies, and that conditions are now conducive to child marriages (South Sudan is ranked seventh in the world for this). A total of 1.9 million children have been impacted with school closures, and 35,000 teachers are faced with unemployment. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

Zimbabwe: (103) 291 deaths; 10,718 cases. (273 deaths; 9,308 cases). T=12,463

There has been a rise in cases since the last report. The active case rate in the country has doubled to over 1,500 cases. Schools have been gradually reopening, and on December 1 the border with Botswana and South Africa reopened (South Africa has been the worst affected nation in Africa). Government officials are fearing a second wave of infections, and according to the Information Minister, this is “giving the government sleepless nights.” *New Zimbabwe* reports that public gatherings have been again restricted to 100 people. **GMP Programs:** COCOA, ICP

Papua New Guinea: (179) 7 deaths; 671 cases. (7 deaths; 612 cases). T=3,331

Active cases again climbed this past reporting period, from 17 to 67. PNG is currently in a constitutional crisis, so this does not bode well for the prevention of a second wave. The next two weeks will be crucial in halting the rise in cases – leading up to Christmas. Worryingly, the major newspaper, *The National*, has effectively stopped reporting on the increase of cases. **GMP Programs:** ICP

The Philippines: (29) 8,572 deaths; 441,399 cases. (8,173 deaths; 420,614 cases.) T=54,598

Active cases fell to under 25,000 in the last fortnight, and it appears that the Philippines may be about to emerge from this long period of its first wave. As with most things, it will depend on the conditions of Metro Manila in the next few weeks in the lead up to Christmas. The President has called on the people of the Philippines to not participate in large gatherings over Christmas, and has apologised that Christmas will be impacted by restrictions. **GMP Programs:** ICP