

Dengue outbreak in Bangladesh

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Dear Editor,

Currently, Bangladesh is experiencing a large dengue outbreak which is unusual in its scale and seasonality. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared it as an outbreak. The main cause behind this devastating outbreak is the high temperatures, high humidity, alongside the heavy rainfall, which has increased mosquito populations throughout the country.

According to WHO the present outbreak is the country's second largest outbreak since 2000. The health ministry has reported 52,807 lab-confirmed cases, plus 230 related deaths, for a case fatality rate of 0.44% till date.

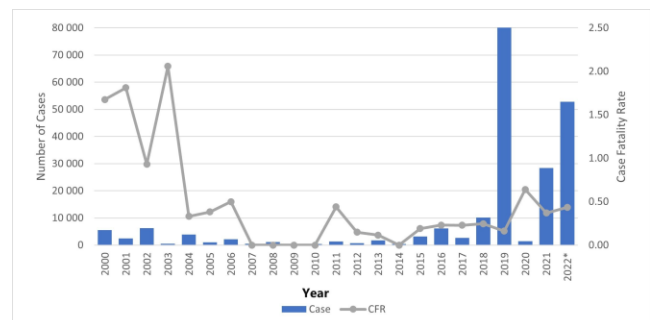


Figure: 1 Number of dengue cases and case fatality rates reported by year in Bangladesh from 1 January 2000 to 20 November 2022 (WHO)

The predominant serotypes are dengue virus 3, predominant since 2019, and dengue virus 4, which hadn't been reported in the country for several years.

The most affected division is Dhaka, accounting for 70.6% of cases and 60.4% of deaths. Dhaka city has reported 64.5% (n= 34 071) of the total number of cases. Other affected divisions include Chattogram division (13.2% of cases and 24.8% of deaths) and Khulna division (5.5% of cases and 4.8% of deaths)

Bangladesh's climate conditions are becoming more favorable to the transmission of dengue and other vector-borne diseases. Excessive rainfall, waterlogging, flooding, a rise in temperature, and unusual shifts in the country's traditional seasons are the main causes. Bangladesh experienced moderate rainfall in October, which is outside of the monsoon season that typically runs from May to September.

Bangladesh has repurposed six hospitals dedicated for COVID-19 in the city of Dhaka for managing dengue cases. Among other response efforts, the ministry and WHO have distributed 284,000 diagnostic kits to hospitals throughout the country.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has established dedicated dengue wards/dengue corners in medical college hospitals, conducted capacity-building activity on clinical case management, and activated control rooms in all district and medical college hospitals for sharing awareness, which is highly appreciable still more attention may improve the current situation.

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