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Two Decades of Endemic Dengue in Bangladesh (2000-2022): Trends, Seasonality, and Impact of Temperature and Rainfall Patterns on Transmission Dynamics

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Abstract:

Background: The objectives of this study were to compare dengue virus (DENV) cases, deaths, case-fatality ratio, and meteorological parameters between the first and the recent decade of this century (2000-2010 vs. 2011-2022) and to describe the trends, seasonality, and impact of change of temperature and rainfall patterns on transmission dynamics of dengue in Bangladesh

Methods: For the period 2000-2022, dengue cases and death data from Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website, and meteorological data from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department were analyzed. A Poisson regression model was performed to identify the impact of meteorological parameters on the monthly dengue cases. A forecast of dengue cases was performed using an autoregressive integrated moving average model.

Results: Over the past 22 years, a total of 244,246 dengue cases were reported including 849 deaths (Case fatality ratio [CFR] =0.34%). The mean annual number of dengue cases increased eight times during the second decade, with 2,216 cases during 2000-2010 vs. 18,321 cases during 2011-2022. The mean annual number of deaths doubled (21 vs. 46), but the overall CFR has decreased by one-third (0.69% vs 0.23%). Concurrently, the annual mean temperature increased by 0.49 °C, and rainfall decreased by 314 mm with altered precipitation seasonality. Monthly mean temperature (Incidence risk ratio [IRR]: 1.26), first-lagged rainfall (IRR: 1.08), and second-lagged rainfall (IRR: 1.17) were significantly associated with monthly dengue cases.

Conclusions: The increased local temperature and changes in rainfall seasonality might have contributed to the increased dengue cases in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Dengue, Bangladesh, Climate change, Temperature, Rainfall

Introduction:

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne disease (MVD) caused by four distinct serotypes of the dengue virus (DENV) within the family *Flaviviridae* (Simmonds et al. 2017). DENV is transmitted to humans by bites of *Aedes aegypti* (L.) and *Aedes albopictus* (Skuse) (WHO 2009; CDC 2019). DENV is endemic in over 125 countries, and the number of cases globally reported to WHO continues to increase yearly (Bhatt et al. 2013; WHO 2023). Annually, an estimated 390 million dengue infections are estimated worldwide, including 96 million clinical cases making DENV one of the most important vector-borne diseases (VBDs) (Murray et al. 2013; Messina et al. 2019; WHO 2023). Most infections (>80%) are self-limiting with no or mild clinical manifestation resulting in lifelong immunity for that serotype (WHO-Bangladesh 2022). However, reinfection with different serotypes, known as secondary or tertiary dengue infection, may result in severe dengue with an increasing risk of fatal outcome (Teo et al. 2023). Currently, South and Southeast Asia are ‘hotspots’ of DENV infection, with more than 50% of cases recorded in these regions (WHO South-East Asia 2023). The first DENV outbreak in Bangladesh was reported in 2000, and since then, dengue has become endemic in the country posing a significant health challenge (Sharmin et al. 2015). Over the past few years, the number of dengue cases has been steadily increasing, with significant seasonal and regional variation. Analysis of data from 2000 to 2017 revealed that almost half of the dengue cases occurred during the monsoon (May-August) and the post-monsoon (September-December) seasons (Mutsuddy et al. 2019). Historically the monsoon has been the primary dengue transmission season in Bangladesh, although the number of dengue cases has increased during the post-monsoon season in recent years (Haider et al. 2021; Hossain et al. 2023). Bangladesh’s hot and humid weather favors the production of a large variety of mosquito species with more than 123 species listed in 2016 (Irish et al. 2016; Bashar et al. 2016). The most

common vectors of dengue virus, *Ae aegypti* and *Ae albopictus*, were first recorded in 1952 (Asir-Ud-Din M 1952) and recent studies in Dhaka showed a higher Breteau index which measures the number of positive containers per 100 households: 30.8 in 1997, 24.6 in 2000, 55.8 in 2011, 28.7 in 2012 and 22.5 in 2013 (Ferdousi et al. 2015; Paul et al. 2018). In 2022, the maximum Breteau index of >50 was recorded for six wards of the Dhaka South City Corporation area (Tawsia Tajmim 2022). The pupal index (PI) which measures the number of pupae per 100 houses was estimated during the monsoon season in several years in Bangladesh: 62.2 in 2011, 153.5 in 2012, and 75.9 in 2013. However, during the dry period, the PI was estimated as 16.7 in 2012 (Paul et al. 2018).

Climate change, including changes in precipitation, temperature and humidity, as well as rapid unplanned urbanization, were identified as strong indicators of an ecological imbalance that has led to an increase in dengue cases in Bangladesh (Mutsuddy et al. 2019). These changes could eventually extend dengue transmission season year-round, with a chance of outbreaks occurring at any time of the year. Identifying trends and seasonality in dengue cases may aid health authorities and relevant public and private administrations in effectively allocating resources to control the spread of the DENV through vector control. The objectives of our current study were to: i) compare the annual and monthly number of dengue cases and deaths between 2000 and 2022, ii) identify the overall trend and seasonality of dengue cases, iii) quantify the impact of weather parameters on the number of monthly dengue cases, and iv) forecast the annual number of dengue cases for the next decade.

Methods:

Data sources:

The current dengue surveillance in Bangladesh is coordinated by the Management Information System (MIS) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh (Haider et al. 2023 Sep). The surveillance includes hospitalized patients diagnosed as infected with dengue virus primarily from government hospitals except in the capital city Dhaka, where more than 57 private hospitals are included in addition to 20 public hospitals. Outside the capital city Dhaka, the central district hospital of 64 districts and medical college hospitals are also included in the surveillance system. We collected data on the number of reported dengue cases and deaths from the publicly shared database of the MIS from January 2000 to December 2022. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh defines dengue cases based on clinical symptoms (including fever and rash) and/or laboratory tests for IgM or IgG antibodies to DENV and nonstructural 1 protein (NS-1) of DENV (Ahsan et al. 2021).

We used three-hourly temperature and daily rainfall data from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) over the period 2000–2022 from the meteorological station located in Mirpur, Dhaka (Lat 23.46, Lon 90.23). Given Bangladesh's relatively small land size and moderate climate variation across the country, we focused data solely on the Dhaka station. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of historical dengue cases (>90%) have originated from Dhaka city (Sharmin et al. 2018).

Procedures

The monthly number of reported dengue cases was used as the primary outcome variable. Two weather variables, temperature and rainfall, were used as the covariates for the regression analysis. In addition, monthly rainfall lagged by 1 or 2 preceding months were also used as predictors for the number of monthly dengue cases

Statistical analysis

We analyzed the monthly dengue cases and meteorological data for the period of 2000-2022. We used 2010 (the median year) to divide the period 2000-2022. Then, we compared the number of dengue cases, deaths, and weather parameters during the two decades (2000-2010 and 2011-2022) using a paired sample t-test, aimed at comparing trends, developments, and changes between these periods. In the first stage, descriptive analyses were conducted to determine the characteristics of dengue cases and deaths with mean, and interquartile range (IQR) in each year and each month for the entire period. Next, we calculated the monthly growth factor (GF) of dengue cases by dividing the number of dengue cases reported in each month by the number of dengue cases reported in the previous month and repeating this process for each month from 2000 to 2022 (Haider et al. 2021). The formula for the growth factor can be given by

$$GF_t = \frac{N_{t+1} + 1}{N_t + 1}$$

where N_t indicates the number of dengue cases in t^{th} month. To avoid the occurrence of zeros in some months, we added 1 to the total number of cases for each month. The distribution of the GF was skewed; therefore, we used the natural log transformation before the data was further examined. However, we have also performed a reverse transformation of the log (GF) values by back-transforming exponentiating values to the original scale for ease of interpretation (Haider et al. 2021). A monthly GF greater than 1 indicates that the number of dengue cases would be more than the number of dengue cases of the previous month, while a GF less than 1 means that the number of dengue cases in a new month would be less than the previous month. For example, if there are 100 cases in January, the number of dengue cases in February would be 200 when the value of GF is 2.0 or 50 cases when the value of GF is 0.5 in January (Haider et al. 2021)

172 We performed forecasting using the autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) model.
173 The ARIMA model is a data-driven, exploratory strategy that enabled us to fit a suitable model
174 and forecast values. The ARIMA model consists of autoregressive (p) terms, differencing (d)
175 terms, and moving average (q) operations, and it is denoted as ARIMA (p, d, q) (Kumar and
176 Susan 2020). To select the appropriate autoregressive and moving average orders, the
177 autocorrelation function (ACF) and partial autocorrelation function (PACF) were examined.
178 Additionally, the differencing parameter, represented by "d," indicated the number of times the
179 time series was different to achieve stationarity (Hasan et al. 2021). By removing high-frequency
180 noise from the data, the model discovers local patterns by assuming that the time series values
181 are linearly related. We also conducted a Mann-Kendall (M-K) trend analysis to determine
182 possible upward or downward trends (Yue and Pilon 2004). The null hypothesis posits no
183 monotonic trend, while the alternative hypothesis suggests the presence of a trend, which could
184 be positive, negative, or non-null. We also performed Sen's slope test to assess variations in
185 annual dengue cases and deaths. The slope greater than 0 indicates an upward trend and less than
186 0 indicates a downward trend of a given period (Sen 1968).
187 We then used a time series count generalized linear model (GLM), more specifically, a time-
188 series Poisson regression model, to determine whether the meteorological factors were associated
189 with the change in dengue cases over time (Sumi et al. 2021). Monthly dengue cases were
190 utilized as the outcome variable in this model, along with data from the Bangladesh
191 Meteorological Department (BMD) on temperature and rainfall. We have estimated the degree-
192 hour generated by the additional temperature each year in Bangladesh. To compare this with the
193 extrinsic incubation period of the dengue virus in *Aedes* mosquito, we estimated the degree-hour
194 required to complete the extrinsic incubation period (EIP) at 26° C using the mathematical

formula $[-0.1393 + 0.008 \times \text{Temp}]$ presented by Focks et al. (1995) (Focks et al. 1995). We used the statistical program RStudio, version 3.5.2.2 for the analyses (R Core Team 2022).

Results:

Between 2000 and 2022, DGHS reported a total of 244,246 dengue cases, with an annual mean of 10,619 cases (interquartile range [IQR]: 859.5-5805.5), including 849 fatal outcomes with a case-fatality ratio (CFR) of 0.34%. Between 2000 to 2010, the mean annual number of dengue cases was 2,216 (IQR: 480-3182) which increased by 8 times in the following decade (2011-2022) at 18,321 (IQR: 1405-28429, $p=0.22$) (**Table 1**). Between these two periods, the mean number of annual deaths due to DENV cases increased by 2.2 times, from 21.2 to 46.6 cases ($p=0.85$). However, the CFR of DENV cases decreased slightly from 0.69% to 0.23% ($p=0.08$) (**Table 1**).

The highest monthly average number of cases was recorded in August ($n=3,407$ cases) and the lowest was in March ($n=6.7$ cases) (**Fig 1B**). The highest number of annual cases was reported in 2019 with 101,354. The highest number of deaths was recorded in 2022 with 281 deaths, which was 35% of total deaths recorded in the past 23 years in Bangladesh (**Fig 1**). Most (65%, $n=550$) of the dengue-related deaths were recorded after 2018 (**Fig 1**).

The average annual temperature was 26.35 °C (SD=0.49) during the first decade (2000-2010) and 26.84 °C (SD=0.37) during the recent decade (2011-2022) (**Table 1**). The increase of 0.49° C temperature was equivalent to 4,292 degree-hours/year of heat (365 days X 24 hours X 0.49° C). For dengue virus transmission, approximately 349-degree-hours of equivalent heat is needed to complete the EIP of DENV in the *Aedes* mosquito at 26° C (Focks et al. 1995). The annual total rainfall decreased by 314 mm between two decades, from 2078.6 mm to 1764.5 mm (**Table**

1), of which 308 mm decreased during the monsoon (July-October) season and only 6 mm decreased during the non-monsoon period. However, during pre-and-post monsoon season, rainfall (more than 3rd quantile value of monthly rainfall for the decade) increased in the second decade (**Fig 2**).

The overall mean GF for the number of dengue cases per month was 1.37 (SD=0.86). However, in four months (April-July), the monthly GF was above one (lower 95% confidence interval >1), while for the rest of the months, the monthly GF was less than 1 (95% confidence interval crossed 1). More than 77% (71/92) of months between April and July for the period 2000–2022 had mean monthly GF > 1 compared to only 16% (30/184) of months between August and March of the same period. June had the highest GF with a mean value of 3.47 indicating that cases would be more than three times higher in the next month (July). The lowest GF was recorded in December with a mean of 0.54 (95% CI: 0.40 to 0.69) indicating that cases in January would be nearly halved compared to the number of cases recorded in December (**Fig. 3**). In the M-K trend analysis, we found a positive trend of reported dengue cases ($p < 0.001$ and $\tau = 0.26$). In Sen's slope test, the slope was 171.67 (95% CI: -46 to 687) with a tau value of 0.26 and p-value of 0.14 indicating a non-significant upward trend in upcoming months.

In the GLM, the estimated effect of each variable is presented as the incidence risk ratio (IRR). The model indicates that dengue cases would rise by 26% with a one-degree centigrade (°C) temperature increase. For each additional centimeter (cm) of rainfall in the first lagged month, the number of dengue cases increased by 8% (IRR= 1.08 [95% CI: 1.08-1.09]), and in the second lagged month increases in cases would be by 17% [IRR=1. 17 (95% CI: 1. 17 -1.18)].

In the ARIMA model, we detected an increasing trend for the first few years, which then started to decline. However, a strong rise in cases was observed after 2018 except for 2020 (the first

year of the COVID-19 pandemic). The forecasted value showed a flat line with reduced variation over time in the number of dengue cases in Bangladesh (**Fig 4**).

Discussion:

Dengue is currently an important public health challenge for Bangladesh. Our analysis showed that the number of DENV cases has increased eight times, deaths have doubled, and the CFR dropped to one-third between the first and second decades of this century. Between these periods, the annual temperature increased by 0.49°C, and annual rainfall decreased by 314 mm, despite changes in the seasonality of rainfall with unusually early or late rainfall outside the typical monsoon season (July-October) (Haider et al. 2014). The monthly growth factor remained above one for four months (April to July) which overlapped the hot and humid period of the year. Monthly mean temperature, monthly first-lagged rainfall, and second-lagged rainfall played a critical role in monthly dengue cases in Bangladesh.

The average increase of 0.49°C temperature added approximately 4,292-degree-hours of equivalent heat per year. This additional heat would favor vector borne disease (VBD) transmission. For DENV, approximately 349-degree-hours equivalent heat is needed to complete the EIP in *Aedes* mosquitoes at 26° C (Focks et al. 1995). Therefore, the addition of 0.49°C temperature shortens the duration of EIP and thus increases the rate of virus dengue transmission. . An 8-fold increase in dengue cases is a possible indication of increases in temperature in the country. Our model identified a significant role of monthly mean temperature, with an additional 1°C temperature increasing the monthly cases by 26%. Earlier studies showed that for every 1°C increase in temperature, dengue cases increased by 61% in Australia, 12-22% in Cambodia, 5% in Vietnam, and 2.6% in Mexico (Soneja et al. 2021). Increasing temperatures

264 can accelerate mosquito population growth and shorten the duration of the EIP of the virus,
265 thereby allowing an increased the biting rate and more frequent transmission (Najmul Haider
266 2018; Couper et al. 2021). Decreased rainfall can increase the risk of dengue,, especially in
267 urbanized areas that may have an inadequate and intermittent water supply during drought (Lowe
268 et al. 2021).

269 Rainfall provides oviposition and larval developmental sites and thereby plays an important role
270 in mosquito population size and pathogen transmission. Although we found a 15% reduction in
271 annual rainfall in the recent decade from the immediate past decade, we detected an increase in
272 rainfall during pre-and-post monsoon seasons, thereby extending the season for mosquitoes and
273 other arthropod vectors. Our model showed that the first and second lagged month's rainfall
274 increased monthly cases by 8% and 17%, respectively. These findings were consistent with
275 earlier studies in Bangladesh that showed that peak dengue cases occurred two months after peak
276 rainfall (Salje et al. 2016) or an additional rainy day per month increased dengue cases by 6% in
277 the succeeding month (Rahman et al. 2020). Similar findings were reported in Vietnam with
278 dengue cases being associated with both first and second-lagged months (Cuong et al. 2011). In
279 the greater part of the capital city Dhaka, there is a shortage of regular supply of water, and thus
280 people attempt to store municipal water when available as well as rainwater. This might facilitate
281 the production of *Aedes* mosquitoes (Akanda et al. 2020). In Timor-Leste, a 47% increase in
282 dengue cases was recorded with an additional 1 mm seasonal rainfall increase (Wangdi et al.
283 2018). These findings are biologically plausible as altered precipitation during pre- and post-
284 monsoon allows extended vector seasons facilitating additional human cases (Yuan et al. 2020).
285 Bangladesh's dengue season is characterized by hot and wet periods between June to August.
286 This is the period with the highest amount of rainfall facilitating *Aedes* abundance (Haider et al.

2023 May 18). The monthly mean growth factor above 1 for April – June indicates that for each of these months, the number of dengue cases will surpass the previous month. Thus, we suggest starting vector control intervention in April in Bangladesh.

Two large dengue outbreaks occurred in Bangladesh in 2019 and 2022, with both characterized by unusual weather patterns and the occurrence of two different DENV serotypes. The 2019 outbreak was characterized by early rainfall of 120 mm in February compared to a historical monthly mean of 20 mm precipitation, along with the introduction DENV-3 (Ahsan et al. 2021). The 2022 outbreak was characterized by the late onset of rainfall with 297 mm of rainfall in October compared to a monthly mean of 156 mm that may have prolonged the vector transmission season and by the introduction of DENV-4 (Haider et al. 2023 May 18). The introduction this new serotype exposed a large naïve population in a densely populated country like Bangladesh. A large proportion of the population had already been infected with one or more serotypes of DENV with more than 80% of people living in Dhaka having antibodies against DENV (Salje et al. 2016). Another study predicted an estimated 40 million people had been infected with DENV nationally, with 2.4 million annual infections (Salje et al. 2019). Thus, any subsequent infections raise the risk of developing severe dengue hemorrhagic fever through antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) (Teo et al. 2023). The deaths of many people in 2022 when DENV-4 was introduced were probably associated with secondary and/or tertiary DENV infection (Haider et al. 2023 May 18).

Our analysis shows that there was a significant monotonic increasing trend of dengue cases in Bangladesh for the period 2000-2022 (M-K trend test), however, the magnitude of the increasing

trend was not significant (Sen's Slope test). This might be due to the large variation of the cases reported in different years. For example, more than 82% of dengue cases (n=202,425) that were recorded in the last 23 years (2000-2023) were reported in the recent five years (2018-2022). This increase in case reporting in recent years might be a true increase in dengue cases or could be the result of the development of the health care system, improved diagnostic system, and inclusion of more hospitals in the surveillance system in Bangladesh (Haider et al. 2023 Sep). Controlling vector-borne diseases in tropical countries where temperatures, humidity, and rainfall remain favorable for mosquitoes during most of the year is a difficult task (Haider et al. 2023 May 18). Concerns have been raised over the development of insecticide resistance (Al-Amin et al. 2020; Ahsan et al. 2021) and the failure of developing a successful dengue vaccine (Wang et al. 2017). The prospect of *Wolbachia*-related intervention is still far from being applied on a national scale considering the expenses and associated technicalities. In this situation, an integrated and holistic vector management plan engaging the local communities is key for controlling *Aedes*-borne diseases, especially in resource-limited countries. Regular destruction of mosquito developmental sites and increasing surveillance for detecting active cases are key to limiting dengue virus infections. The development of a municipal water system that would preclude the need to store water is essential to prevent *Aedes* mosquito production. Continuous active surveillance for DENV cases will enable early detection of cases and the location of outbreaks. Public health authorities will be able to identify areas where the disease is spreading, take immediate action to control mosquito populations, isolate infected patients, and implement public awareness campaigns to educate people about preventive measures. Early detection and response can help prevent the further spread of the disease and reduce its impact.

Several weaknesses may have impacted our study. We relied on the reported number of cases from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website, which mainly relies on passive reporting systems from the selected health facilities in the country (Ahsan et al. 2021). These numbers seem to underestimate the actual number of infections and fever cases. The hospitals included in the surveillance system are only a small fraction of total healthcare facilities in Bangladesh (~5%) where dengue patients can seek healthcare (Haider et al. 2023 Sep). A modeling study based on the national seroprevalence of DENV antibodies predicted an annual infection of 2.4 million people (Salje et al. 2019). Dengue cases are underestimated globally as it is difficult to detect asymptomatic or mild cases that never reach healthcare settings. Although mild cases are missed frequently, the severe and fatal cases would likely visit the hospital and thus be counted as numerators in our estimates. Thus, our estimation did not overlook the worst-case scenario, but may have estimated a higher CFR because of the underestimation of the denominators. Another limitation pertains to our exclusive utilization of weather data from the Dhaka station. Given Bangladesh's relatively small size and the moderate climate variation across the country, we focused our data collection solely on the Dhaka station. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of historical dengue data originates from Dhaka city. We could not use herd immunity data in our model as these data are not available for different serotypes of DENV in Bangladesh. However, earlier studies show that people living in the capital city and larger cities like Chittagong have higher seroprevalence compared to rural areas where the seroprevalence was as low as 3% (Salje et al. 2019). This also illustrates a high risk of antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) through secondary and tertiary infection in large cities. We accept that the increase in dengue cases in the recent decade could be a result of multiple factors that we could not include in the analysis. These factors include the improvement of the

healthcare system which now detects a greater proportion of clinical cases than in the past, the arrival of new serotypes of DENV, and the increased size of the urban population.

Conclusions:

Between the first (2000-2010) and the second decade (2011-2022), dengue cases have increased by 8.3 times, and annual deaths have increased by 2.2 times in Bangladesh. This growth of cases may partly be explained by global warming, with an increase of 0.49°C annual temperature as well as changes in duration and length of the rainy season. Unusual early or late rain in and beyond the monsoon season likely contributed to extending the length of the dengue transmission season in Bangladesh. The monthly mean temperature and monthly total rainfall of the first-lagged month and second-lagged months showed a large influence on the monthly DENV cases in Bangladesh. The mean monthly growth factor remained significantly above one during April-July, which coincided with the hot and rainy season of the country indicating an earlier vector control would benefit the country. The ARIMA model forecasted a continuously increasing trend of DENV cases for the next decade in Bangladesh. We recommend an integrated and holistic vector management plan while engaging the local communities in the elimination of mosquito larval habitats and increasing surveillance for detecting active dengue cases. Proactive surveillance, vector control, and vaccine rollout remain essential public health interventions. In the context of climate change, urbanization, trade, and the movement of infected people, there is a need to operationalize the One Health approach to address dengue fever and other vector-borne diseases in Bangladesh and beyond.

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Author contribution statement: NH ideated the study and all authors helped develop the study outline and protocol. MNH and IK collected the data. NH, MNH, MA and AZ analyzed the data. NH, IK and MNH prepared the first draft manuscript and all authors contributed to several drafts and finalization of the manuscript. All authors approved the final draft and submission of the manuscript.

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Conflict of interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethics statement: This study does not include individual-level data and thus does not require ethical approval. We used publicly available data on Dengue cases and deaths.

Data availability statement: All the dengue data presented in this manuscript are publicly available on Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's Directorate General of Health Services website (<https://dghs.gov.bd/>). The meteorological data were purchased from Bangladesh Meteorological Department and are restricted to use for research purposes only and anyone interested in these data can request Bangladesh Meteorological Department (<https://live3.bmd.gov.bd/>).

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Tables and Figure Legends:

Tables:

Table 1: Comparison of dengue cases, deaths, and weather parameters between the first (2000-20210) and the recent decade (2011-2022) in Bangladesh

Figures:

Fig 1A: Number of dengue cases and deaths over the period 2000-2022, Bangladesh. **1B:** Number of monthly dengue cases and deaths recorded in Bangladesh, 2000-2022.

Fig 2: The boxplot compares monthly rainfall in Dhaka city, Bangladesh between two decades (2000-2010 vs 2011-2022). The bottom and top of the box indicate the first and third quantiles, the band inside the box is the median. The dots outside the box are individual outliers. Most of the months in the second decade had outlier rainfall whereas in the first decade, only the cooler months (Nov-Jan) had some extreme rainfall.

Fig 3: Top: Mean monthly growth factor for the period of 2000-2022. **Bottom:** The Monthly growth factor for the individual year 2000-2022. The horizontal dashed line indicates monthly growth factor 1 (the same number of dengue cases in two subsequent months).

Fig 4: The observed and forecasted number of dengue cases in Bangladesh using the autoregressive moving average (ARIMA) model including a 95% confidence interval.

Two Decades of Endemic Dengue in Bangladesh (2000-2022): Trends, Seasonality, and Impact of Temperature and Rainfall Patterns on Transmission Dynamics

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52

Abstract:

Background: The objectives of this study were to compare dengue virus (DENV) cases, deaths, case-fatality ratio, and meteorological parameters between the first and the recent decade of this century (2000-2010 vs. 2011-2022) and to ~~describe~~understand the trends, seasonality, and impact of change of temperature and rainfall patterns on transmission dynamics of dengue in Bangladesh

Methods: For the period 2000-2022, dengue cases and death data from Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website, and meteorological data from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department were analyzed. A Poisson regression model was performed to identify the impact of meteorological parameters on the monthly dengue cases. A forecast of dengue cases was performed using an autoregressive integrated moving average model.

Results: Over the past 22 years, a total of 244,246 dengue cases were reported including 849 deaths (Case fatality ratio [CFR] =0.34%). The mean annual number of dengue cases increased eight times during the second decade, with 2,216 cases during 2000-2010 vs. 18,321 cases during 2011-2022. The mean annual number of deaths doubled (21 vs. 46), but the overall CFR has decreased by one-third (0.69% vs 0.23%). Concurrently, the annual mean temperature increased by 0.49 °C, and rainfall decreased by 314 mm with altered precipitation seasonality. Monthly mean temperature (Incidence risk ratio [IRR]: 1.26), first-lagged rainfall (IRR: 1.08), and second-lagged rainfall (IRR: 1.17) were significantly associated with monthly dengue cases.

Conclusions: The increased local temperature and changes in rainfall seasonality might have contributed to the increased dengue cases in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Dengue, Bangladesh, Climate change, Temperature, Rainfall

81 **Introduction:**

82 Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne disease (MVD) caused by four distinct serotypes of the
83 dengue virus (DENV) within the family *Flaviviridae* (Simmonds et al. 2017). DENV is
84 transmitted to humans by bites of *Aedes aegypti* (L.) and *Aedes albopictus* (Skuse) (WHO 2009;
85 CDC 2019). DENV is endemic in over 125 countries, and the number of cases globally reported
86 to WHO continues to increase yearly (Bhatt et al. 2013; WHO 2023). Annually, an estimated 390
87 million dengue infections are estimated worldwide, including 96 million clinical cases making
88 DENV one of the most important vector-borne diseases (VBDs) (Murray et al. 2013; Messina et
89 al. 2019; WHO 2023). Most infections (>80%) are self-limiting with no or mild clinical
90 manifestation resulting in lifelong immunity for that serotype (WHO-Bangladesh 2022).
91 However, reinfection with different serotypes, known as secondary or tertiary dengue infection,
92 may result in severe ~~dengue, including with dengue with an~~ increasing ~~the~~ risk of fatal outcome
93 ~~s~~ (Teo et al. 2023).
94 Currently, South and Southeast Asia are ‘hotspots’ of DENV infection, with more than 50% of
95 cases recorded in these regions (WHO South-East Asia 2023). The first DENV outbreak in
96 Bangladesh was reported in 2000, and since then, dengue has become endemic in the country
97 posing a significant health challenge (Sharmin et al. 2015). Over the past few years, the number
98 of dengue cases has been steadily increasing, with significant seasonal and regional variations.
99 Analysis of data from 2000 to 2017 revealed that almost half of the dengue cases occurred during
100 the monsoon (May-August) and the post-monsoon (September-December) seasons (Mutsuddy et
101 al. 2019). Historically ~~the m~~Monsoon has been the primary dengue transmission season in
102 Bangladesh, although the number of dengue cases has increased during the post-monsoon season
103 in recent years (Haider et al. 2021; Hossain et al. 2023).

Bangladesh's hot and humid weather favor²s ~~re the~~ production of a large variety of mosquito species with ~~a record of~~ more than 123 species listed in 2016 (Irish et al. 2016; ~~The most detected larvae in the capital city Dhaka were *Culex*, *Anopheles*, *Toxorhynchites* and *Aedes* and *Mansonia*~~ Bashar et al. 2016). –The most common vectors of ~~the~~ dengue virus, *Ae aegypti* and *Ae albopictus*, were first recorded in 1952 (Asir-Ud-Din M 1952) and recent studies ~~in Dhaka~~ showed a higher Breteau index which measures the number of positive containers per 100 households ~~in Dhaka~~: 30.8 in 1997, 24.6 in 2000, 55.8 in 2011, 28.7 in 2012 and 22.5 in 2013 (Ferdousi et al. 2015; Paul et al. 2018). In 2022, the maximum Breteau index of >50 was recorded for six wards of the Dhaka South City Corporation area (Tawsia Tajmim 2022). The pupal index (PI) which measures the number of pupae per 100 houses was estimated during the monsoon season in several years in Bangladesh: 62.2 in 2011, 153.5 in 2012, and 75.9 in 2013. However, during the dry period, the PI was estimated as 16.7 in 2012 (Paul et al. 2018).

Climate change, including changes in precipitation, temperature, and humidity, as well as rapid unplanned urbanization, were identified as strong indicators of an ecological imbalance that has led to an increase in dengue cases in Bangladesh (Mutsuddy et al. 2019). These changes ~~could eventually extend suggest that the~~ dengue transmission season ~~could eventually extend~~ year-round, with a chance of outbreaks occurring at any time of the year. Identifying trends and seasonality in dengue cases ~~mayean~~ aid health authorities and relevant public and private administrations in effectively allocating resources to control the spread of the DENV through vector control. The objectives of our current study were to: i) compare the annual and monthly ~~number of~~ dengue cases ~~and deaths~~ between 2000 and 2022, ii) identify the overall trend and seasonality of dengue cases, iii) quantify the impact of weather parameters on the ~~number of~~ monthly dengue cases, and iv) forecast the annual ~~number of~~ dengue cases for the next decade.

127

128 **Methods:**

129 **Data sources:**

130 The current dengue surveillance in Bangladesh is coordinated by the Management Information
131 System (MIS) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh (Haider et al. 2023
132 Sep). The surveillance includes ~~the~~ hospitalized patients diagnosed as infected with ~~the~~ dengue
133 virus ~~in the country~~ primarily from government hospitals except in the capital city Dhaka, where
134 more than 57 private hospitals are included in addition to 20 public hospitals. Outside the capital
135 city Dhaka, the central district hospital of ~~each~~ 64 districts and medical college hospitals are also
136 included in the surveillance system. We collected data on the number of reported dengue cases
137 and deaths from the publicly shared database of ~~the~~ MIS from January 2000 to December 2022.
138 ~~We used the definition of dengue cases used by the~~ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,
139 Bangladesh ~~defines dengue cases. Dengue cases were identified~~ based on clinical symptoms
140 (including fever and rash) and/or laboratory tests for IgM or IgG antibodies to DENV₁ and
141 nonstructural 1 protein (NS-1) of DENV (Ahsan et al. 2021).
142 We used three-hourly temperature and daily rainfall data from the Bangladesh Meteorological
143 Department (BMD) over the period 2000–2022 ~~from~~ the meteorological station located in
144 Mirpur, Dhaka (Lat 23.46, Lon 90.23). Given Bangladesh's relatively small land size and ~~the~~
145 moderate climate variation across the country, we focused ~~our~~ data ~~collection~~ solely on the
146 Dhaka station. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of historical dengue cases (>90%) have
147 originated~~d~~ from Dhaka city (Sharmin et al. 2018).

148 **Procedures**

The monthly number of reported dengue cases was used as the primary outcome variable. Two weather variables, - temperature and rainfall, - were used as the covariates for the regression analysis. In addition, ~~two lagged variables~~ monthly rainfall lagged by 1 or 2 preceding months ~~in lag 1 and lag 2~~ were also used as predictors for the number of monthly dengue cases ~~to capture the impact of those meteorological parameters. A lagged variable refers to a value from a prior time point. When studying the meteorological impact on dengue cases, it's crucial to consider the time-series effect of lag variables: lag 1 refers to the data from the preceding month, and lag 2 pertains to the data from two months prior.~~

Statistical analysis

We analyzed the monthly dengue cases and meteorological data for the period of 2000-2022. We ~~used~~ consider 2010 (the median year) ~~to as a divider of the period 2000-2022, as the year the median year of the duration~~. Then, we compared the number of dengue cases, deaths, and weather parameters during in the two decades (2000-2010 and 2011-2022) using a paired sample t-test, aimed at ~~examining and~~ comparing trends, developments, and changes between over these ~~specific~~ periods. In the first stage, descriptive analyses were conducted to determine the characteristics of confirmed dengue cases and deaths with mean, and interquartile range (IQR) in each year and each month for the entire period. Next, we calculated the monthly growth factor (GF) of dengue cases by dividing the number of dengue cases reported in each month by the number of dengue cases reported in the previous month and repeating this process for each month from 2000 to 2022 (Haider et al. 2021). The formula for the growth factor can be given by

$$GF_t = \frac{N_{t+1} + 1}{N_t + 1}$$

Commented [wkr1]: This differs from your case definition which includes clinical as well as confirmed cases?

Commented [NH2R2]: Agree, deleted the word 'confirmed'

171 where N_t indicates the number of dengue cases in t^{th} month. To avoid the occurrence of zeros in
172 some months, we added 1 to the total number of cases for each month. ~~This allows us to obtain a~~
173 ~~real-valued measurement of the GF for the above equation.~~ The distribution of the GF was
174 skewed; therefore, we used the natural log transformation before the data was further examined.
175 However, we have also performed a reverse transformation of the log (GF) values by back-
176 transforming exponentiating values to the original scale for ease of interpretation (Haider et al.
177 2021). A monthly GF greater than 1 indicates that the number of dengue cases would be more
178 than the number of dengue cases of the previous month, while a GF less than 1 means that the
179 number of dengue cases in a new month would be less than the previous month. For example, if
180 there are 100 cases in January, the number of dengue cases in February would be 200 when the
181 value of GF is 2.0 or 50 cases when the value of GF is 0.5 in January (Haider et al. 2021)
182 We performed forecasting using the autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) model.
183 The ARIMA model is a data-driven, exploratory strategy that enableds us to fit a suitable model
184 and forecast values. The ARIMA model consists of autoregressive (p) terms, differencing (d)
185 terms, and moving average (q) operations, and it is denoted as ARIMA (p, d, q) (Kumar and
186 Susan 2020). To select the appropriate autoregressive and moving average orders, the
187 autocorrelation function (ACF) and partial autocorrelation function (PACF) were examined.
188 Additionally, the differencing parameter, represented by "d," indicated the number of times the
189 time series was different to achieve stationarity. ~~An ARIMA (p, d, q) process refers to an~~
190 ~~autoregressive moving average (ARMA) model that has been differenced "d" times to obtain~~
191 ~~stationarity~~ (Hasan et al. 2021). By removing high-frequency noise from the data, the model
192 discovers local patterns by assuming that the time series values are linearly related. We also
193 conducted a Mann-Kendall (M-K) trend analysis to determine possible upward or downward

- Commented [wkr3]:** Natural log base e or base 10?
- Commented [NH4R4]:** We have clarified this. This is natural log.

The log10 base was only used in displaying Fig 1 (A and B). No analysis were conducted using log10 value.

For the estimation of GF, we used natural log and backtarnformed it.

We never used the word 'log10' in this manuscript except in Fig 1 which was necessary for displaying only.
- Commented [wkr5]:** Top panel of Fig. 3?
- Commented [NH6R6]:** Both top and bottom panel
- Commented [wkr7]:** But these values were arithmetic and not ln or log transformed?
- Commented [NH8R8]:** The GF that we shared is the arithmetic value after the back transformation.

So, the interpretation is simple, in arithmetic term.
- Commented [wkr9]:** Seems redundant to previous sentence.
- Commented [NH10R10]:** Removed

trends (Yue and Pilon 2004). The null hypothesis posits no monotonic trend, while the alternative hypothesis suggests the presence of a trend, which could be positive, negative, or non-null. We also performed Sen's slope test to assess variations in annual dengue cases and deaths. The slope greater than 0 indicates an upward trend and less than 0 indicates a downward trend of a given period (Sen 1968).

We then used a time series count generalized linear model (GLM), more specifically, a time-series Poisson regression model, to determine whether the meteorological factors were associated with the change in dengue cases over time (Sumi et al. 2021). Monthly dengue cases were utilized as the outcome variable in this model, along with data from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) on temperature and rainfall. We have estimated the degree-hour generated by the additional temperature each year in Bangladesh. To compare this with the extrinsic incubation period of the dengue virus in *Aedes mosquito*, we estimated the degree-hour required to ~~complete~~ accomplish the extrinsic incubation period (EIP) at 26° C using the mathematical formula $[-0.1393 + 0.008 * \text{Temp}]$ ~~suggested~~ presented by Focks et al. (1995) (Focks et al. 1995). We used the statistical program RStudio, version 3.5.2.2 for the analyses (R Core Team 2022).

Results:

Between 2000 and 2022, DGHS reported a total of 244,246 dengue cases, with an annual mean of 10,619 cases (interquartile range [IQR]: 859.5-5805.5), including 849 fatal outcomes with a case-fatality ratio (CFR) of 0.34%. Between 2000 to 2010, the mean annual number of dengue cases was 2,216 (IQR: 480-3182) which increased by 8 times in the following decade (2011-2022) at 18,321 (IQR: 1405-28429, $p=0.22$) (**Table 1**). Between these two periods, the mean

number of annual deaths due to DENV cases increased by 2.2 times, from 21.2 to 46.6 cases (p=0.85). However, the CFR of DENV cases decreased slightly from 0.69% to 0.23% (p=0.08) (Table 1).

The highest monthly average number of cases was recorded in August (n=3,407 cases) and the lowest was in March (n=6.7 cases) (Fig 1B). The highest number of annual cases was reported in 2019 with 101,354. The highest number of deaths was recorded in 2022 with 281 deaths, which was 35% of total deaths recorded in the past 23 years in Bangladesh (Fig 1). Most (65%, n=550) of the dengue-related deaths were recorded after 2018 (Fig 1).

The average annual temperature was 26.35 °C (SD=0.49) during the first decade (2000-2010) and 26.84 °C (SD=0.37) during the recent decade (2011-2022) (Table 1). The increase of 0.49-°C temperature was equivalent to 4,292 degree-hours/year of heat (365 days X 24 hours X 0.49-°C). For dengue virus transmission, approximately 349-degree-hours of equivalent heat is needed to complete the EIP of DENV in the Aedes mosquito at 26° C (Focks et al. 1995). The annual total rainfall decreased by 314 mm between two decades, from 2078.6 mm to 1764.5 mm (Table 1), of which 308 mm decreased during the monsoon (July-October) season and only 6 mm decreased during the non-monsoon period. However, during pre-and-post monsoon season, rainfall (more than 3rd quantile value of monthly rainfall for the decade) increased in the second decade (Fig 2).

The overall mean GF for the number of dengue cases per month was 1.37 (SD=0.86). However, in four months (April-July), the monthly GF was above one (lower 95% confidence interval >1), while for the rest of the months, the monthly GF was less than 1 (95% confidence interval crossed 1). More than 77% (71/92) of months between April and July for the period 2000–2022 had mean monthly GF > 1 compared to only 16% (30/184) of months between August and

Commented [wkr11]: Increase font size of panel labels A and B.

Commented [NH12R12]: we have increased the font size now.

March of the same period. June had the highest GF with a mean value of 3.47 indicating that cases would be more than three times higher in the next month (July). The lowest GF was recorded in December with a mean of 0.54 (95% CI: 0.40 to 0.69) indicating that cases in January would be nearly halved compared to the number of cases recorded in December (Fig. 3). In the M-K trend analysis, we found a positive trend of reported dengue cases ($p < 0.001$ and $\tau = 0.26$). In Sen's slope test, the slope was 171.67 (95% CI: -46 to 687) with a tau value of 0.26 and p-value of 0.14 indicating an non-significant upward trend in upcoming months. In the GLM, the estimated effect of each variable is presented as the incidence risk ratio (IRR). The model indicates that dengue cases would rise by 26% with a one-degree centigrade ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) temperature increase. For each additional centimeter (cm) of rainfall in the first lagged month, the number of dengue cases increased by 8% (IRR= 1.08 [95% CI: 1.08-1.09]), and in the second lagged month increases in cases would be by 17% [IRR=1. 17 (95% CI: 1. 17 -1.18)]. In the ARIMA model, we detected an increasing trend for the first few years, which then started to decline. However, a strong rise in cases was observed after 2018 except for 2020 (the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic). The forecasted value showed a flat line with reduced variation over time continuous fluctuation by increasing trend in the number of DENV dengue cases in Bangladesh over time (Fig 4). For dengue virus transmission, approximately 349-degree-hours equivalent heat is needed to accomplish the EIP of dengue virus in Aedes mosquito at 26°C

Discussion:

Dengue is currently an important public health challenge for Bangladesh. Our analysis showed that the number of DENV cases has increased eight times, deaths have doubled, and the CFR dropped to one-third between the first and second decades of this century, in Bangladesh. Between these periods, the annual temperature increased by 0.49°C , and annual rainfall

Commented [wkr13]: By eye, these two panels do not seem to be in agreement. In the below panel there seems to be a decreasing trend after May whereas in the upper panel Jun has the highest value?

Commented [NH14R14]: The upper panel is just an aggregated mean value of the lower panel. We checked the data and it seems okay to us.

Commented [wkr15]: So the slope had $p = 0.14$ which was not significant? If not significant was there truly an upward trend?

Commented [NH16R16]: True, the p-value shows a non-significant for the magnitude of the trend. We mentioned this. However, the M-K trend was significant which indicate whether there was any monotonic trend or not.

Commented [wkr17]: I disagree: the ARIMA predictions in Fig. 4 seem relatively 'flat lined' with reduced variation over time?

Commented [NH18R18]: Thanks, we changed the wording.

263 decreased by 314 mm, despite changes in the seasonality of rainfall with unusually early or late
264 rainfall outside the typical monsoon season (July-October) (Haider et al. 2014). The monthly
265 growth factor remained above one for four months (April to July) which overlapped the hot and
266 humid period of the year. Monthly mean temperature, monthly first-lagged rainfall, and second-
267 lagged rainfall played a critical role in monthly dengue cases in Bangladesh.

268
269 The average increase of 0.49-°C temperature adds approximately 4,292-degree-hours of
270 equivalent heat per year. This additional heat would favor vector borne disease (VBD)
271 transmission. For DENVdengue virus transmission, approximately 349-degree-hours equivalent
272 heat is needed to complete the EIP~~accomplish the extrinsic incubation period~~ in *Aedes*
273 mosquitoes at 26° C (Focks et al. 1995). Therefore, the addition of 0.49°C temperature shortens
274 the duration of EIP and thus increases the rate of virus dengue transmission. ~~will add the burden~~
275 ~~of more than 12 generations of infectious mosquitoes in the environment of Bangladesh.~~ An 8-
276 fold increase in dengue cases is a possible indication of such changes in increases in temperature
277 in the country. Our model identified a significant role of monthly mean temperature, with an
278 additional 1-°C temperature increasing the monthly cases by 26%. Earlier studies showed that for
279 every 1-°C increase in temperature, dengue cases increased by 61% in Australia, 12-22% in
280 Cambodia, 5% in Vietnam, and 2.6% in Mexico (Soneja et al. 2021). Increasing temperatures
281 can accelerate mosquito population growth reproduction and shorten the duration of the EIP of
282 the virus, thereby allowing a faster transmission potential, increasing an increased the biting rate
283 and more frequent transmission ~~but decreasing the daily survival probability of mosquitoes in the~~
284 ~~long run expanding the geographic range of mosquitoes, impacting global disease transmission~~
285 ~~dynamics~~-(Najmul Haider 2018; Couper et al. 2021). The draughtDecreased rainfall can increase

Commented [wkr19]: The EIP is NOT the duration of the mosquito generation but rather the time required from infection to first transmission. The EIP becomes shorter and the rate of virus replication increases with warmer temperature. Although not done with DENV, see our paper on WNV in JME 43: 309-317. I don't think you can really relate increases in the EIP directly to cycles of transmission and certainly not mosquito generations.

Commented [NH20R20]: Thank you for this comment. We wanted to indicate that this additional temperature is equivalent to the heat needed to complete the EIP 12 times in the *Aedes* mosquitoes. However, we realized that the EIP is not a continuous process, and such an argument might create confusion. We have deleted the wording related to the generation and revised the wording now. Also, thank you for sharing the article on WNV- very useful findings. "Therefore, the addition of 0.49°C temperature shortens the duration of EIP and thus increases the rate of virus dengue transmission".

Commented [wkr21]: Reproduction is sex and oviposition. Don't you mean increases in the number of mosquitoes here?

Commented [NH22R22]: Agree .. And changed to the suggested wording ..

the risk of dengue, ~~with different delays~~, especially in urbanized areas that may have an inadequate shortage and intermittent water supply during drought (Lowe et al. 2021). Rainfall provides oviposition and larval developmental sites and thereby plays an important role in mosquito ~~borne~~ population size and pathogen transmission. Although we found a 15% reduction in annual rainfall in the recent decade from the immediate past decade, we detected an increase in ~~unusually high~~ rainfall induring pre-and-post monsoon seasons, thereby extending the season for mosquitoes and other arthropod vectors. Our model showed that ~~both~~ the first and ~~the~~ second lagged month's rainfall increased monthly cases by 8% and 17%, respectively. These findings were consistent with earlier studies in Bangladesh that showed that peak dengue cases occurred two months after ~~the~~ peak rainfall (Salje et al. 2016) or an additional rainy day per month increased dengue cases by 6% in the succeeding month (Rahman et al. 2020). Similar findings were reported in Vietnam with dengue cases being associated with both first and second-lagged months (Cuong et al. 2011). In the greater part of the capital city Dhaka, there is a shortage of regular supply of water, and thus people attempt to store municipal water ~~from the~~ daily supply when available as well as ~~from~~ rainwater. This might facilitate the production breeding of *Aedes* mosquitoes (Akanda et al. 2020). In Timor-Leste, a 47% increase in dengue cases was recorded with an additional 1 mm seasonal rainfall increase (Wangdi et al. 2018). These findings are biologically plausible as altered precipitation during pre- and post-monsoon allows extended vector seasons facilitating additional human cases (Yuan et al. 2020). Bangladesh's dengue season is characterized by hot and wet periods between June to August. This is the period with the highest amount of rainfall facilitating *Aedes* abundance ~~in the country~~ (Haider et al. 2023 May 18). The monthly mean growth factor above 1 for April – June indicates

308 that for each of these months, the number of dengue cases will surpass the previous month. Thus,
309 we suggest starting vector control intervention in April in Bangladesh.

310
311 Two large dengue outbreaks occurred in Bangladesh in 2019 and 2022, with both characterized
312 by unusual weather patterns and the occurrence of two different DENV serotypes. The 2019
313 outbreak was characterized by early rainfall of 120 mm in February compared to a historical
314 monthly mean of 20 mm precipitation, along with the introduction ~~of a new serotype of~~ DENV-3
315 ~~in the country~~ (Ahsan et al. 2021). The 2022 outbreak was characterized by the late onset of
316 rainfall with 297 mm of rainfall in October compared to a monthly mean of 156 mm that may
317 have prolonged the vector transmission season and by the introduction of ~~a new serotype,~~
318 DENV-4, ~~in the country-~~ (Haider et al. 2023 May 18). The ~~introduction~~~~occurrence of this~~ new
319 serotype exposed a large naïve population in a densely populated country like Bangladesh. A
320 large proportion of the population had already been infected with one or more serotypes of
321 DENV with more than 80% of people living in Dhaka having antibodies against DENV (Salje et
322 al. 2016). Another study predicted an estimated 40 million people had been infected with DENV
323 nationally, with 2.4 million annual infections (Salje et al. 2019). Thus, any subsequent infections
324 raise the risk of developing severe dengue hemorrhagic fever through antibody-dependent
325 enhancement (ADE) (Teo et al. 2023). The deaths of many people in 2022 when DENV-4 was
326 introduced were probably associated with secondary and/or tertiary DENV infection (Haider et
327 al. 2023 May 18).

328
329 Our analysis shows that there was a significant monotonic increasing trend of dengue cases in
330 Bangladesh for the period 2000-2022 (M-K trend test), however, the magnitude of the increasing

Commented [wkr23]: With this scenario one would expect an increase in fatalities due to DENV shock syndrome? By your CFR decreased?
Commented [NH24R24]: Agree . Please read the discussion added to explain the trend and magnitude od dengue cases. Just below this paragraph.

This increase in case reporting in recent years might be a true increase in dengue cases or could be the result of the development of the health care system, improved diagnostic system, and inclusion of more hospitals in the surveillance system in Bangladesh (Haider et al. 2023 Sep).

trend was not significant (Sen's Slope test). This might be due to the large variation of the cases reported in different years. For example, more than 82% of dengue cases (n=202,425) that were recorded in the last 23 years (2000-2023) were reported in the recent five years (2018-2022). This increase in case reporting in recent years might be a true increase in dengue cases or could be the result of the development of the health care system, improved diagnostic system, and inclusion of more hospitals in the surveillance system in Bangladesh (Haider et al. 2023 Sep).

Controlling vector-borne diseases in tropical countries where temperatures, humidity, and rainfall remain favorable for mosquitoes during most periods of the year is a difficult task (Haider et al. 2023 May 18). Concerns have been raised over the development of insecticide resistance (Al-Amin et al. 2020; Ahsan et al. 2021) and the failure of developing a successful dengue vaccine (Wang et al. 2017). The prospect of *Wolbachia*-related intervention is still far from being applied on a national scale considering the expenses and associated technicalities. In this situation, an integrated and holistic vector management plan while engaging the local communities is key for controlling *Aedes*-borne diseases, especially in resource-limited countries. Regular destruction of mosquito developmental sites and increasing surveillance for detecting active cases are key to limiting/controlling dengue virus infections. The development of a municipal water system that would preclude the need to store water is highly essential to prevent *Aedes* mosquito reproduction. Continuous active surveillance for DENV cases will enable early detection of cases and the location of outbreaks. Public health authorities will be able to identify areas where the disease is spreading, take immediate action to control mosquito populations, isolate infected patients, and implement public awareness campaigns to educate

353 people about preventive measures. Early detection and response can help prevent the further
354 spread of the disease and reduce its impact ~~on individuals and communities~~.
355
356 Several weaknesses may have impacted our study. We relied on the reported number of cases
357 from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare’s website, which mainly relies on passive
358 reporting systems from the selected health facilities in the country (Ahsan et al. 2021). These
359 numbers seem to underestimate the actual number of infections and fever cases. The hospitals
360 included in the surveillance system are only a small fraction of total healthcare facilities in
361 Bangladesh (~5%) where dengue patients can seek healthcare (Haider et al. 2023 Sep). A
362 modeling study based on the national seroprevalence of DENV antibodies predicted an annual
363 infection of 2.4 million people (Salje et al. 2019). Dengue cases ~~are~~ underestimated globally as
364 it is difficult to detect asymptomatic or mild cases that never reach healthcare settings. Although
365 mild cases are missed ~~more~~-frequently, the severe and fatal cases would likely visit the hospital
366 and thus be counted as numerators in our estimation ~~es~~. Thus, our estimation did not overlook the
367 worst-case scenario, but may have estimated a higher CFR because of the underestimation of the
368 denominators. Another limitation pertains to our exclusive utilization of weather data from the
369 Dhaka station. Given Bangladesh's relatively small size and the moderate climate variation
370 across the country, we focused our data collection solely on the Dhaka station. Furthermore, a
371 substantial proportion of historical dengue data originates from Dhaka city. We could not use
372 herd immunity data in our model as these data are not available for different serotypes of DENV
373 in Bangladesh. However, earlier studies show that people living in the capital city and larger
374 cities like Chittagong have higher seroprevalence compared ~~to~~ ~~whereas in the~~ rural areas ~~where~~
375 ~~the seroprevalence was~~ as low as 3% ~~antibodies for DENV~~ (Salje et al. 2019). This also

illustrates a high risk of antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) through secondary and tertiary infection in large cities. We ~~also~~ accept that the increase in dengue cases in the recent decade could be a result of multiple factors that we could not include in the analysis. These factors include the improvement of the healthcare system which now detects a greater proportion of clinical cases than in the past, the arrival of new serotypes of DENV, and the increased size of the urban population.

Conclusions:

Between the first (2000-2010) and the second decade (2011-2022), dengue cases have increased by 8.3 times, and annual deaths have increased by 2.2 times in Bangladesh. This growth of cases may partly be explained by global warming, with an increase of 0.49°C annual temperature as well as changes in duration and length of the rainy season. Unusual ~~rain including~~ early or late rain in and beyond the monsoon season likely contributed to extending the length of the dengue transmission season in Bangladesh. The monthly mean temperature and monthly total rainfall of the first-lagged month and second-lagged months showed a large influence on the monthly DENV cases in Bangladesh. The mean monthly growth factor remained significantly above one during April-July, which coincided with the hot and rainy season of the country indicating an earlier vector control would benefit the country. The ARIMA model forecasted a continuously increasing trend of DENV cases for the next decade in Bangladesh. We recommend an integrated and holistic vector management plan while engaging the local communities in the elimination of mosquito larval habitats and increasing surveillance for detecting active dengue cases. Proactive surveillance, vector control, and vaccine rollout remain essential public health interventions. In the context of climate change, urbanization, trade, and the movement of

Commented [wkr25]: Do you feel this is necessary? This section largely repeats your discussion and really adds little to your paper.

Commented [NH26R26]: We find this section very useful. Especially for the policymakers who used to read the conclusion to get a quick idea. getting citations. This also helps in increasing the visibility of the paper. In our opinion, we would like to keep the section, but won't disagree to delete if the editor like us to delete this.

399 infected people, there is a need to operationalize the One Health approach to address dengue
400 fever and other vector-borne diseases in Bangladesh and beyond.

401
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403
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412
413 **Author contribution statement:** NH ideated the study and all authors helped develop the study
414 outline and protocol. MNH and IK collected the data. NH, MNH, MA and AZ analyzed the data.
415 NH, IK and MNH prepared the first draft manuscript and all authors contributed to several drafts
416 and finalization of the manuscript. All authors approved the final draft and submission of the
417 manuscript.

418
419 **Financial Support:** There was no funding for this research.

420 **Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

421 **Ethics statement:** This study does not include individual-level data and thus does not require
422 ethical approval. We used publicly available data on Dengue cases and deaths.

423 **Data availability statement:** All the dengue data presented in this manuscript are publicly
424 available on Bangladesh’s Ministry of Health and Family Welfare’s Directorate General of

425 Health Services website (<https://dghs.gov.bd/>). The meteorological data were purchased from
426 Bangladesh Meteorological Department and are restricted to use for research purposes only and
427 anyone interested in these data can request Bangladesh Meteorological Department
428 (<https://live3.bmd.gov.bd/>).

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Commented [wkr27]: These do not use current JME/ESA format and will have to be redone. See examples of edits needed to your data base.

Commented [NH28R28]: Thanks, done now.

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577 **Tables and Figure Legends:**

578

579 **Tables:**

580 **Table 1: Comparison of dengue cases, deaths, and weather parameters between the first**
581 **(2000-20210) and the recent decade (2011-2022) in Bangladesh**

582

583 **Figures:**

584 **Fig 1A:** Number of dengue cases and deaths over the period 2000-2022, Bangladesh. **1B:**
585 Number of monthly dengue cases and deaths recorded in Bangladesh, 2000-2022.

586

587 **Fig 2:** The boxplot compares monthly rainfall in Dhaka city, Bangladesh between two decades
588 (2000-2010 vs 2011-2022). The bottom and top of the box indicate the first and third quantiles,
589 the band inside the box is the median. The dots outside the box are individual outliers. Most of
590 the months in the second decade had outlier rainfall whereas in the first decade, only the cooler
591 months (Nov-Jan) had some extreme rainfall.

592

593 **Fig 3: Top:** Mean monthly growth factor for the period of 2000-2022. **Bottom:** The Monthly
594 growth factor for the individual year 2000-2022. The horizontal dashed line indicates monthly
595 growth factor 1 (the same number of dengue cases in two subsequent months).

596

597 **Fig 4:** The observed and forecasted number of dengue cases in Bangladesh using the
598 autoregressive moving average (ARIMA) model including a 95% confidence interval.

599

Response to the Subject Editor and Reviewers

Manuscript reference number: JME-2023-0210

Manuscript title: Two Decades of Endemic Dengue in Bangladesh (2000-2022): Trends, Seasonality, and Impact of Temperature and Rainfall Patterns on Transmission Dynamics

We would like to thank the Subject Editor and Reviewers for their constructive comments and guidance to improve the paper. Following up on the Editor's and reviewers' suggestions and recommendations, we have revised the manuscript, and each modification has been highlighted in red. We have modified the whole paper as per the Subject Editor and reviewers' suggestions. We have also corrected the grammatical mistakes and proofread the manuscript line-by-line. Besides, we have corrected all typos and minor mistakes in the presentation of the manuscript that the reviewer brought to our attention. Our detailed response is found below. We strongly believe that the Editor's and reviewers' comments have helped us to improve the presentation, readability, and technicalities of the manuscript. We thank you again for your valuable comments.

Response to the Subject Editor:

1. Reference format. The will need to be revised to follow JME/ESA formatting as indicated below.

Response: We used Mendeley for formatting the references. Now, we have used the ESA format (Author, year) and corrected it manually for the JME format.

2. Transformation. I was confused about which log was used for transformation and backtransformation for your figures.

Response: Sorry for this confusion.

We used log10 for only displaying Fig 1: dengue cases by year (Fig 1A) and months (Fig 1B). This is because data are so divergent (in some years there were only a few hundred cases, whereas in some years there were more than 100,000 cases) which makes the figure awkward looking (and difficult to see many years' cases). The log10 was never used in any analysis and were never mentioned this in the manuscript.

We used the natural log for the estimation of the monthly growth factor (GF). We also backtransformed the value before analysis. The details are here:

“The distribution of the GF was skewed; therefore, we used the natural log transformation before the data was further examined. However, we have also performed a reverse transformation of the

log (GF) values by back transforming exponentiating values to the original scale for ease of interpretation ” Page 7.

3. Statistics. Some of your between-decade comparisons were NOT significant ($P > 0.05$); i.e., the variation about the means overlapped. Therefore, were the means/trends really different?

Response: Thank you for this comment. We realized that there is some confusion created between the results of the M-K trend test and Sen's slope test. In our analysis, the M-K trend test was significant while the Sen's Slope test was not significant.

The difference between the M-K trend and Sen's slope test is that in the M-K trend test, we can detect whether there is any monotonic nature of the trend existing in time series data. On the other hand, Sen's slope test shows the magnitude of the increase or decrease in the trend. Our findings show there was a significant monotonic increasing trend of dengue cases in Bangladesh ($p < 0.05$ in the M-K trend test), however, their magnitude was not significant ($p = 0.14$, in Sen's Slope test).

Please see the results of both the M-K trend and Sen's slope test on page 11. “In the M-K trend analysis, we found a positive trend of reported dengue cases ($p < 0.001$ and $\tau = 0.26$).” “In Sen's slope test, the slope was 171.67 (95% CI: -46 to 687) with a tau value of 0.26 and p-value of 0.14 indicating a non-significant upward trend in upcoming months.”

We have now added sentences to interpret the findings of these two tests in the discussion. (Page 13).

“Our analysis shows that there was a significant monotonic increasing trend of dengue cases in Bangladesh for the period 2000-2022 (M-K trend test), however, the magnitude of the increasing trend was not significant (Sen's Slope test). This might be due to the large variation of the cases reported in different years. For example, more than 82% of dengue cases ($n = 202,425$) that were recorded in the last 23 years (2000-2023) were reported in the recent five years (2018-2022). This increase in case reporting in recent years might be a true increase in dengue cases or could be the result of the development of the health care system, improved diagnostic system, and inclusion of more hospitals in the surveillance system in Bangladesh.”

4. Impact of heat on the EIP. In addition to the semantics, I find the logic here difficult to follow. I understand the calculations, but I'm not sure using an average for 26C is relevant or if this can be used to calculate the number of 'extra' EIPs per year?

Response:

Thank you for this comment. We wanted to indicate that this additional temperature is equivalent to the heat required to complete the EIP 12 times in the *Aedes* mosquitoes. However, we realized that the EIP is not a continuous process [in a scale of a year], and such an argument might create confusion. We have deleted the wording related to the generation and revised the wording now. Also, thank you for sharing the article on WNV- very useful findings.

“Therefore, the addition of 0.49°C temperature shortens the duration of EIP and thus increases the rate of virus dengue transmission”.

Tables

Table 1:

	First decade (2000-2010)	Recent decade (2011-2022)	p-value
Mean annual dengue cases (interquartile range [IQR])	2216.64 (480-3182)	18321.92 (1405-28429)	0.219
Mean annual dengue deaths (IQR)	21.18 (0.0-28.5)	46.58 (3.0-105.0)	0.853
Mean Case-fatality ratio (\pm SD)	0.69 (\pm 0.79)	0.23 (\pm 13)	0.08
Mean annual temperature $^{\circ}$ C (\pm SD)	26.35 (\pm 0.49)	26.84 (\pm 0.37)	<0.001
Mean annual rainfall in mm (\pm SD)	2078.66 (\pm 459.68)	1764.50 (\pm 448.32)	0.188

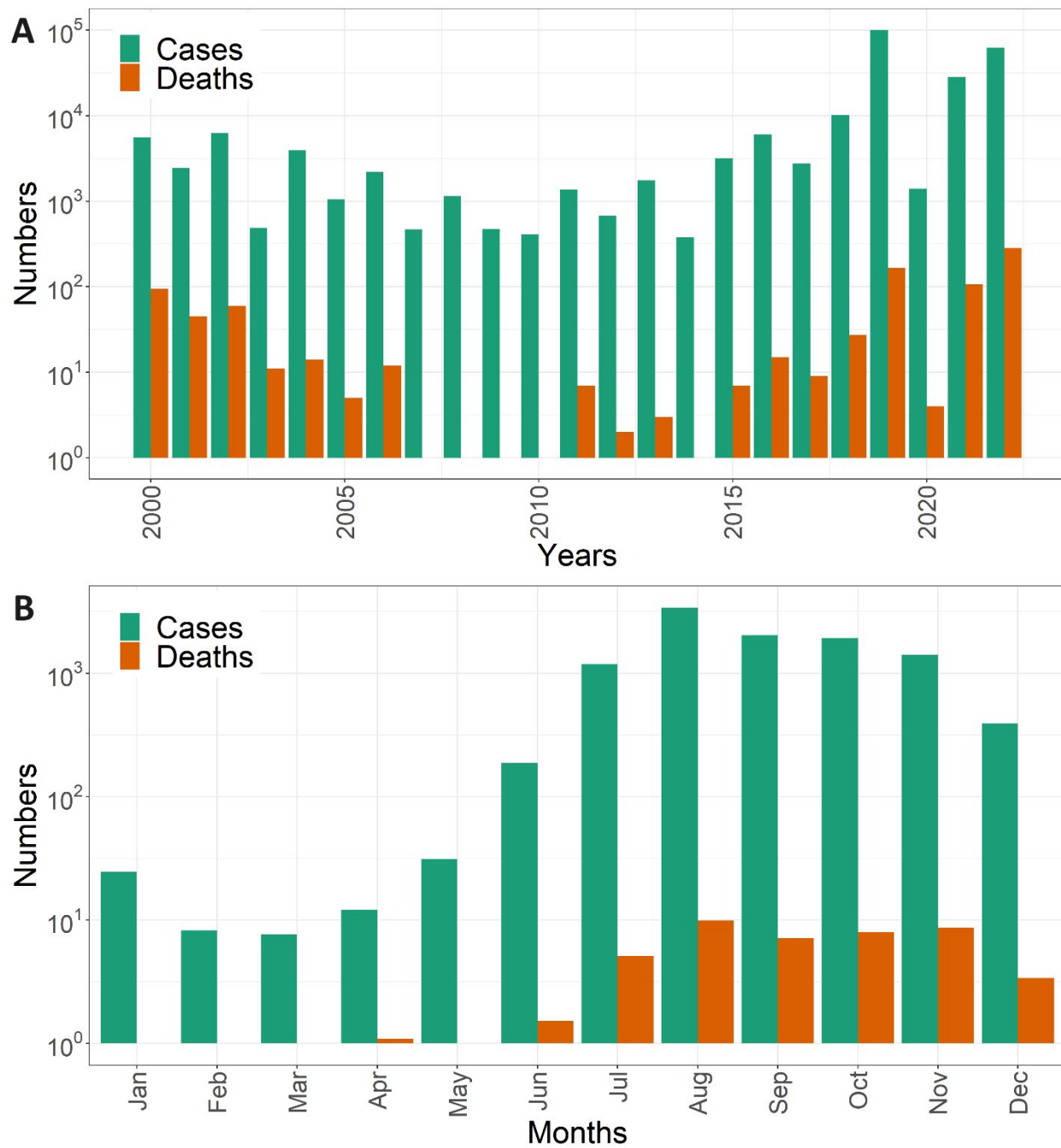
Figures**Fig 1:**

Fig 2:

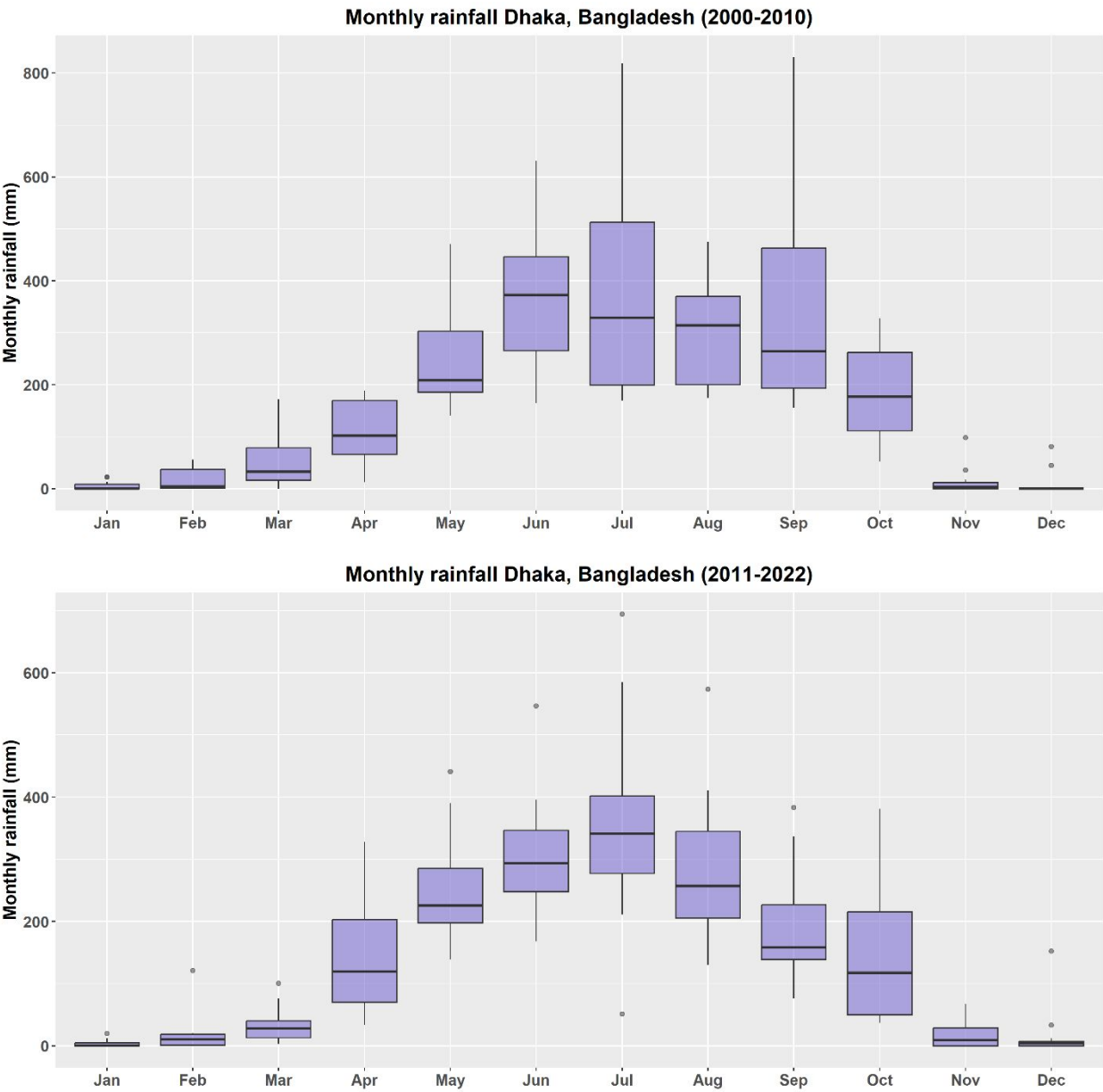


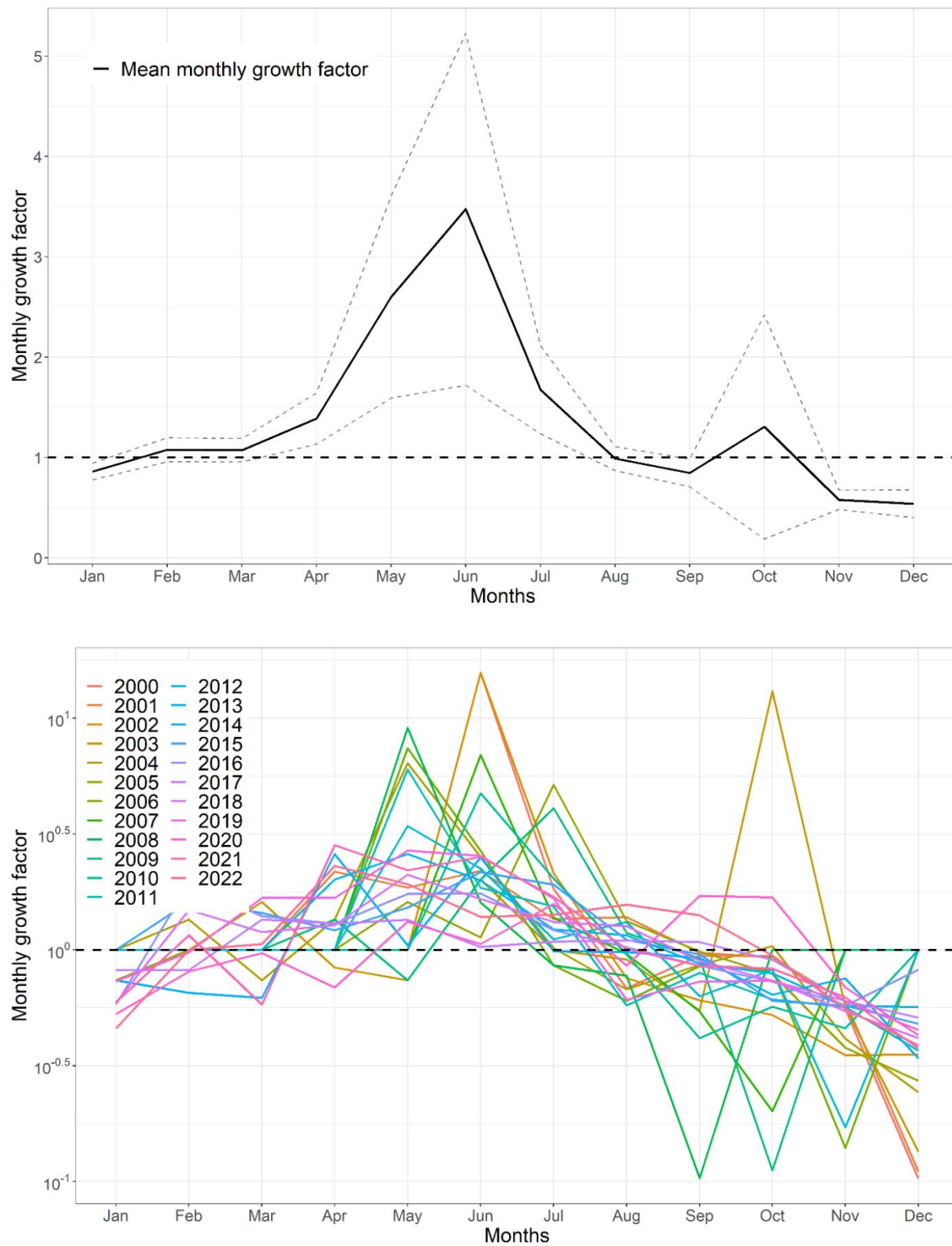
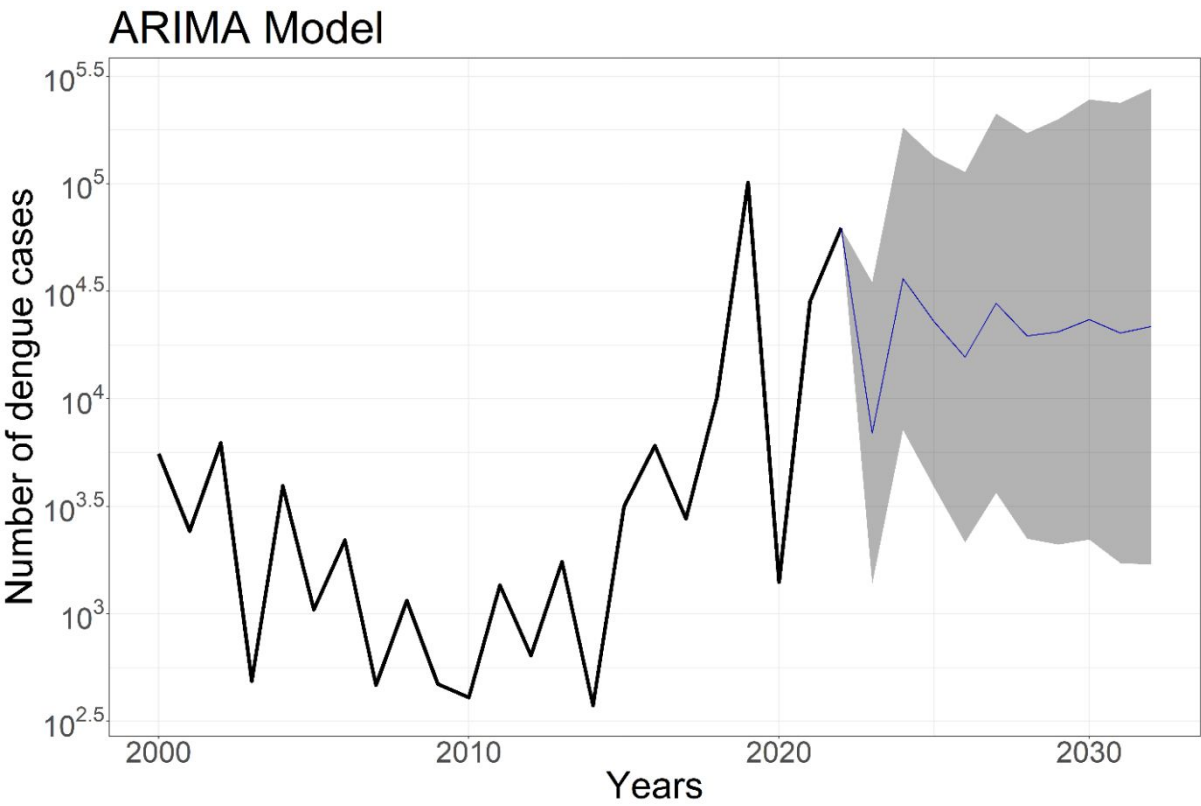
Fig 3:

Fig 4:



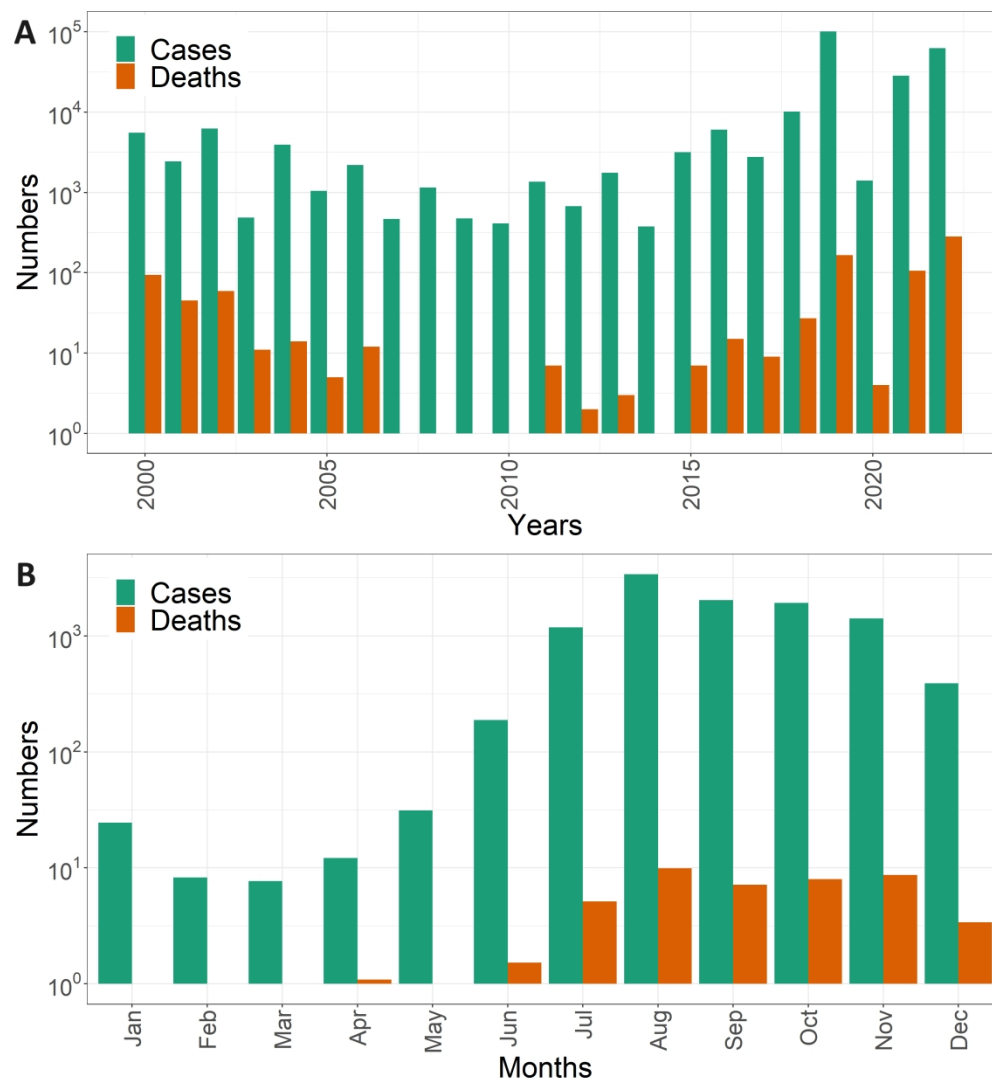


Fig 1A: Number of dengue cases and deaths over the period 2000-2022, Bangladesh. 1B: Number of monthly dengue cases and deaths recorded in Bangladesh, 2000-2022.

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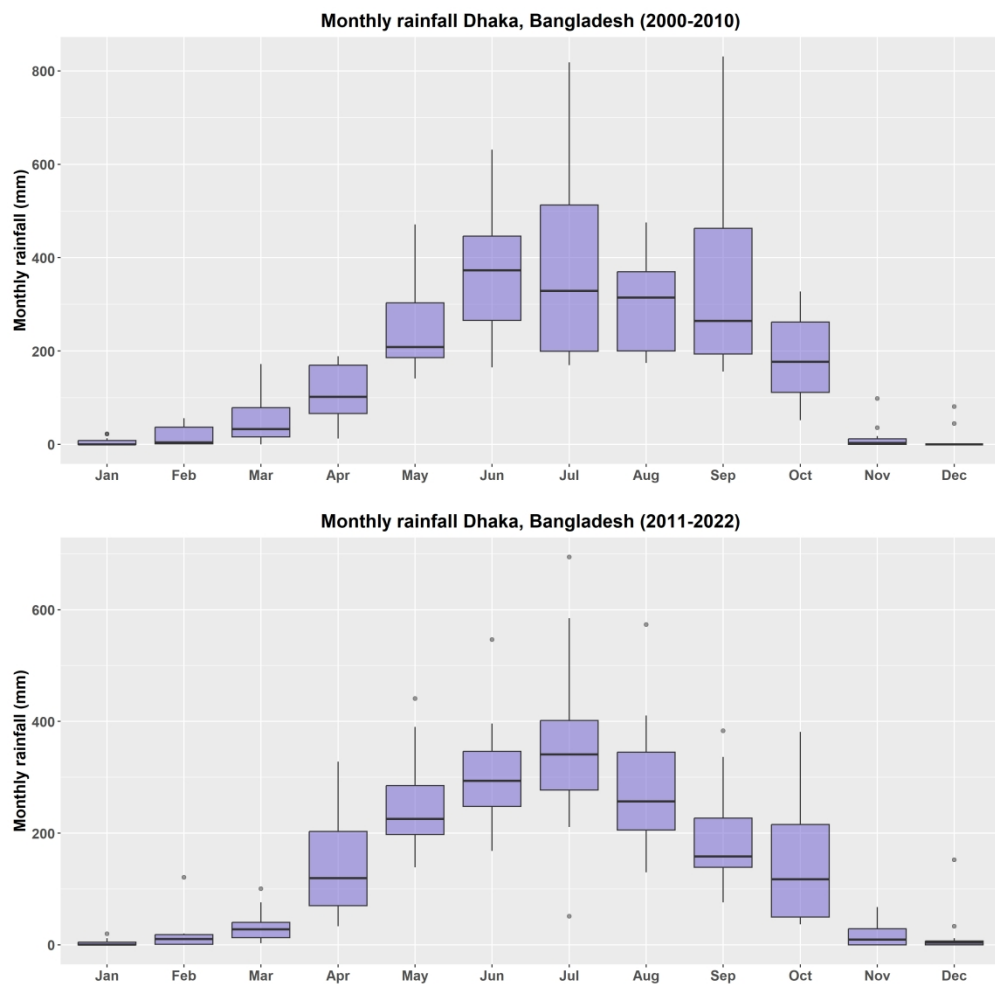


Fig 2: The boxplot compares monthly rainfall in Dhaka city, Bangladesh between two decades (2000-2010 vs 2011-2022). The bottom and top of the box indicate the first and third quantiles, the band inside the box is the median. The dots outside the box are individual outliers. Most of the months in the second decade had outlier rainfall whereas in the first decade, only the cooler months (Nov-Jan) had some extreme rainfall.

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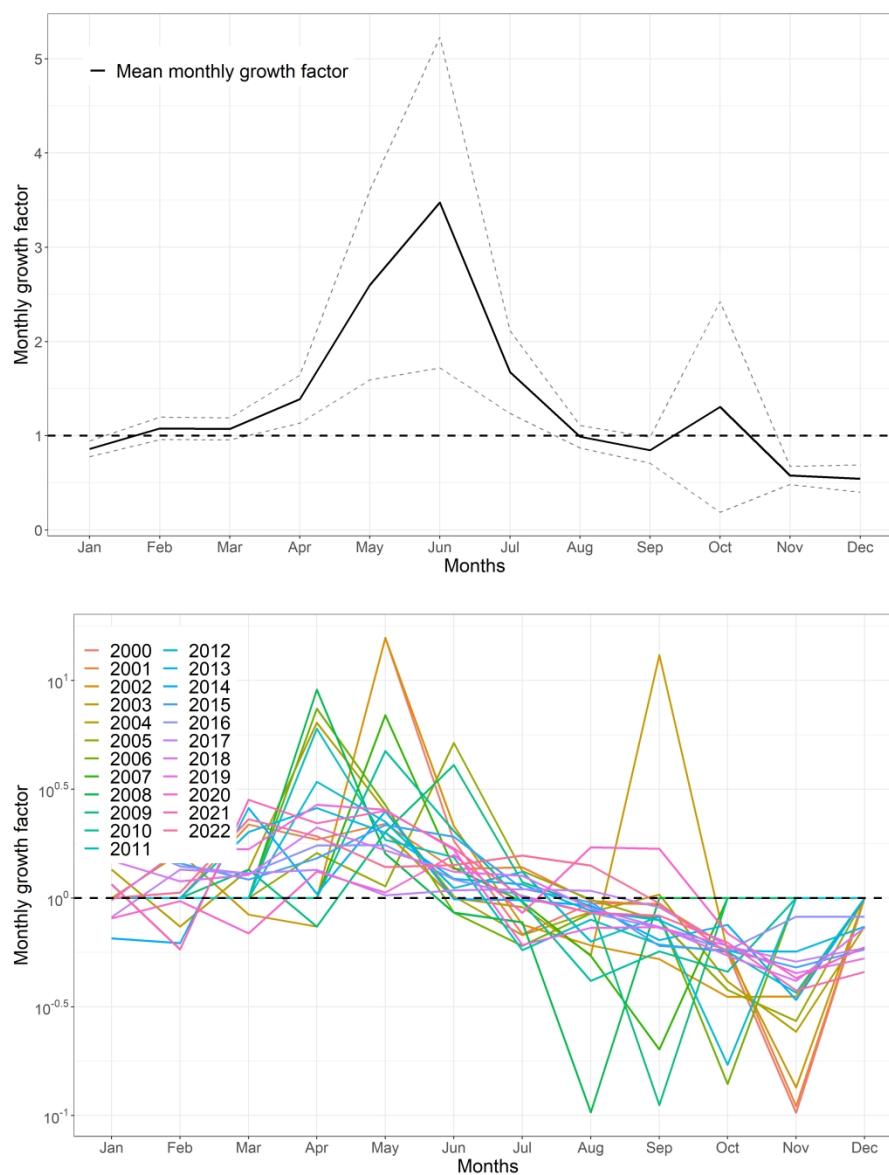


Fig 3: Top: Mean monthly growth factor for the period of 2000-2022. Bottom: The Monthly growth factor for the individual year 2000-2022. The dotted horizontal line indicates monthly growth factor 1 (same number of cases in two subsequent months).

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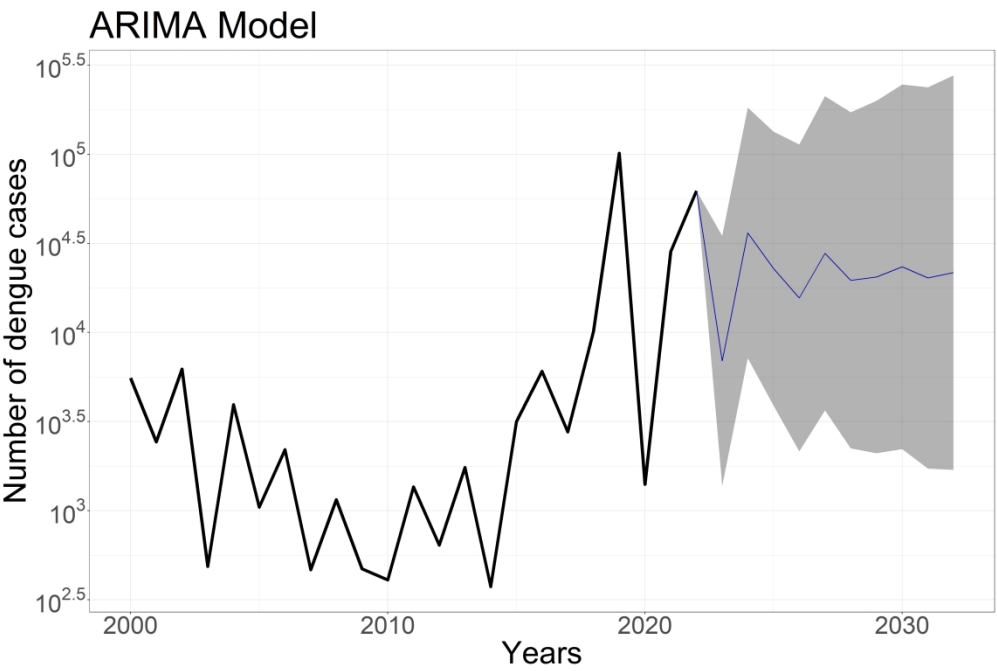


Fig 4: The observed and forecasted number of dengue cases in Bangladesh using the Autoregressive moving average (ARIMA) model including a 95% confidence interval.

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