



# Science for Saving Lives

## Asian-African Research Forum on Emerging and Reemerging Infections

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### High Prevalence of Hepatitis B Infection among Indonesian *Migrant Workers* from Lombok Island, Indonesia and its HBV Molecular Characteristics

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Indonesia is one of the countries with the largest *migrant workers* outside its country, primarily to East and South East Asia as well as to Middle East; and Lombok island (West Nusa Tenggara Province) is one of the important areas of origin (up to 20,000 people from East Lombok Regency with 1,105,671 population). Due to the high endemicity of HBsAg positive in Lombok population, it is important to determine its prevalence among migrant workers before leaving and after coming back to Indonesia. The transmission of the virus may contribute to the varieties of HBV (sub) genotypes and subtypes. Sera were collected from the two study groups, to be screened for HBsAg by EIA. Those with HBsAg positive were continued with HBV DNA detection and genotype/subtype determination. Seventeen point two percent (15/87) sera from the *migrant workers* who will go to their destination countries and 12.2% (15/124) of those come to their home country were HBsAg positive. Most of them (90%) were native people, known as Sasak ethnic. The positive PCR products were obtained from all (30) HBsAg positive sera. The most isolates (96.2%, 25/26) belonged to HBV B/adw2 and the rest (3.8%, 1/26) was HBV C/adrq+. Conclusion: High prevalent of HBsAg carriers in the Indonesian *migrant workers* from Lombok were found, with the predominant of HBV B/adw2. A tight screening of hepatitis B carrier to the *migrant workers* should be applied, in order to limit its transmission. Moreover, it is strongly recommended that those with HBsAg negative to have immunization.