

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

November 24 - 30, 2022

WEEKLY EVENTS

- The Ministry of Health, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) reported 831 deaths from road accidents in 2021. The death toll from illnesses related to smoking was 6,800. The WHO Health Coordinator in Lao PDR noted that there is a lack of safety standards for domestic transport. Smoking is still popular and easy to access. Among ASEAN countries, Lao PDR has the lowest tobacco taxation rate.
- Many Thai laborers have a preference to work in South Korea due to the relatively high compensation. In Thailand, Korean language schools have been established, especially in the northeastern region. Udon Thani has eight such schools. South Korea has memorandums of agreement with 16 countries (including Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR) to fulfill labor needs. Each country has an annual quota for the number of workers that can be provided to South Korea. This year, the quota limit is 3,900 workers, much less than in previous years. According to the Department of Employment, Ministry of Labor this has caused many workers to go to South Korea through unofficial channels.

PREPARING TO PREVENT COVID-19

There have been reports of increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in the past week, in the midst of the cold season. The Ministry of Public Health surveillance system indicated that areas to be especially careful are markets in border provinces, because that is where there are high numbers of infections. Other places that are considered high-risk for COVID-19 outbreaks are entertainment venues, tourist attractions, schools, and social gathering events such as festivals.

The Ministry of Public Health emphasizes the importance of vaccinations, especially among the 608 group. This group accounts for more than half of the fatal COVID-19 cases reported. Those who have completed the initial vaccination course should get a booster dose to strengthen their immunity if their most recent dose administered more than four months prior. Vaccines help prevent serious illness and reduce the probability of death. Vaccine centers at public and private hospitals are located all across the country and ready to provide free vaccination services. Wearing masks in crowded places and frequent hand washing remain the most basic and easiest ways to prevent the spread of all COVID-19 variants.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Public health officials should notify the community of the increase in COVID-19 cases and should focus on bedridden patients, the elderly, and young children. Vaccinations at nearby health facilities should be prioritized for people who have not received the vaccine and for those who received their most recent dose more than 4 months ago. People should remain vigilant when entering a crowded or poorly ventilated area. If there is a cluster of people with suspected symptoms of COVID-19, it should be immediately reported to health officials.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

Multisectoral Capacity Development Program for Public Health Emergency Detection and Response in Border Areas

Office of International Cooperation, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand
Supported by the Thailand MOPH - US CDC Collaboration on Public Health



CONTACT

oicddc@gmail.com
02-5903832
www.ddc.go.th/oic

Sources

- <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/health/public-health/1039088>
- <https://www.bbc.com/thai/articles/c72nnm3xggeo>
- <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/health/1040094>
- <https://laotiantimes.com/2022/11/21/in-laos-smoking-kills-more-people-than-road-accidents/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/thai/articles/cn0yx011nqqo>
- Image courtesy of: <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/health/public-health/1039088>