

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

April 6 - 12, 2023

WEEKLY EVENTS

- On April 7, 2023, the Ministry of Public Health provided assistance to people who fled the fighting in Myanmar near the border in Mae Ramat District, Tak Province. Many displaced persons traveled to the safe area for temporary shelter, and the Tak Provincial Public Health Office cooperated with multisectoral partners to prepare safe zones for the prevention and control of disease outbreaks. Disease testing kits were distributed to hospitals in the area where the displaced people were located, and respiratory masks were provided to prevent respiratory illnesses. Basic health advice was provided, including guidance on sanitation, water safety, and environmental health. The central government has offered to provide additional medical equipment and medicine to support the assistance efforts, upon request.
- On April 5, 2023, the Ministry of Public Health shared details regarding COVID-19 Vaccine Passports for international travelers. The Department of Disease Control has issued Vaccine Passports while the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) has collaborated with the National Science and Technology Development Office to develop an efficient and reliable digital system for issuing Vaccine Passports. This has been widely accepted internationally and covers vaccines for various diseases such as meningococcal and influenza. The INTERVAC system was used to issue Vaccine Certificates to those who traveled to Saudi Arabia during the Hajj pilgrimage.
- The Department of Disease Control predicts that the period after the Songkran Festival will see an increased trend of mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika, which are on the rise across the region. The public should monitor their symptoms and those of their family members, especially the elderly and those with chronic diseases. If they experience acute high fever, fever lasting more than two days, fatigue, headache, muscle aches, loss of appetite, and skin rashes particularly on the arms, legs, and joints, they should seek prompt medical attention.

MOPH STUDY HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO IMPROVE MIGRANT WORKER HEALTH INSURANCE

The Ministry of Public Health conducted a study on health insurance systems for migrant workers who work in the special economic zone of Mae Sot district, Tak province, by reviewing legal documents, regulations, processes, and information systems from central agencies. The assessment team observed the work of local agencies and conducted in-depth interviews and group discussions with personnel who recruit migrant workers to border areas and agencies that manage health insurance for migrant workers who have official documents and either work permanently or temporarily in Thailand.

The research found gaps in the management of the health insurance system and in the provision of routine health services, resulting in limited access to health care services among some groups of migrant workers. In the short term, the Ministry of Public Health will discuss with the Office of Insurance Commission and the Ministry of Labour to establish guidelines that supervise and promote health care benefit packages. This will include leading studies on health insurance management models for migrant workers in border areas. In the long term, the studies of the models will guide legal measures to support suitable health insurance systems for non-Thai migrants to reduce the burden of expenses on the people and on the country.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

The Ministry of Public Health, Provincial Public Health Offices, and related agencies jointly announced a public relations campaign, particularly in border areas where migrant laborers work in the industrial sector, agricultural sector, and general employment. The announcement was made to inform the public of the Ministry of Public Health's efforts to improve health insurance coverage for migrant workers, in line with current work practices. Employers should be aware of and support compliance with regulations, as this is a way to support the economy, trade, and investment in the country.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

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

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