

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

October 12 - 18, 2023

WEEKLY EVENTS

- On October 15, 2023, the Secretary-General of the National Health Security Office (NHSO) disclosed that during the National Health Security Committee meeting held on October 2, they were briefed on the government's policy direction to elevate the 30-baht universal healthcare policy. This policy encompasses 13 key areas. The seventh key area pertains to public health in border areas and special regions. There will be active support for service provision to enhance access for vulnerable groups. Budget allocations for hospitals in high-risk border and southern border provinces will be increased. Additionally, the efficiency of administration and disbursement of funds for the health security fund for foreign workers will be improved.
- On October 16, 2023, the Department of Disease Control issued instructions for affiliated agencies to prepare for the return of individuals from Israel as follows:
 - The International Border Control and Quarantine Division is preparing health screenings and coordinating the transportation of injured or non-urgent patients to designated healthcare facilities, including military airfield facilities and Suvarnabhumi Airport.
 - Temporary accommodations have been prepared for individuals who cannot return to their residences at the border control checkpoints. There are 60 rooms available for approximately 90 people.
 - Rapid diagnostic laboratory services have been arranged, ensuring that results are available within two hours at Suvarnabhumi Airport and Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute (BIDI).
 - Vaccines have been prepared for the teams traveling abroad, such as vaccines for avian influenza, COVID-19, and Japanese encephalitis.
 - BIDI has prepared various rooms to accommodate patients who may have infectious diseases. These measures are in place to facilitate the return of individuals from Israel and ensure their health and safety.

ELIMINATING AEDES MOSQUITO BREEDING SITES REDUCES THE RISK OF 3 SERIOUS DISEASES

Due to the continuous rainfall throughout Thailand, there is stagnant water in containers around residential areas and community environments. This creates favorable breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes, which can transmit three significant diseases in the region: dengue, Zika, and Chikungunya. Data from the Department of Disease Control reported that from January 1 to October 11, 2023, there were 110,809 confirmed dengue cases with 106 fatalities. The number of cases this year is around 3.5 times higher compared to 2022 during the same period. There were 495 Zika cases but no reported fatalities. However, a concern is that the Zika virus can cause birth defects in pregnant women. As for Chikungunya, there were 1,062 cases with no reported fatalities. Although the mortality rate is low, it significantly impacts daily life due to the chronic symptoms of fever, joint pain, and inflammation. All three of these diseases are primarily transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. Therefore, a crucial measure is to manage the environment in residential and community areas. This includes locations like schools, industrial facilities, hotels, and temples, ensuring they are free from mosquito breeding sites. At the same time, the Department of Disease Control emphasizes the importance of public cooperation in reducing the mosquito populations by implementing the prevention strategy: clean homes, eliminate waste around the home and community, and tightly sealing water containers to prevent mosquito breeding sites. These are simple measures that can be achieved through community effort to reduce the risk of these diseases.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

The Department of Disease Control and local agencies should disseminate knowledge to the communities regarding the elimination of Aedes mosquito breeding sites. This is to prevent the occurrence of dengue, Zika, and Chikungunya. All these diseases are primarily transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. Officials should also provide information on how to recognize the initial symptoms of each disease, as each disease has both common and distinct symptoms. It is advised for individuals to take measures to prevent mosquito bites. Local community organizations should actively promote the elimination of mosquito breeding sites within residential areas and at various risk locations, such as temples, schools, factories, and hotels. This involves improving the environmental conditions to maintain cleanliness and proper air circulation and implementing appropriate measures to eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

Health officials should provide accurate guidance, and regular assessments should be carried out to ensure the effectiveness of these measures. These simple and effective strategies help in reducing the risk of the aforementioned three diseases in the area.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

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Sources

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