

# REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

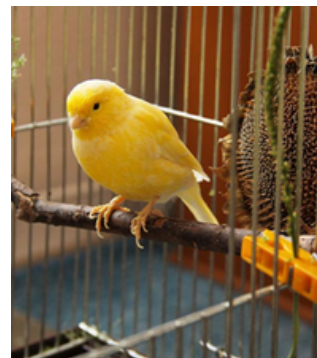
March 7 - 13, 2024

## WEEKLY EVENTS

- On March 9, 2024, Taiwan reported three cases of measles. Two cases were infected domestically, while one was imported. The domestic cases include a 20-year-old female hospital caregiver in northern Taiwan and a 40-year-old male with a history of staying in the same place as the first infected patient. The imported case, a 30-year-old male, returned from Malaysia on February 24 and resides in northern Taiwan. He began experiencing symptoms and a physician confirmed measles diagnosis. Contact tracing and travel history investigations have been conducted. It is expected that March to April will see high measles outbreak activity.
- The Joint Task Force for Environmental Protection between Sa Kaeo Province, Thailand and Banteay Meanchey Province and Preah Vihear Province, Kingdom of Cambodia, aims to address the continuous and severe PM 2.5 air pollution issue. They organized a meeting among government agencies in the border areas of both countries to establish a joint approach to tackling the PM 2.5 pollution issue. During the meeting, it was unanimously agreed that close monitoring of the situation and collaborative public awareness campaigns should be conducted to encourage residents in the border areas to cease burning activities or any other actions that contribute to smog formation. Additionally, collaborative efforts to address the issue according to the plans of both Thailand and Cambodia were discussed. In the past, the Joint Task Force has expedited efforts to address the aforementioned issues in the border areas of four districts in Sa Kaeo Province and the neighboring areas in Cambodia.

## KEEP AN EYE ON PSITTACOSIS

According to the World Health Organization's warning, Psittacosis (the disease spread by *Chlamydia psittaci*) is currently spreading across several countries in Europe, with five deaths. The Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, has closely monitored this situation and coordinated with relevant agencies to monitor the disease in both humans and animals. Psittacosis is not a new disease; in the past, it has been reported in parrots in several countries like Mexico, the United States, New Zealand, Costa Rica, and Australia. Although there were reports of this disease in Thailand in 1996, there have been no cases reported in the country since. Psittacosis is caused by the bacterium, *Chlamydia psittaci*. Most patients can be treated with antibiotics, and the mortality rate is low compared to the avian flu caused by the influenza virus. It is not a disease that is transmitted solely by parrots, but it can be transmitted from other avian species, such as pigeons and sparrows. Additionally, it can also be found in other animals closely associated with birds, such as dogs and cats. The infection spreads to humans through inhaling the contaminated dust particles that settle on the feathers and dry droppings of birds. Those at risk include individuals engaged in activities close to birds, such as animal handlers, veterinarians, bird breeders, caregivers, and bird traders. The initial symptoms of infected individuals are mild, such as fever, chills, headache, muscle pain, and dry cough, which typically appear around 5-14 days after exposure to the pathogen. For patients with severe symptoms or fatalities, they are mostly elderly individuals or those with weakened immune systems. Individuals with bird exposures should monitor their symptoms closely, and if they experience fever along with respiratory symptoms, they should seek medical attention promptly and provide their risk history for proper and timely treatment.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

The local authorities have coordinated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and relevant agencies to provide information to residents about Psittacosis. This includes educating the community about the causes, transmission routes, symptoms, and self-protection measures. To prevent Psittacosis, individuals who are in close contact with or breed birds, including bird traders, should wear face masks and gloves when handling birds or cleaning bird cages. After completing these tasks, they should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water. Those who wish to keep birds should purchase them from reputable pet shops. There is no vaccine available for Psittacosis, so individuals can protect themselves using the aforementioned methods. Additionally, individuals in close contact with or breeding birds should monitor themselves closely. If they experience fever along with respiratory symptoms, they should promptly seek medical attention and inform healthcare providers of their risk history, such as their contact history with birds or bird breeding, to assist in diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

## INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY



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

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