

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

February 23 - March 2, 2022

## WEEKLY EVENTS

- The Thailand Department of Disease Control has warned people to beware of influenza. From January 1 to February 14, 2022, there have been 565 cases and no deaths. The age group with the most cases was newborns - children under 4 years old (6.71 cases per 100,000 populations). The provinces with the most cases were Chiang Rai, Narathiwat, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai, and Sisaket.
- Lao PDR and Thailand are cooperating to safely open border crossings. Both sides emphasized the need to open borders as soon as possible to stimulate economic recovery.
- Phnom Penh, Cambodia is facing an increase of COVID-19 cases, especially with the Omicron variant. A recent rise has caused more than 500 cases among students causing more than 10 schools to close (as of February 25, 2022).
- Malaysia's Ministry of Health reported 32,070 new COVID-19 cases, the highest daily total since the outbreak began. This brought the total number of cases to over 3 million and the total number of deaths is now 32,534 people (as of February 25, 2022).

## FACING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK BANG KLOI AND PONG LUEK

Ban Bang Kloi is a community of 1,280 ethnic Karen who live in Kraeng Krachan National Park, Phetchaburi. On February 26, 2022, as many as 88 people in the community were diagnosed with COVID-19, including 60 students under the age of 12, who were isolated at the Ban Pong Luek Child Development Center. By March 2, the number of cases rose to 123. The outbreak began after the easing of COVID-19 measures. Prior to that event, there were no gatherings of people in the community with outsiders, but there has recently been an increase in activity and contacts, for example when locals receive donations from outsiders.

Currently, the schools serving as quarantine centers lack Antigen Test Kits and masks. Treatment for cases have included herbal steam and alternative therapy. There are concerns that infected children who have not received vaccinations may develop severe symptoms. Officials have brought in drinking water, surgical masks, alcohol gel, and foodstuffs for distribution to the patients.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Continue to emphasize prevention and control measures against COVID-19, particularly for group activities with outsiders by adhering to the Provincial Communicable Disease Control Committee. The recommendations for border health volunteers are as follows:

- Notify local health officials in the case of group activities or social gatherings
- Notify public health workers or volunteers to obtain COVID-19 screening tests. Precautions like temperature checks, hand-washing, and checking vaccine certificates should be taken
- Request cooperation from everyone to wear masks throughout the duration of the event. Be prepared to provide adequate space, reduce congestion for social-distancing, and provide hand sanitizer gel for participants.

## INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

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

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