

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

February 16 - 22, 2023

## WEEKLY EVENTS

- On February 20, 2023, there was an opening ceremony for the permanent border crossing point, "Mitrphap Bridge", between Thailand and Myanmar linking Mae Sai District, Chiang Rai Province, and Tachileik Province. The point officially opened after being closed for almost 3 years due to COVID-19 prevention measures. From now on, people can travel and trade as usual. Initially, the border checkpoint will be open from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm, and negotiations will be made to extend the opening hours to 9:00 pm.
- On February 21, 2023, The Laotian Times presented news about the launch of the ASEAN Biodiversity River Basin Management Project in Manila, Philippines. This is a regional project with a 5-year duration aimed at reducing pollution and preserving the environment in Southeast Asia. The project is supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project will develop practices and innovations for communities and industries to manage river basins in an integrated manner in the main river basins of some of the ASEAN member countries, namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, and Vietnam.

## LEARN AND PREVENT **MARBURG VIRUS**

As reported by the World Health Organization, there is a significant number of patients and deaths due to the Marburg virus outbreak in Central Africa. The Ministry of Public Health has been closely monitoring and continuously following the situation of the outbreak. For Thailand, Marburg virus infection is one of the 13 dangerous communicable diseases according to the Communicable Diseases Act of 2015, as it is a disease with a high mortality rate, no cure, and no vaccine. From past outbreaks, it has been found that fruit bats and African monkeys are carriers of the virus.

The incubation period for the disease is approximately 2-21 days after contact with an infected individual or animal. Initial symptoms that onset suddenly are high fever, severe headache, and muscle pain. After three days, symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting. Many patients will have bleeding in various parts of the body and death may result from severe bleeding causing shock within 8-9 days from the onset of symptoms. The infection is transmitted from person to person through bodily fluids, such as blood or saliva. Even those who have recovered from the infection still carry the virus in bodily fluids such as blood or urine, which can infect others for several months. Currently, there is no specific treatment, so doctors treat the symptoms along with providing replacement fluids or blood. The Department of Disease Control is now focusing on screening travelers from countries with outbreaks and preparing for possible emergencies.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Public health officials and local officials should coordinate to share information on the international Marburg outbreak situation with their communities. They should inform them about the animals that could carry the virus, the disease symptoms, as well as risky behaviors such as traveling in the forest, entering caves, consuming undercooked or raw food, and keeping wild animals as pets, all of which have a high risk of contracting the disease. If a villager or tourist has just returned from a high-risk country, their symptoms should be monitored. If any abnormal symptoms are detected, they should quickly inform the local health authorities. However, there is no need to panic. It is important to reduce or stop engaging in the aforementioned risky behaviors and continue to maintain normal health practices to prevent diseases.

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

## Sources

- <https://www.bbc.com/thai/international-62217894>
- <https://www.thansettakij.com/health/health/556729>
- <https://pr.moph.go.th/?url=pr/detail/2/04/186344/>
- <https://www.pidst.or.th/A236.html>
- <https://mgronline.com/local/detail/9660000016357>
- <https://laotiantimes.com/2023/02/21/asean-integrated-river-management-project-launched-in-manila/>
- Image Courtesy of: <https://thethaiger.com/th/news/609601/>
- Image Courtesy of: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-62206270>