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Students working assist anti-dengue campaign in the capital

Times Reports

Vientiane health authorities are continuing to utilise the assistance of university students studying medical science and nursing science, who are working with health sector staff to destroy mosquito breeding grounds and treat people suffering from dengue.

The aim to build momentum in the ongoing campaign to spread awareness about the need to destroy mosquito breeding sources and encourage local people to increase their attention to clean living and healthy lifestyles.

Through the activities over the past month, people in each target village have a better understanding about the danger of dengue fever and the number of people who went to hospitals and clinics increased after they received health education.

Almost 300 medical science and nursing students gathered at the Friendship Hospital in Vientiane on Saturday to summarise the activities over the

past month and plan the activities in the months ahead.

The ceremony was attended by Minister of Health, Dr Eksavang Vongvichit, the National Avian and Human Influenza Coordination Office (NAHICO) Director, Dr Bounlay Phommasack along with Vientiane health officials.

“Throughout the course of the campaign, we have divided the groups of students and medical staff to go to each village to join with village health volunteers and visit each house to destroy mosquito breeding sites and advise them about health awareness and the danger of dengue fever,” a team leader, Dr Vathsana Inthavong reported at the meeting.

“Over the past month, we checked 130,800 households in some 658 villages through eight districts of the capital, all except Sangthong district,” he said.

Of around 130,800 households, the team killed mosquito larvae at more than 20,229 houses and some 357,000 materials which might house

mosquitoes were checked, of which 37,900 were found to be housing larvae.

The team requested access to every house and then announced the objective of the activity and provided advice to the house owner and helped them to clean and destroy mosquito breeding sites by emptying or flushing all containers storing water and where necessary sprinkling chemical sands to kill mosquito larvae.

The team has also plastered stickers on public transport vehicles and other visible places in dengue outbreak areas warning about the dengue fever outbreak in the area.

“However, people in some villages are still not participating in the destruction of mosquito breeding sources or aware of the fact they need to go to hospital or a clinic when they get sick,” said Dr Vathsana.

Over the following month, the team will bring health sciences students within the targeted districts to check one village a day or may divide into two groups to check two villages. The team will report to the village head when they encounter mosquito larvae in that house and then the village head may call the house owner to talk.

To control the dengue fever outbreak, the Ministry of Health has sent more than 900 health sciences and nursing students to implement this activity in the capital and the five provinces of Bokeo, Xayaboury, Borikhamxay, Xekong and Saravan, while other provinces with universities were left to second their own students to the task.



Vientiane authorities convened a meeting recently to assess the progress of the anti-dengue campaign over the past month.

Police seek information to identify corpse

Souknilundon Southvongnorath

Savannakhet Police Headquarters have sent messages to the media and involved sectors about a dead body floating in the Mekong River in Kaystone Phomvihane district, seeking information as to his identity.

The officials have been trying to find the dead man's family or relatives in both Laos and Thailand since August 8 but so far there has been no response.

The head of the Scientific Crime division Lieutenant Thanouone Kindavong, told *Vientiane Times* last week that they had already given details to both Lao and Thai immigration officials as well as local media trying to find anyone who could identify him.

“We issued a statement that the body belonged to a man who was no more than 30 years old, who had two small tattoos on his right forearm, a small knife tattoo on the underside and a dragon on the topside. We also gave details of his clothing,” he said.

Police received the report about a dead body floating in the Mekong River near the Savannakhet hospital in the early morning of August 8, from a couple who spotted it while they were out fishing in the area.

“After getting the report, we went to the place and brought the dead and decomposing body onto the riverbank and checked him over. There was no paper or anything else we could use to identify who he was, there was just some chewing gum in his pocket,” Lieutenant Thanouone said.

He said that the man was wearing a tartan shirt with a grey vest underneath as well as green trousers, but no shoes.

“The green trousers caused local people in the area to wonder as they looked similar to police and military uniform trousers. Many people made enquiries to us so we rechecked and found that there was a similarity to our uniforms. However, these green trousers are commonly sold in several

markets in Savannakhet province,” he added.

According to provincial police records dead bodies floating in the river in Savannakhet province are not an unusual occurrence and are found about three times a year. Many of them remain unidentified but some get recognised by families or relatives who claim the bodies to take home.

Lieutenant Thanouone also told the public that if they have a family member missing they should immediately report this to local officials who will help them to investigate the disappearance or possibly help them to make an identification if their relative ends up as a dead body floating in the Mekong River.



A dead body floating in the Mekong River in Savannakhet province.



Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment, Dr Bounthavy Sisouphanthong (right), shakes hands with Mr Plew Trivisavet after signing the agreement.

Nam Bak 1 development agreement signed

Times Reporters

Major energy investor Nam Ngum 2 Power Company Limited last week signed a project development agreement with the Lao government for the Nam Bak 1 hydropower project.

The agreement allows the company to begin work on more detailed studies on the project, including its engineering and design, concession agreements and financial support.

“We expect that all these works will be complete within one year, and project construction will start by the end of next year,” company Chairman Mr Plew Trivisavet

said. Nam Ngum 2 Power Company signed the agreement with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, on behalf of the Lao government, on Thursday in Vientiane.

Representatives from the ministries of Planning and Investment, Energy and Mines and Natural Resources and Environment, as well as the Thai Embassy to Laos attended the event.

Mr Plew said construction on Nam Bak 1, located in Vientiane province, would take about three years to complete. The project is estimated to cost about 5 trillion kip (20 billion Thai baht).

“However we have to complete all of our detailed studies to know how much the investment cost will be,” he said.

Mr Plew said the completed project would have an installed capacity of 160 megawatts, which could generate about 740GWh of electricity per year

“We will sell all the generated energy to Electricite du Laos,” he said.

The chairman said the company would not know how long it would own and operate the project for until after a concession agreement had been finalised with the Lao government.

Flooding, landslides hit ... FROM PAGE 1

is mainly focused on villagers who live along the Nam Yang and Nam Ngeun rivers.

Meanwhile in Vientiane, it has been raining for several days since Tropical Storm Mangkhut hit the country, but not as heavily as in the north. The rain has affected transportation and movement of people in the capital, but there has been no real flooding so far.

In Borikhamxay province, flooding took place in Hadkhai village in Thaphabath district as heavy rains caused the nearby Nam Mang River to breach its banks.

On Thursday, Nam Mang rose rapidly, submerging houses and farmland located in low-lying areas. The heavy rains and rising river had caused flooding along some parts of the road to Phoubia Mountain in Xieng Khuang province, which passes through Hadkhai.

The floodwaters reached more than a metre high on about five sections of the road, which lies about 3km off Road No. 13 South. The rains also degraded the quality of local roads, and some have been churned to a quagmire after flooding

and frequent heavy vehicle traffic.

Every year, Laos suffers from flooding and landslides, which destroy vast swathes of crops in the major rice producing provinces of Borikhamxay, Khammuan and Savannakhet.

In 2011, tropical storms Haima and Nock-Ten and other monsoonal weather events affected more than 429,900 people in 1,790 villages of 96 districts across 12 provinces that resulted in 30 fatalities. The government has spent billions of kip to assist flood victims.



Flooding in Ngen district Xayaboury province.

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