



MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**NEWS**

Newspaper

Date

*Phil-Star*

*16 June 2014*

*10*

## DOH: Air travel may spread dengue in region

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

CLARK, Pampanga – Migration and constant traveling of people in Asia are feared to spread dengue in the region, an official of the Department of Health warned yesterday.

At the second day of the ASEAN Dengue Summit here, DOH's program manager for Dengue Prevention and Control Program Lyndon Lee Suy said that mosquitoes can "survive" a long-haul plane ride and travelers could bring mosquitoes not only through their cars but in their suitcases as well.

"Mosquitoes can travel and they don't need a passport to go around countries," he said in a press briefing.

"One reason why ASEAN has decided to prioritize dengue is because within the region, there is really movement of different nationalities from different countries," he added.

Lee Suy noted that "human migration" could also contribute to the rise of dengue cases in Asia, which accounts for 75 percent of dengue cases in the world.

"If there is a dengue patient who travels to another place and the mosquitoes in that area have bitten him, acquired the virus and transmit the virus to other areas and to other people, then dengue (could spread)," he warned.

Dengue is transmitted through a bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. The symptoms appear three to 14 days after the infective bite.

Lee Suy said in the Philippines, 23,867 dengue cases have been reported to the DOH's National Epidemiology Center (NEC) from Jan. 1 to May 31 this year. This is 50.98 percent lower compared to the 48,686 cases registered during the same period in 2013.

Central Luzon accounted for most cases at 10.21 percent followed by Calabarzon at 10.14 percent, Eastern Visayas at 9.93 percent, SoCCSKSarGen at 9.48 percent, and National Capitol Region at 8.55 percent. There were 99 deaths.