



**INFORME RESUMEN DE AMENAZAS A LA SALUD PÚBLICA INTERNACIONAL
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UNDIAGNOSED DEATHS - THAILAND

The deaths of 7 tourists -- including an elderly British couple -- have been connected to a toxic bed bug pesticide found in the Thailand hotel they all visited. A male pensioner, 78, and his wife, 73, were found dead in their room at Chiang Mai's Downtown Inn while in the northern tourist resort of Chiang Mai on 19 Feb 2011.

Their deaths are the latest in a string of fatalities that occurred during the months of January to March 2011, including that of a 23-year-old female New Zealander less than 2 weeks ago. According to Thai authorities, the elderly couple suffered fatal heart attacks within minutes of each other, though family members say the couple had no history of heart problems.

The female New Zealander became seriously ill on 3 Feb 2011 while staying at the hotel. She was taken to a local hospital but died from heart inflammation one day later. The condition of her 2 travelling companions who were sharing her room also deteriorated, and one survived only after emergency heart surgery.

Thai officials were quick to attribute the deaths to "toxic seaweed" that was being sold at a nearby bazaar, but the persistent campaigning of the female New Zealander's father over what he alleges is a "cover up" has sparked extensive probes from the media.

An investigation aired by New Zealand's 60 Minutes program found small traces of the insecticide Chlorpyrifos -- used to kill bed bugs -- in the hotel room where the female New Zealander was staying. Reporters for the program posed as hotel guests and took swabs from the 5th floor room, which then underwent tests. United Nations toxicologist Ron McDowall, who carried out tests on behalf of the channel TV3, said the symptoms the young woman and the other tourists had had suggested they had died from an over-exposure to the toxic chemical.

Dr McDowall got 2nd and 3rd opinions from experts in New Zealand and Italy who supported his belief. "I think she has been killed by an overzealous sprayer who's been acting on the instructions of the hotel owner to deal with bed bugs," Dr McDowall told 60 Minutes.

Fuente: Promed

COLERA - BROTE EN BARRIADAS DE SANTO DOMINGO

El potencial brote de cólera en el capitalino barrio La Ciénaga responde al mismo patrón de otros ocurridos en el país desde que en octubre del año pasado se diagnosticara el primer caso de la enfermedad.

En una declaración escrita difundida este martes, el ministro de Salud Pública, Bautista Rojas Gómez, afirma que desde el pasado fin de semana un equipo de la institución desarrolla

actividades de prevención y control del cólera en populoso y empobrecido barrio, sin que hasta ahora haya ocurrido ninguna muerte. Admite, no obstante, que varios residentes en el sector han sido ingresados en los hospitales Luis Eduardo Aybar y Francisco Moscoso Puello, algunos de los cuales han recibido el alta. La vida de los todavía ingresados no corre peligro, precisó.

Para reivindicar ante eventuales críticas el esfuerzo que realice Salud Pública para contener la enfermedad, el ministro recordó que el Área IV de Salud, a la que pertenecen un grupo de barrios marginales como 24 de Abril, Simón Bolívar Capotillo y la propia Ciénaga, está atravesada por 24 cañadas que provocan contaminación ambiental y exponen a los moradores.

Fuente: Promed