

H1N1 flu outbreak in northern Chile kills 11

July 5 2013

At least 11 people have been killed in an outbreak of H1N1 flu virus in northern Chile, where the rate of infection is more than six times higher than the rest of the country, authorities said Thursday.

"The average across the country is 24 patients per 100,000 residents, but in Tarapaca, in the past week, the rate was 148 patients per 100,000 residents," Medical Association president Enrique Paris said.

Citing fears of aggravating the outbreak, Paris recommended postponing or cancelling the upcoming Fiesta de la Tirana, a religious celebration planned for July 15-17 where 200,000 people are expected.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Jaime Manalich announced he will travel Friday to the region 1,900 kilometers (1,180 miles) north of Santiago near the border with Bolivia.

The minister also said some 115,000 vaccines will be sent to immunize the population, which numbers around 300,000.

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