

Dominican Republic reports 19 cholera cases



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Santo Domingo, January 17 (RHC)-- The Dominican Republic's Health Ministry has confirmed two new cholera infections, which brings to 19 cases reported in the country since October last year.

"The two new cases correspond to two Haitians who reside in the Banica municipality. Both remain stable and will be discharged possibly in the next few hours," the Health Ministry stated, stressing that patients had recently returned to their home country, where 457 people have died from the disease in the last three months.

"No friends or relatives of patients have presented suspected symptoms so far.... We will maintain epidemiological surveillance on them," authorities insisted, urging the population not to be alarmed.

The National Society of Infectology President Clevy Perez considered that taking care of hygiene conditions for food sales and access to water supply sources is indispensable to prevent the spread of cholera, whose mode of transmission is fecal-oral.

The 2018 National Multi-Purpose Household Survey (ENHOGAR), however, revealed that 20 percent of Dominicans do not have an adequate toilet, and 2.2 percent of the population does not even have access to a latrine.

"The problem is not limited to this percentage of the population but includes those who do not receive water continuously and must store it, with the consequent risk of contamination," Perez insisted.

"Authorities must work harder to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Otherwise, we would not stop the cholera spread," the specialist highlighted.

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