

# At least 30 children dead in Myanmar from unknown disease

August 4 2016

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At least 30 children have died in northwestern Myanmar since mid-June from an unknown disease that causes breathing difficulty, officials said Thursday.

"We have this problem since two months ago and we haven't received any help from the government yet," said Kay Sai, a local administrator.

He said the deaths have been recorded in Nanyun and Lahe towns in the Naga region, one of the poorest in the country, about 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) from Yangon, adjoining India's Nagaland state. He said most of the victims have been younger than 5.

Kay Sai said officials have not been able to identify the disease, which appears to be contagious. Blood samples have been sent to a hospital in the neighboring Sagaing division and results are awaited. There has been no response from the Ministry of Health, or the Department of Prevention of Transmitted Diseases on the outbreak.

He said local authorities have temporarily banned people from traveling around to prevent contagion.

The Naga area is the least developed part of Myanmar and is in utter neglect with the absence of even the most basic health care, education and infrastructure.

Law Yone, a local lawmaker of Lahe township, said that the region

suffers from inadequate transportation, insufficient number of health care workers and medicine. Because of the backwardness, even curable diseases have proved to be deadly in the past he said.

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