

Nipah claims another victim in India, death toll now 13

May 27 2018

Another patient has died in India from the Nipah virus, taking the number of fatalities from an outbreak of the rare disease to 13, authorities said Sunday.

Officials in the southwestern state of Kerala said that in addition to the latest fatality two patients have tested positive for the [virus](#) spread by [fruit bats](#), which induces flu-like symptoms that lead to agonising encephalitis and coma.

Emergency measures have been imposed across Kerala to curb the spread of the virus, with dozens of patients quarantined since the outbreak was detected this month.

Health experts have been flown to Kerala to help contain the virus, which has a mortality rate of 70 percent and no vaccine.

"One man died today from Nipah virus, taking the overall death toll to 13," Sarita R.L., director of Kerala's health services, told AFP.

"There are two other confirmed Nipah patients undergoing treatment."

Nipah has killed more than 260 people in Malaysia, Bangladesh and India since 1998.

The World Health Organization has listed it as one of the eight priority diseases that could cause a global epidemic, alongside Ebola and Zika.

Nipah is named after the Malaysian village where it first appeared in 1998. It spread to Singapore and more than 100 people were killed. On that occasion, pigs were the virus hosts but they are believed to have caught it from bats.

In India the disease was first reported in 2001 and again six years later, with the two outbreaks claiming 50 lives. Both times the disease was reported in West Bengal state bordering Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has borne the brunt of the disease in recent years, with more than 100 people dying of Nipah since a first outbreak was reported there in 2001.

Four victims from the latest outbreak in Kerala hailed from one family. Dead bats were found in a well at their home in Kozhikode district, the epicentre of the viral [outbreak](#).

A nurse treating one of the victims also succumbed to the [disease](#).

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