

## Nipah Virus Outbreak

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Health*

### Why in News?

Recently, The Health department is exercising maximum vigil and taking all possible preventive measures to ensure that the current outbreak of Nipah in Kozhikode is contained.

### Nipah Virus

- **Nature** - Zoonotic virus.
- **Natural host** - Fruit bats (Family - Pteropodidae).
- **Genus** - Henipavirus (closely related to the Hendra virus).
- **Symptoms** - Fever, headache, confusion, respiratory distress, encephalitis and asymptomatic in some individuals.
- **Transmission** - ***Bat-to-human*** (contaminated fruits/date palm sap), animal-to-human (pigs, horses), and human-to-human (close contact, healthcare settings).
- **Incubation** - 3-14 days (rarely up to 45).
- **Severe Outcomes** - Brain swelling, pneumonia, multi-organ involvement; 20% survivors develop long-term neurological sequelae.
- **Fatality** - Estimated **40-75%** (higher than many other viral diseases).
- **Diagnosis**
  - **RT-PCR (Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction)** - Detects viral RNA in blood, respiratory samples, cerebrospinal fluid.
  - **ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay)** - Detects antibodies (IgM/IgG).
- **Containment** - Samples handled under maximum biosafety (BSL-4) conditions.
- **Prevention**
  - Avoid raw date palm sap/fruits contaminated by bats.
  - Protective gear when handling pigs/horses.
  - Strict infection control in hospitals (isolation, PPE, hand hygiene).
  - WHO advises airborne precautions during aerosol-generating

procedures.

- **Treatment**

- ***No licensed drug/vaccine.***

- Supportive Care - Oxygen therapy, ventilation, renal dialysis, rehydration.

- **Global Spread** - First identified in **Malaysia (1998)**, later in Singapore, Bangladesh (annual outbreaks), India (periodic), and Philippines.

## References

1. [The Hindu | Nipah](#)
2. [WHO | Nipah](#)

