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Government of India



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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.



Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
3352	19.04.2016	19.04.2016	Kollam Kerala	www.thehindu.com/English http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Kochi/kalaazar-outbreak-in-pathananapuram/article8492128.ece?css=print
Title:	Kala-azar outbreak in district Kollam, Kerala			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Kollam, SSU-Kerala			

An indigenous case of kala-azar or black fever outbreak has been reported from Chempanaruvi, near Pathanapuram, in Kollam district, causing concern among public health experts.

Pathologists of Government Medical College Hospital (MCH), Thiruvananthapuram, have confirmed the disease in a 63-year-old woman through a bone marrow test and the public health experts collected the vector sandfly from Chempanaruvi, confirming the fears of the outbreak. The blood-sucking pest, which is one-third the size of mosquitoes, is found in moist mud and sand.

The presence of the vector poses the risk of the disease spreading to humans and animals. Though the source of the disease has not been confirmed, it is a highly risky public health situation, said T.S. Anish, Assistant Professor of the MCH, who collected the vector.

Kavitha Ravi, Associate Professor (Pathology Department) of the MCH, who conducted the pathological tests, said the patient was diagnosed with visceral leishmaniasis, a version of the disease that affects internal organs, which was prevalent in parts of north India.

In most of the earlier incidents reported in Kerala, the patients were either migrant labours or people from States where the disease was prevalent. This was considered to be the second endemic case being reported among Keralites with no history of

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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travel outside the State. The earlier one was from Thenmala in 2005, the pathologist told The Hindu .

In the recent case, the patient reported fever, fatigue and loss of weight and appetite. She had low blood count and an enlarged spleen, which are symptomatic with the disease, Ms. Ravi said.

If left untreated, visceral leishmaniasis could be lethal. The milder version of the disease, cutaneous leishmaniasis, is a self-limiting disease. Public health campaign needs to be carried out in the area to contain the disease. The disease is a curable one, Dr. Anish said.

Most of the households in the area where the patient lived had two or three dogs, which could serve as reservoirs of the disease. Even if humans are cured of the disease, animals could pose risk, he said.

Besides screening the residents of the area, vector-control measures need to be carried out. Mud walls of houses should be treated with synthetic pyrethrum. Bed nets with smaller mesh size should be used by the residents to avoid insect bites, he suggested.

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