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THIS VIRUS HAS A 75% DEATH RATE AND IT’S BACK IN INDIA



By [Francisco Ramirez Jr.](#)

PALAKKAD/MALAPPURAM, July 5, 2025 — Kerala health authorities have issued an alert across three northern districts following the confirmation of two Nipah virus infections. The virus has claimed the life of an 18-year-old girl in Malappuram and left a 38-year-old woman in Palakkad in critical condition. Both cases have triggered widespread concern and a rapid public health response.

The teenager from Chettiyyarangadi in Malappuram died on July 1 after receiving treatment for acute encephalitis at a private hospital in Kozhikode. Her infection was [confirmed](#) by the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune following sample analysis.

In Palakkad, a 38-year-old woman from Thachanattukara tested positive for Nipah and is currently being treated at Moulana Hospital in Perinthalmanna. Local officials have declared Ward 8 of her panchayat a containment zone and imposed restrictions within a three-kilometer radius.

425 People on Contact List, Health Workers Among Those at Risk

Health Minister Veena George reported that 425 people have been identified through contact tracing. This includes 228 individuals in Malappuram, 110 in Palakkad, and 87 in



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Kozhikode. A large number of those under observation are health workers, including 61 in Palakkad and all 87 in Kozhikode.

Twelve individuals are undergoing treatment in Malappuram, with five in the intensive care unit. One patient has tested negative, while the others await results. A 10-year-old boy, a relative of the Palakkad patient, has also been hospitalized with fever and is under close observation.

The health department has begun providing psychological assistance to those placed under surveillance.

Massive Containment and Surveillance Operation Launched

In response to the confirmed cases, the state has launched a widespread door-to-door fever survey. In Malappuram, 65 medical teams visited 1,655 households across 20 wards in the panchayats of Makkaraparamba, Kuruva, Koottilangadi, and Mankada. No additional symptomatic cases were detected, although residents have been advised to remain cautious.

In Palakkad, containment efforts include six wards in the Thachanattukara and Karimpuzha panchayats. A 24-hour control room has been activated, and 26 outbreak response teams were formed, including senior officials and specialists from the Government Medical College.

District collectors have instructed officials to strictly enforce containment protocols. Police support has also been enlisted to assist in identifying and tracking contacts.

Central Government Monitoring the Situation

The Union Health Ministry is considering deploying the National Joint Outbreak Response Team to Kerala. The Central Surveillance Unit of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme is also closely monitoring developments in coordination with state health



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officials.

Although the two cases currently appear unlinked, investigators are examining whether the patients may have attended a common event or been exposed to a shared source. The exact origin of the infections is still under investigation.

Kerala's Ongoing Struggle with Nipah

This latest outbreak adds to a series of Nipah virus cases reported in Kerala in recent years. In 2018, the [state reported 17 deaths](#). Other fatal cases occurred in 2021, 2023, and earlier in 2024. In May 2025, a 42-year-old woman tested positive for Nipah but survived and is still recovering.

Nipah is a zoonotic virus that spreads from animals to humans, with fruit bats identified as the primary natural hosts. Human-to-human transmission is also possible. Symptoms include fever, headache, cough, sore throat, vomiting, and confusion. The virus can lead to severe complications, including encephalitis, and has a mortality rate ranging from 40 to 75 percent according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Precautions to Stay Safe from Nipah Virus

Although the current outbreak is localized to India, public health experts are closely monitoring the situation. **Hopefully, this virus does not spread to other countries, including the United States**, where travel and trade can occasionally become unintended transmission routes.

To reduce the risk of infection, both in affected regions and globally, health officials recommend the following precautions:

- **Avoid contact with sick animals or individuals showing symptoms** such as fever, vomiting, or altered mental status.



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- **Do not consume fruits that may have been partially eaten by bats** or animals.
- **Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly** before eating.
- **Avoid visiting high-risk areas**, especially fruit orchards or locations where bats are known to roost.
- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing hands frequently with soap and water.
- **Use masks and gloves** if caring for sick individuals or animals.
- **Follow local health advisories** and report any unusual symptoms immediately.
- **Stay informed** through verified public health sources, including WHO and CDC updates.

Public Urged to Stay Alert

Minister Veena George urged the public to report any unusual illnesses or unexplained deaths. State and district helplines have been activated, and health teams are working around the clock to prevent further spread. A follow-up high-level meeting is scheduled to ensure all precautionary measures remain in place.

Kerala's health infrastructure is now fully mobilized to contain the virus and protect residents from further infections.