

## Nipah Virus causes panic attack in Kerala with several deaths

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**Singapore** – 8 deaths in Kerala, including three people of the same family in the state's coastal city Kozhikode have been recorded over the last two weeks. Reportedly, these deaths are because of the rare virus known as 'Nipah'. This has caused a state of panic within the commons. Deaths due to the dangerous virus has put the state health department on high alert. The nature of the virus is yet not ascertained.

A district level special task force has been formed to investigate the deaths due to this rare virus.

Nipah was first identified in Malaysia in 1998. Nipah Virus (NV) infection is an emerging zoonosis that causes severe diseases in both humans and animals. The virus induces flu-like symptoms that often lead to encephalitis and coma. Fruit bats are considered the main carrier of the virus for which there is no vaccination, according to the World Health Organization. In India, the disease was first reported in 2001 and again six years later, with the two outbreaks claiming 50 lives.