

CENTRAL TEAM OF OFFICIALS TO VISIT NIPAH-HIT AREAS ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2023

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A patient is admitted to a Nipah isolation ward at the Government Medical College Hospital in Kozhikode on September 14, 2023. | Photo Credit: PTI

A Central team of officials is expected to visit Maruthonkara and Ayancheri areas in Kozhikode district of Kerala on Friday where [two persons died due to Nipah infection recently](#).

[Five people have so far tested positive for the virus](#), of whom two are dead. The others are undergoing treatment. Restrictions are continuing in at least nine grama panchayats in Kozhikode district, where a holiday has been declared for educational institutions till Saturday.

The Central team reached Kozhikode on Thursday morning and held parleys with State officials. According to sources, they will coordinate with the State departments of Health and Animal Husbandry in taking up containment measures.

The team has members drawn from the National Centre for Disease Control, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bengaluru.

Police on September 14, 2023 put barriers in Ayanchery grama panchayat in Kozhikode district which has been declared a containment zone. | Photo Credit: Thulasi Kakkat

The National Institute of Virology, Pune, has set up a mobile testing lab at Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, to test body fluid samples of suspected Nipah patients.

Official sources said that the lab has biosafety level-III standards. Now, there is no need to send the samples of those on the contact list of the infected persons to Pune. There are four scientists and four technicians in the mobile lab. Monoclonal antibodies to treat 25 patients to have reached here.

At the same time, another mobile testing lab under the aegis of the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology too is expected to reach Kozhikode soon to speed up the tests. It has biosafety level-II standards. As many as 96 samples can be tested here at a time and the results will be available within three hours.

Health Minister Veena George said that all the high-risk contacts of E. Mohammadali, the first Nipah victim who died on August 30, will be subjected to lab tests. They will have to isolate themselves for at least 21 days. Medical boards will be constituted in all hospitals where the Nipah patients are being treated. The treatment procedures will be decided by the board.

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