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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
4420	20.11.2017	20.11.2017	Chittoor Andhra Pradesh	www.thehindu.com/English http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/fear-of-dengue-returns-to-varadaiahpalem/article20558007.ece
Title:	Fear of dengue returns to Varadaiahpalem mandal of Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Chittoor, SSU-Andhra Pradesh			

After a gap of 10 days, the fear of dengue has returned to Varadaiahpalem mandal, with the fresh case of a 13-year-old girl from Matterimitta village. The girl's family members said she was currently undergoing treatment at the General Hospital in Chennai, where she was admitted a couple of days ago.

Resurfacing of the dreaded fever in the already affected mandal has led to a depressed and agitated atmosphere in the village. Since September 1 this year, nearly 30 casualties due to viral fevers were reported in the area.

A WHO team had also rushed to the mandal last month after reports of suspected yellow fever prevalence.

Over 50 families of Chinna Panduru, Battalavallam and Karipakkam villages were affected by the febrile illness.

Top officials of the medical and health department led by Collector P.S. Pradyumna conducted week-long medical camps in vulnerable villages and shifted the suspect

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

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell: - Phone (011)23946029

Email: - idsppediaalert@gmail.com, idspp-misc@nic.in, idspp-npo@nic.in

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dengue cases to Tirupati hospitals. The medical officer of a government hospital in the mandal is under suspension for dereliction of duties.

Villagers at Matterimitta said that nearly 15 persons were under treatment at Tirupati, Chennai and Nellore hospitals. During the last one week, the fever cases were being shifted to the hospitals in Nellore and Tamil Nadu as the public health centres in Varadaiahpalem mandal are not equipped to handle them.

Focus lost

Though the district administration issued instructions for personal supervision of the area by the medical officials, launching of a door-to-door survey and shifting of cases to referral hospitals, the response slowed down immediately after the WHO team had left the district. With two spells of rain in the mandal, the wet and unsanitary conditions returned, with open drains and stagnant water pools turning breeding ground for mosquitoes.

On the other hand, the public health centres in the mandal continue to face acute staff crunch.

A couple of viral fever patients from Battalavallam village, who were recently discharged from the General Hospital in Chennai, deplored that there was none to monitor their condition at field level during the convalescing period.

Ambulances not sent

It is alleged that though the district administration ordered two ambulances to be deployed in the affected villages for transportation of patients to referral hospitals, nothing had happened and the patients were reportedly forced to travel to Tirupati or Srikalahasti by themselves.

It is widely felt in villages that instead of reaching Tirupati, which is 90 km away, it would be better to go to Chennai, just a few km away, which would save time and expense. Moreover, there was a better response in the hospitals there with encouraging results to the patients, it is said.

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