



22 July 2024

Kerala Regional News

<p>Amoebic meningoencephalitis</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerala has introduced new guidelines to address the threat of amoebic meningoencephalitis, a rare and potentially fatal disease. • The new guidelines, possibly the first of their kind in India, focus on the prevention, diagnosis, and management of this rare yet fatal infection. <p>About Amoebic Meningoencephalitis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause: Primarily caused by the amoebic parasite Naegleria fowleri. In one case, Vermamoeba vermiformis, another free-living amoeba, was identified. • Description: PAM is a severe central nervous system infection characterized by rapid progression and high mortality. The amoeba enters the body through the nasal passages and destroys brain tissue, often leading to severe brain swelling and death. • Occurrence: More common in warmer climates and during warmer months. Typically associated with swimming, diving, or bathing in warm, stagnant freshwater. <p>Diagnosis and Prognosis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptoms: Common signs include headache, fever, nausea, and vomiting, which can mimic bacterial meningitis. • Mortality Rate: The condition has a mortality rate exceeding 97%. Only 11 survivors of confirmed N. fowleri PAM have been documented. • Diagnosis: Early detection is crucial but challenging, as symptoms are similar to other infections and diagnosis is often delayed. <p>Recommended Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History Taking: Inquire about recent nasal exposure to freshwater within the past 14 days for patients presenting with acute meningitis symptoms.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Testing: Perform rapid testing for N. fowleri in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) if there's a history of nasal exposure to freshwater. Alert microbiologists before sending the CSF sample. ● Treatment: Begin a multi-drug regimen and supportive care immediately upon confirmation of PAM through CSF microscopy. Treatment should be managed by a multidisciplinary team, including physicians, intensivists, ID specialists, neurologists, and microbiologists. <p>Preventive Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoidance: Minimize activities that involve diving into stagnant water. Use nose plugs during unavoidable exposures and keep the head above water when swimming in freshwater bodies. ● Water Safety: Use filtered or sterile water for nasal irrigation. Regularly empty and maintain wading pools, and ensure proper chlorination and maintenance of swimming pools and water parks. ● Hygiene Practices: Avoid stirring up sediments in water and prevent water from entering the nose during showers or face washing.
<p>Kerala Brand Initiative</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agriculture Minister P. Prasad announced that all major products in Kerala, including agricultural goods, will eventually be marketed under the 'Kerala Brand.' ● This initiative aims to promote high-quality products and services from Kerala on a global scale. <p>Workshop for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During a workshop organized for FPOs in Alappuzha, Mr. Prasad highlighted the goal of the 'Kerala Brand' to ensure authenticity and quality. ● He noted that over a thousand farming groups have been established under Krishi Bhavans in Kerala, focusing on producing and marketing high-quality products under this brand. <p>Support for Value Addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Minister emphasized that farming collectives would help make agriculture more profitable. ● He encouraged farmers to create value-added products, noting that multinational companies currently profit from such products.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPOs are expected to provide opportunities for farmers to earn from value-added agricultural goods.
<p>IDSFFK 2024</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 16th edition of the International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK) will showcase a special package of 31 animation films. The festival is scheduled to take place in Thiruvananthapuram from July 26 to 31, 2024. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK) is a prestigious film festival held annually in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. It is renowned for showcasing a wide array of documentaries and short films from across the globe, providing a platform for filmmakers to present their work and engage with audiences.
<p>Reconstruction of Historical Structures 'Kalithattu'</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 'kalithattu' structures, which are believed to be over three centuries old and situated on the premises of Vattakad Devi Temple near Vallikkunnam in Alappuzha district, Kerala, are set for reconstruction. <p>Key points:</p> <p>Historical Significance and Current Condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure Details: The two wooden 'kalithattu' structures, located on the north and south sides of the temple, historically served as resting places for traders traveling between Mavelikara and Kollam. These structures have deteriorated over time, with one collapsing on June 27, 2024. Current State: One structure has collapsed, and the other is significantly decomposed, making restoration unfeasible. The plan is to reconstruct both structures, preserving their original design and using wild jack wood, similar to the original construction. <p>Conservation Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural Firm Involved: Studio Maram, a Malappuram-based architecture firm, will lead the conservation project. The firm specializes in using traditional construction methods and materials to preserve historical structures.



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- **Funding Sources:** The project will be financed through CSR funds and crowdfunding, eliminating the need for direct funding from the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB).

Additional Plans:

- **History Museum:** A history museum will be constructed on the temple grounds to **exhibit materials from the current 'kalithattu' and other related artefacts.** This museum aims to highlight the historical significance of the structures.
- **UNESCO Recognition:** The project seeks to secure a place for the 'kalithattu' on **UNESCO's Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.**

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