

A-18 Dengue haemorrhagic fever situation in Sri Lanka

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Since the first outbreak of Dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) in 1989, 3808 clinical cases and 955 serologically confirmed cases have been detected. The case fatality rate (CFR) varied from 3.6 to 6.2%. Most cases were <15 years of age. Majority of the cases were from Colombo and the suburbs. Increasing number of cases are being reported from other major towns. This study analyses the DHF situation in Sri Lanka in 1995.

All blood samples received from suspected DHF cases were tested by the haemagglutination inhibition (HAI) test. Serum aliquots were sent to CDC-Fort Collins for virus isolation and Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) studies. Vector surveillance was carried out in the Colombo Municipality and in 20 suburbs by the Entomological Department.

There were 483 clinically diagnosed and 94 serologically confirmed DHF cases. However convalescent samples had been received only from 14 cases. There were 32 deaths but only 3 were serologically confirmed. The peak incidence was seen in June, July and August. All age groups were affected but most cases were <15 years of age. Cases were reported from most areas in the country. As

in previous years an increase in the Breteau Index of *Aedes albopictus* was seen in the months June, July and August. All DHF cases had evidence of Secondary dengue virus infection.

As in the previous years, in 1995 too, DHF continued to be a problem in Colombo and the suburbs. However as more and more cases are being reported from other major towns in the country, conducting awareness programmes on mosquito control in these areas is important.

Isolation of dengue virus in the laboratory has to be strengthened.