

M'laya tops list in reducing malaria cases in country, says WHO report

(Source: The Shillong Times, WHO, NVBDCP)

Meghalaya has topped the list in reducing malaria cases by 59 per cent in the country, the 'World Malaria Report 2020' prepared by the World Health Organisation (WHO), has said.

Experts believe that by this rate, the hill state can eliminate malaria before the target year of 2030.

The survey was based on mathematical projections of the progress made by endemic zones in reducing the malaria burden.

Meghalaya was able to reduce the malaria cases by as much as 87 per cent in 2019 itself.

BAKDIL among the major organization helps in eliminating Malaria in Garo hills. There has been an 80% reduction in malaria cases in South Garo Hills District since BAKDIL too up the implementation of IMEP in the year 2011.

The state has a target of eliminating the once widespread disease by 2030 and even earlier.

This is a result of regular surveillance and the proper implementation of the 'High Burden to High Impact' programme initiated by the WHO.

The programme was implemented across the country under the National Framework of Malaria Elimination, which is being run by the Union government.

"Two decades from 2000 to 2020 was a period of extraordinary success in malaria control," the report said.

As many as 1.5 billion cases and 7.6 million deaths were averted worldwide, according to the WHO report.

India contributed to the largest absolute reductions in the WHO South-East Asia Region, from about 20 million cases in 2000 to about 5.6 million in 2019.

Anti-malaria drug resistance was also growing fast, according to another WHO report released last month.

Five countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), including Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar have been the epicentres of anti-malarial drug resistance. "Incidentally, three states in India's North East also reported resistance to commonly used drug against malaria," the report added.

Unfortunately, the big gains made have levelled off — a trend observed over recent years — and more so in the wake of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

“The restrictions related to control the pandemic caused disruptions in essential malaria services,” the report added.

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