



Mystery Illness of Eluru

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Why in News

Recently, the Andhra Pradesh government has requested the **All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)-New Delhi** and the **Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT)** in Hyderabad to conduct a **long-term study** to determine the causes of the **mystery illness in Eluru** in West Godavari district.

Key Points

- Over **70%** of Eluru town, in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district, has been **affected by a mysterious illness**.
One person died due to the illness while **550 people were hospitalised**.

- **About Mystery Illness of Eluru:**

- **Symptoms:**

- **Convulsions, seizures, dizziness and nausea.**

- **Convulsion** is a medical condition where **body muscles contract and relax rapidly and repeatedly**, resulting in uncontrolled actions of the body.
- **Seizure** is a **sudden, uncontrolled electrical disturbance in the brain**. It can cause changes in behavior, movements or feelings, and in levels of consciousness.
- **Dizziness** is a term used to describe a range of sensations, such as **feeling faint, weak or unsteady**.
- **Nausea** is **stomach discomfort** and the sensation of wanting to vomit.

- The **seizures** last for 3 to 5 minutes **followed usually by vomiting or loss of consciousness**.

- **Recovery:**

Most victims being treated are **getting fine within one or two hours and are discharged**.

- **Victims:**

People of all age groups, **men, women and even small children are among the victims**.

- **Possible Causes:**

- The primary suspicion is on **water contamination by heavy metals**.

- **Excessive use of bleaching powder and chlorine in sanitation programmes** as part of **Covid-19** prevention measures might have caused water contamination.

- **AIIMS-New Delhi** found traces of **lead and nickel** in blood samples of 25 victims out of the 45 samples sent by the state government.

- Scientists suspect that **pesticide or insecticide has seeped into drinking water sources**.

Eluru **receives water through canals from both Godavari and Krishna rivers**. The **canals pass through agricultural fields where runoff laced with pesticides** mixes with water in the canals.

Source:IE