

A Study of Malaria in Kerala

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Abstract

Background: To the best knowledge of the author, there is no available literature on the status of Malaria in Kerala. Hence the preparation of this document.

Objectives: To find out the parameters of Malaria in Kerala till as recently as possible.

Methods: By studying the documents prepared by the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases (NCVBD) and doing a web search on Malaria in Kerala.

Results: It is seen that the Annual Parasite Incidence of Malaria in Kerala had come down to the very low level of 0.03 in 2018 and that there were only 309 cases of Malaria in Kerala during 2021.

Conclusions: Kerala is very close to achieving near elimination goals but will have to take active measures to reach it.

Keywords: Malaria; Kerala; API; NCVBD; WHO.

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INTRODUCTION

Kerala is in the south-western part of India. It is bordered by Karnataka in the north, Tamil Nadu in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west and the Indian Ocean in the south.

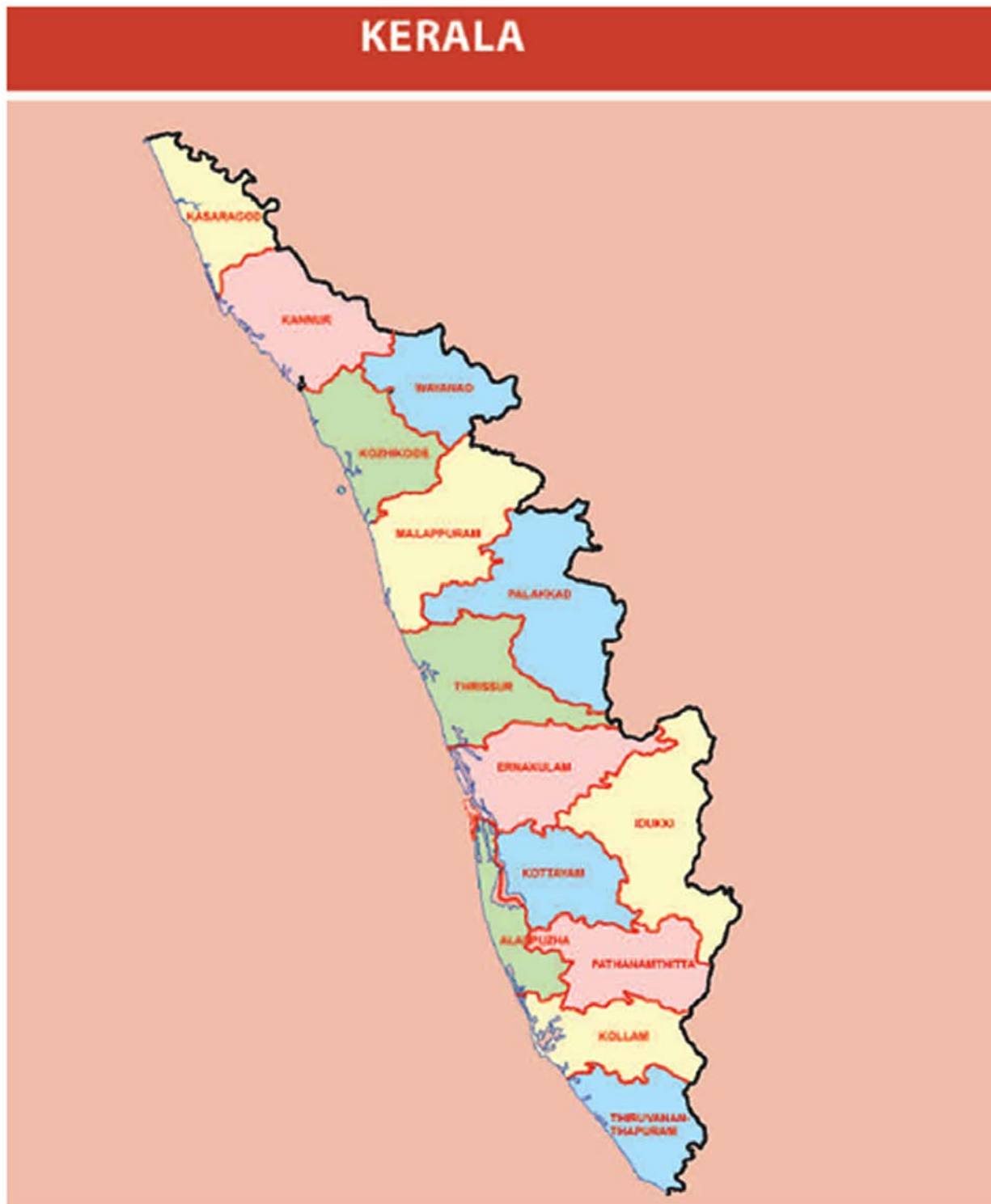


Fig. 1: Map of Kerala [Source: (1)]

MATERIAL & METHODS

The study design included analysis of the annual reports of the Malaria Division of the

National Centre for Vector-Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC) for 2017 and 2018 and a web search for information on Malaria in Kerala.

RESULTS

According to the most recent data available on the NCVBDC website (data for 2018), the API for Kerala was 0.03.² It's comparison with the API from 2017 can be seen from the following table:

Table 1: API of Telangana, 2017 and 2018

State	Year	
	2017	2018
Telangana	0.03	0.03

[Sources: (2) and (3)]

Here, it is seen that the API in 2018 was the same as that as in 2017.

In 2018, the API was not uniform throughout the state but varied from district to district. This can be seen from the following table:

Table 2: API of the Districts of Kerala, 2018

S. No.	District	API
1	Thiruvananthapuram	0.02
2	Kollam	0.01
3	Pathanamthitta	0.03
4	Alappuzha	0.01
5	Kottayam	0.02
6	Idukky	0.02
7	Ernakulam	0.03
8	Thrissur	0.03
9	Palakkad	0.01
10	Malappuram	0.02
11	Kozhikode	0.03
12	Wayanad	0.02
13	Kannur	0.04
14	Kasargod	0.11
State	Kerala	0.03

[Source:(2)]

Further search revealed the following information on Malaria cases in Kerala during 2019, 2020 and 2021 and is shown in the following table:

Table 3: Data on Malaria Cases in Kerala, 2019, 2020 and 2021

Reference Period	Number of Malaria Cases
2019	656
2020	268
2021	309

[Sources: (4), (5) and (6)]

DISCUSSION

Beginning in 2019, there has been a decline in the incidence of Malaria in Kerala with a mild increase during 2021.

In 2016, the Government of India adopted a framework for Malaria Elimination in India covering the period 2016 – 2030.⁷ This was based on WHO's Global Technical Strategy for Malaria covering the period 2016 – 2030 which was adopted in 2015 and updated in 2021.⁸

The aim is to reach zero Malaria cases by 2027 and then wait for three years before WHO can grant Malaria free status certification. It is already nearly the middle of 2022 and India is about to reach the halfway mark of the period from 2016 to 2027.

CONCLUSION

Although Kerala did not reach zero Malaria cases in 2021, it did reach an API of 0.03 during 2018. Therefore, it is a good candidate for being among the first few states in the country close to being able to achieve near elimination goals.

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