

chapare virus

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In news

Recently, the researchers from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have discovered that a rare Ebola-like illness that is believed to have first originated in rural Bolivia in 2004 can spread through human-to-human transmission

What is the Chapare virus?

- The Chapare hemorrhagic fever is caused by the same arenavirus family that is responsible for illnesses such as the Ebola virus disease (EVD).
- It is named Chapare after the province in which it was first observed, causes a hemorrhagic fever much like Ebola along with abdominal pain, vomiting, bleeding gums, skin rash and pain behind the eyes.
- Viral hemorrhagic fevers are a severe and life-threatening kind of illness that can affect multiple organs and damage the walls of blood vessels.

How does it spread to human beings?

- CDC website mentions that arenaviruses like the Chapare virus are generally carried by rats and can be transmitted through direct contact with the infected rodent, its urine and droppings, or through contact with an infected person.

Key findings of the researchers

- Researchers from the US' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed that by examining the 2019 outbreak in Bolivia, they had found the virus can spread from person to person, particularly in healthcare settings.
- They found that the disease can be transmitted sexually

- They also discovered signs of the virus in rodents in the “home and nearby farmlands” surrounding the first person infected during the 2019 outbreak

Various threats posed by the Chapare virus

- Scientists have pointed out that the Chapare virus is much more difficult to catch than the coronavirus as it is not transmissible via the respiratory route.
- Instead, Chapare spreads only through direct contact with bodily fluids.
- As per the scientists healthcare workers and family members who come in close contact with infected people are particularly at risk of contracting the illness

Area of transmission

- The disease is also known to be most commonly transmitted in more tropical regions, particularly in certain parts of South America where the small-eared pigmy rice rat is commonly found.