

## A Study of Malaria in Lakshadweep Islands

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### Abstract

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

**Objectives:** To find out the parameters of Malaria in Lakshadweep Islands till as recently as possible.

**Methods:** By studying the documents prepared by the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases (NCVBD) and the website of Department of Medical & Health Services, Lakshadweep Islands.

**Results:** It is seen that the Annual Parasite Incidence (API) of Malaria in Lakshadweep Islands was at the low value of 0.08 in 2018 and there were no indigenous cases of Malaria in the islands. All the cases of Malaria seen there were imported cases.

**Conclusions:** Lakshadweep Islands may be identified as having achieved Malaria-elimination goals.

**Keywords:** Malaria, Lakshadweep Islands, API, NCVBD, WHO

### INTRODUCTION

Lakshadweep Islands lie towards the south-western part of the Indian mainland. They are bounded by the Arabian Sea in the west and north, the Indian Ocean in the south and the Lakshadweep Sea in the east.

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Anti-Malaria activities are carried out throughout the Lakshadweep Islands. While six percent of the total population is covered for active surveillance, four percent is monitored for passive surveillance each year. Blood samples are collected from all the fever cases and from contacts and during surveys. The Malaria positive cases are diagnosed and treated. Focal spraying with insecticides and observance of Anti-Malaria month during June to create awareness among the people are other measures taken.<sup>2</sup>

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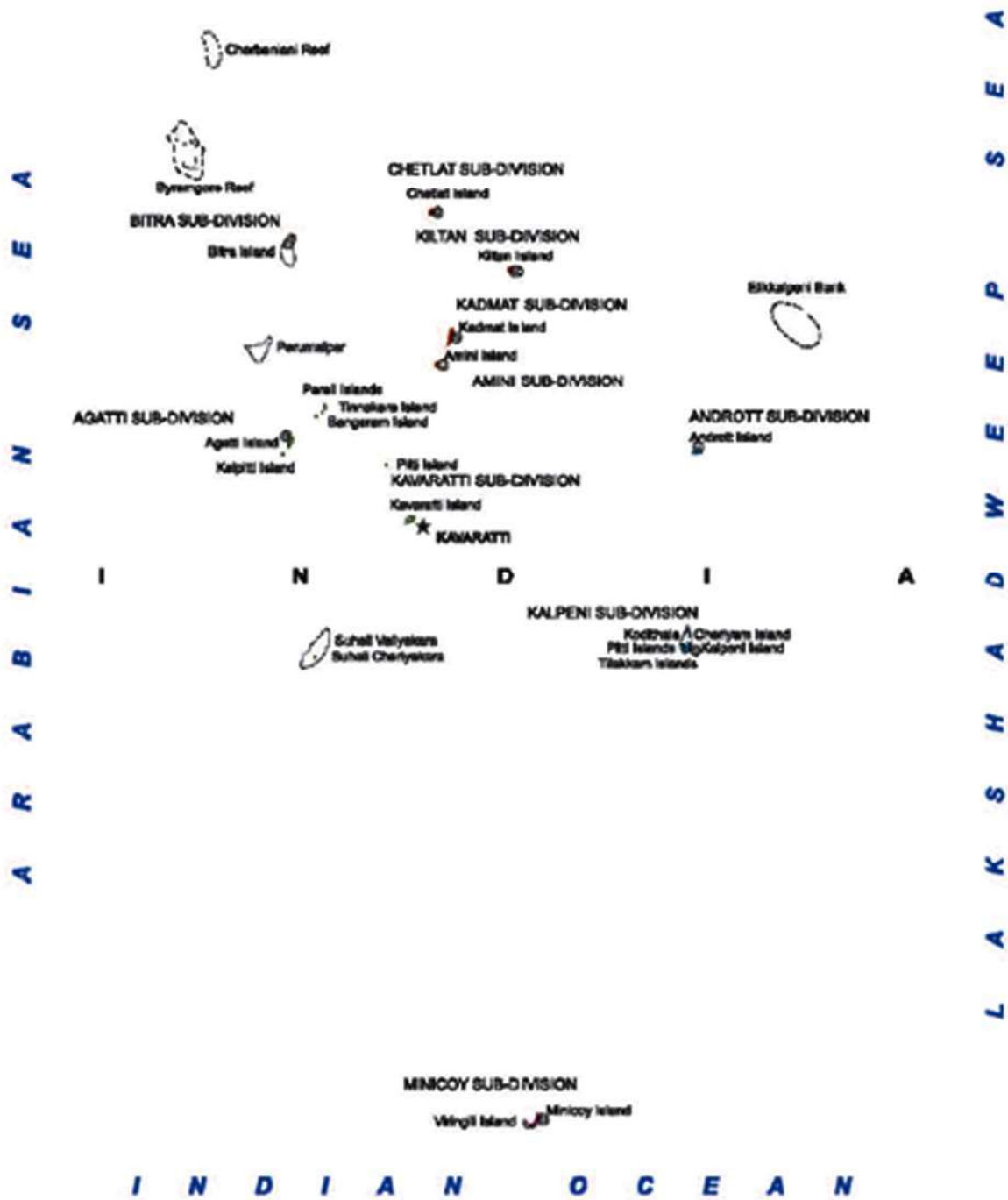


Fig. 1: Map of Lakshadweep Islands [Source: (1)]

**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 study of the website of Department of Medical & Health Services, Lakshadweep Islands.

## RESULTS

According to the most recent data available on the NCVBDC website (data for 2018), the API for Lakshadweep Islands was 0.08.<sup>2</sup> It's comparison with the API from 2017 can be seen from the following table:

Thus, it is seen that the API in 2018 was four times as that seen in 2017.

**Table 1:** API of Lakshadweep Islands, 2017 and 2018

Union Territory	Year	
	2017	2018
Lakshadweep Islands	0.02	0.08

*Sources:* (2) and (3)

A study of the website of Department of Medical & Health Services, Lakshadweep Islands revealed that Malaria is totally controlled except for a few imported cases.<sup>4</sup>

## DISCUSSION

Indigenous Malaria does not exist in Lakshadweep Islands. The Malaria which occurs there is due to imported cases. However, as seen from the data, the rate of importation seems to be rising.

In 2016, the Government of India adopted a framework for Malaria Elimination in India covering the period 2016–2030.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

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 Lakshadweep Islands did not reach zero Malaria cases in 2018, whatever disease is occurring is due to imported cases. Therefore, it is a good candidate for being the first administrative jurisdiction in the country to be able to achieve Malaria elimination goals.

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