

i SUMMARY

Epidemiological findings of the first major outbreak of Japanese encephalitis which occurred between November, 1985, and February, 1986, in Anuradhapura and the surrounding districts, Sri Lanka, are herewith presented.

Out of the 326 cases admitted during the period of 20th November, 1985, to 20th February, 1986, 120 cases were serologically confirmed. There were 65 deaths. The case fatality rate was 19.9%. The Anuradhapura District had 288 cases, and out of that, 105 were serologically confirmed. The incidence rate was 45.6 per 100,000 population and the mortality rate was 7.9 per 100,000 population.

The Nuwaragampalatha Central Assistant Government Agent (AGA) Division, had the highest incidence rate of 104 per 100,000 population while the Nochchiyagama AGA Division, had the highest mortality rate of 18.5 per 100,000 population.

The highest age specific incidence rate (71.9 per 100,000 population) and the highest age specific mortality rate (57.5 per 100,000 population) were seen in the age group of 65-69. The case fatality rate was high (100%) in the 55-59 and 60-64 age groups. The above-15 year age group incidence was higher than the below-15 year age group. The difference was statistically significant ($P < .05$).

The sex specific incidence rate was higher (54.2 per 100,000 population) in males. The difference was statistically significant ($P < .01$).

The inter-relationship between the patients and their occupations, period of stay in the district and animal-rearing habits too, have been discussed. Comparing the epidemiological findings of the countries in the South-East Asian region, the probable factors which led to the occurrence of the outbreak, are enumerated.