

## **Kolkata, India**

**Fatal virus spreads:** Airports across Asia went on alert last week as authorities scrambled to contain an outbreak of deadly Nipah virus in Kolkata. Nipah causes fever, headache, cough, and muscle pain that can progress to fatal brain swelling. There is no treatment, and up to 70% of those infected die within two days of symptom onset. The outbreak began last month in India's West Bengal state, where Indian health authorities confirmed two infections among nurses at a Kolkata hospital. Now Thailand and Pakistan have begun Covid-style screening of passengers from West Bengal. South Asian countries, especially Bangladesh and India, see small outbreaks of Nipah nearly every year, but public awareness of the disease is not widespread. The virus tends to be transmitted to humans from animals such as fruit bats, and humans can pass it to other humans.