

China sets up world's largest mosquito factory to fight dengue

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Beijing: China has set up the world's largest mosquito factory in northwestern Guangzhou province to tackle dengue fever by releasing one million sterilised mosquitoes every week in a bid to dilute their population with insects that don't carry the disease.

In Guangzhou's Science City area, the team leader, Xi Zhiyong, is in charge of releasing the produced mosquitoes to the Shazi Island every week to combat dengue fever.

This was the first trial test in the field and it has been proved to reduce the mosquito population by 90 per cent, state run Global Times reported.

Releasing sterilised mosquito to the wild is one of several innovative attempts to tackle dengue fever by diluting the mosquito population with insects that don't carry the disease.

The mosquito-borne sickness causes pain so agonising it is also known as "breakbone disease".

Last year China had the worst outbreak in two decades, with more than 47,000 cases, almost all in the Guangdong province.

Catch one strain the person will be immune to the virus in the future but if bitten by a mosquito carrying another one of the strains, the chances to develop severe dengue, also known as dengue haemorrhagic fever very high, the report said.

No vaccine or treatment is available and recently it has caused about 22,000 deaths a year worldwide, mostly among children.

- PTI