

## Kala-azar outbreak kills 10 people in Jonglei

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October 12, 2012 (JUBA) - At least ten people have died and 42 others admitted in to hospital following the recent outbreak of Kala-azar in Ayod County in South Sudan's Jonglei State, local leaders say.

Seven people died in Pagil Payam [district] while three died in Jech Boma [sub-district], according to Nelson Kuach Thoat, a member of Jonglei State Legislative Assembly representing Ayod.

Cases of Kala-azar are common in the water-logged remote areas of Ayod, Pigi and Fangak counties of northern Jonglei state. Annual reports of death and hospitalization from the disease during the rainy season are not new but little has been done to combat the situation.

Over fifty people died of Kala-azar last year in Fangak and Ayod between May and June.

Local leaders have blamed the recent heavy rains for this year's Kala-azar cases. The MP said that on 9 October it rained for almost 24 straight.

Kala-azar is a parasite-carried infectious disease transmitted by sand flies. The disease is fatal if not treated after few days.

The Commissioner of Ayod, James Mawich Makuach, told UN Radio Miraya in a phone interview on Wednesday that shops and residential areas have been swept away by floods in Ayod and called on the UN and government to help.

Jonglei State's Minister of Health, Jehan Makuei Deng, says an assessment to area will commence soon but flooded roads have made Twic East, Duk and Ayod County inaccessible.

### **FLOOD IN AYOD**

Hundreds of people are said to have been displaced from Ayod's villages in the west to the County headquarters due to floods following heavy rains that started on Tuesday carried on through to Friday.

"The rains have destroyed residential houses, market, schools and local clinics in Ayod", said MP Kuony.

Rains were reported to have destroyed more than 600 shops in Ayod center. "No single shop is operating in the market", he added.

A man is also reported drowned in the water while attempting to cross to his home on the over side of the river on Tuesday.

Kuony urged the government and UN agencies to intervene quickly to the safe lives of the people in Ayod.

(ST)