

Govt, group ordered to pay in vaccine suit

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The government and the Research Foundation for Microbial Diseases at Osaka University in Suita, Osaka Prefecture, were ordered Thursday to pay 34 million yen to the family of a boy who died after receiving the now-banned measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine in 1991.

They were also told to pay 121 million yen to the family of a girl who fell seriously ill after being given the vaccine.

The government has recognized 1,065 people as eligible for financial help as a result of side-effects they experienced after being given the MMR vaccine.

They comprise the biggest single group of victims under the government's program to compensate sufferers of vaccination-related health problems.

According to Thursday's ruling at the Osaka District Court, **Daisuke Kinoshita**, the eldest son of Masami and Kayoko Kinoshita of Suita, suffered from a high fever two days after receiving the MMR vaccine in June 1991.

He was diagnosed with serious brain damage and died about 14 months later at the age of 2 years, 11 months.

Hana Ueno, 13, of Iwate Prefecture, displayed similar symptoms two weeks after being vaccinated in April 1991. She also suffered brain damage and remains severely disabled.

Judge Shinichi Yoshikawa said it was reasonable to surmise, based on the evidence, that the children's problems had been caused by the MMR vaccine.

He said the research foundation had altered the way it produced the vaccine without

government approval and must have been aware that such a change could have serious consequences.

The government, he added, had failed to ensure that the foundation observed the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law.

The court, however, dismissed a third case concerning a boy from Hyogo Prefecture, saying his death had been caused by influenza, not the MMR vaccine.