



ECTAD South Asia Weekly Animal Disease E-Information

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INDIA

27 Jul 2015: Zoonotic Diseases rising in the Kerala

More than a dozen of the 200 zoonotic diseases transmitted to human beings across the world are actively prevalent in Kerala, mainly due to consumption of meat from unscientifically slaughtered animals. Even as new diseases like kysanur forest disease (monkey fever) and kala azar are emerging, the Animal Husbandry Department and the State Government are dragging their feet in terms of taking preventive measures. In Kerala, where around 90 per cent of the population is non-vegetarian, diseases like avian influenza, dengue fever, chikungunya and leptospirosis are highly prevalent. The incidence of tuberculosis, anthrax, brucellosis, zoonotic rabies, salmonellosis and worm infestations and also very high in the state, owing mainly to poor waste management and environmental issues. [read more](#)

27 Jul 2015: 66 people have died of JE in Assam

At least 66 people have died of Japanese encephalitis this year across Assam, chief minister Tarun Gogoi on Monday said. "So far, 66 deaths have been reported from various districts in Assam. Though the severity is lesser this year than the previous years, we are taking it very seriously," [read more](#)

28 Jul 2015: Mutated bacteria leptospira resistant to drugs, heat

Scientists at the Premier Regional Medical Reference Centre at Port Blair have found that the bacterial species that causes leptospirosis is no longer socially aloof, as has been held for years. Leptospira now interacts aggressively with other organisms, in the soil and water, becoming stronger and smarter, while posing a greater threat to public health. The study is the first to demonstrate how leptospira mutates to form a biofilm, an extra protective layer of microbial cells, when it interacts with other organisms in water. Its relationship with azospirillum brasilense, a bacteria routinely found in plants, was particularly intriguing and scary. [read more](#)

OTHERS

28 Jul 2015: South Korea declares end to MERS outbreak

South Korea on Tuesday (Jul 28) declared an end to a deadly outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) that killed 36 people, triggered widespread panic and stymied growth in Asia's fourth-largest economy. Addressing a meeting of government officials in Seoul, Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn said the danger posed by what was the biggest outbreak of the virus outside Saudi Arabia was over. "After weighing various circumstances, the medical personnel and the government judge that the people can now be free from worry," Mr Hwang said. "I ask the public to shake off all concerns over MERS and to resume normal daily activities, including economic, cultural, leisure and school activities." [read more](#)

30 Jul 2015: Bird flu (H5N2) vaccine works on chickens: USDA

Scientists have developed a vaccine strain that has tested 100 percent effective in protecting chickens from bird flu and testing is underway to see if it also protects turkeys, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack told the House Agriculture Committee at a July 22 hearing. If it does, the agency plans to quickly license it and is seeking funding from the Office of Management and Budget to stockpile it nationally. "Hopefully we'll be able to get a lot of folks working collaboratively together and we stockpile enough so that if this does hit and hits us hard we're in a position to respond quickly," Vilsack said. Developing a vaccine targeted to the H5N2 virus that has killed 48 million birds since early March in 15 states is one aspect of planning for a potential recurrence of the bird flu. Scientists believe the virus was spread through the droppings of wild birds migrating north to nesting grounds. They're concerned it could return this fall when birds fly south for the winter or again next spring. Not all poultry producers are on the same page when it comes to using vaccines. Turkey producers tend to favor vaccination to protect flocks because turkey immune systems appear more vulnerable to viruses. Some egg producers and farmers who raise broilers often resist vaccination programs because of the possible impact on export markets. U.S. producers export nearly \$6 billion worth of poultry and egg products yearly. [read more](#)