

South Asia Weekly Animal Disease E-Information

Regional Support Unit for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (RSU-SAARC)

INDIA

07 Jan 2016: Anthrax fear in Villupuram of Tamil Nadu as 10 cattle die

The Anthrax scare has once again hit Villupuram district for the third time in three years after at least 10 cattle reportedly died of the disease in Anaikarai Kottalam village near Kallakurichi over the past one week. While locals blame the Animal Husbandry Department for the cattle deaths, the Animal Disease Analysing Unit said they had completed the vaccination process for about 8,600 cattle in 19 villages surrounding Anaikarai Kottalam and the situation was under control. [read more](#)

07 Jan 2016: Cattle hit by foot and mouth disease in Faridkot villages in Punjab

While there are reports of casualty among cows due to foot and mouth disease in some villages of Faridkot in the last two days, the Animal Husbandry Department is yet to get the required number of vaccines to control the disease. Against its requirement of 1.60 lakh vaccines for Faridkot district, the Animal Husbandry Department has received 80,000 vaccines to control the disease. "Our first priority is to use the vaccine in *gaushalas*, where the numbers of cows are quite high, as the FMD is a highly infectious disease, said Deputy Director, Animal Husbandry Department, Faridkot. [read more](#)

02 Jan 2016: 905 people lost their lives due to influenza A (H1N1) in Maharashtra in 2015

Influenza A H1N1 infection resulted in the death of 905 people in Maharashtra in 2015. This number is 35% higher than the number in 2011, when the infection was at its peak. 8,583 cases of influenza A (H1N1) have been reported by the state in 2015. This clearly indicates that the mortality rate was more than 10%. Only 30,000 people in Maharashtra have taken the vaccination whereas 1 lakh vaccines have been procured by the state government in August. The mortality rate was witnessed higher among pregnant women, diabetic patients and people with hypertension. As such, a free vaccination programme was also initiated by the State Health Department in August for pregnant women. Later in December, it was extended to the diabetic patients and people with hypertension. [read more](#)

01 Jan 2016: Goat deaths trigger anthrax scare in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha

Death of more than a 100 goats in the last couple of days has led to fear of anthrax outbreak in a village close to Dukura forest in Mayurbhanj district. Forest and veterinary officials though, are yet to ascertain the cause of deaths. The carcasses were first spotted in Mahalibasa village and later, nearby villages also reported sudden deaths of goats. Though no visible symptom of any disease was found, villagers said the animals developed swelling in the neck, stomach and died. A team of experts from Animal Diseases Research Institute (ADRI) in Cuttack visited Mahalibasa village. [read more](#)

SRI LANKA

27 Dec 2015: 22 rabies death cause for alarm: Health Ministry

Alarmed by the deaths of 22 people due to rabies this year, the Health Ministry has intensified the battle against the deadly disease with dog owners being urged to get their pets vaccinated immediately. Last year, 19 persons died of rabies, while annually around 3,600 people sought treatment for rabies in public hospitals countrywide, costing the state a staggering Rs. 350 million a year, Public Health Vet Services Director said. He said most of the cases were due to dog bites although people had sought treatment for rabies after being bitten by squirrels and other home reared animals. In 80 percent of the cases, the victims including owners, neighbours and visitors were infected with the disease after being bitten by household dogs. Also most of the cases were reported from the Western Province. [read more](#)

OTHERS

02 Jan 2016: State of emergency declared as Brazil faces virus that shrinks babies' brains

Between 2014 and 2015, Brazil has seen the number of babies born with microcephaly - a rare and devastating neurological disorder that causes newborns to develop abnormally small skulls and brains - increase dramatically, from 200 to nearly 3,000. Brazil's worst affected regions have declared a state of emergency, and health officials are drawing a link between the sudden increase in microcephaly, which can lead to severe brain damage and often death, and a recent epidemic of the mosquito-borne Zika virus. The Brazilian government estimates that around 1.5 million locals have been infected with the virus since May 2015. [read more](#)

02 Jan 2016: Repeal of meat-labelling law makes it harder to find product's origin

After more than a decade of wrangling, Congress repealed a labelling law last month that required retailers to include the animal's country of origin on packages of red meat. It is a major victory for the meat industry, which had fought the law in Congress and the courts since the early 2000s. Lawmakers said they had no choice but to get rid of the labels after the World Trade Organization repeatedly ruled against them. The WTO recently authorized Canada and Mexico, which had challenged the law, to begin more than \$1 billion in economic retaliation against the United States. Congress first required the labels in 2002 amid fears of mad cow disease from imported cattle. The labels weren't on most packages until 2009, though, due to delays pushed by the meat industry. [read more](#)