



Major diseases situation in the Sub-region

During the months of November and December 2011, outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 were reported from Bangladesh, India and Nepal. While the outbreaks in Bangladesh and Nepal were in domestic poultry, the outbreak in India was confined to crows (*Crovis splendens*) in Jharkhand state.

No other significant disease incidence was reported from any other country in the sub-region.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza in poultry

Bangladesh

After a gap of one month, new H5N1 HPAI outbreaks occurred in districts Manikganj, Khulna, Bagerhat and Rajbari during November-December 2011. A commercial layer poultry farm was affected on 19 December 2011 at Mongla Upazila, Bagerhat District, Khulna Division. Out of 720 susceptible chickens, 320 died and 400 were destroyed. In district Meherpur at Sajan poultry farm, after detection of HPAI outbreak, 1803 birds were culled and 994 eggs were destroyed. ([Source: www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int))

Nepal

The Government of Nepal declared a HPAI H5N1 outbreak at Madhyapur Thimi Municipality-16 locality of Bhaktapur district in Bagmati zone on 2 Dec 2011 in a mixed backyard chicken and duck population. Out of a susceptible population of 396 birds mortality in 88 cases was noticed. Following the declaration of outbreak, 308 birds were culled and compensated. ([Source: www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int))

Highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild birds (crows)

India

Mortality in about 1000 crows was noticed over a period of more than one month in some districts of Jharkhand state.

The crows first started dying mysteriously in the month of October 2011 in Jamshedpur district. This was followed by crow deaths in Ranchi, Bokaro, Khunti, Sahibganj and other districts of the state. The High Security Animal Diseases



Map showing HPAI outbreaks in the region during November-December, 2011. Map prepared by Regional Support Unit/Regional Epidemiology Center (South Asia), FAO-Nepal based on country reports sent to OIE.

Laboratory, Bhopal detected HPAI H5N1 virus from the sampled crows. Surveillance in the domestic poultry did not indicate any on-going disease incidence. The state government issued general advisory message to the public to minimize contact with dead and sick crows and dispose the dead crows by deep burial.

The State and Central Governments initiated actions to limit the spread of virus to poultry. The Government of India requested FAO to help the Department of Animal

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Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries with its experience and expertise on control of avian influenza in wild birds. Consequently, FAO activated the Crisis Management Center-Animal Health based in Rome to prepare for a field mission in the beginning of January 2012.

Foot and mouth disease progressive control pathway (PCP-FMD) workshop in Kathmandu, 22-24 November, 2011

PCP-FMD workshop for the SAARC region was held in Kathmandu in November 2011. Dr. Chris Bartels from EuFMD, FAO HQ facilitated the workshop. Twenty six participants from SAARC member countries attended the workshop. The workshop was inaugurated by Dr Nar Bahadur Rajwar, Director General and Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Livestock Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Nepal.

The objective for the workshop was to draft the strategy (Roadmap) for regional foot and mouth disease control in the SAARC countries between 2011 and 2020, using the principles of PCP-FMD. During the three-day deliberations, through interactive presentation and group works, the current situation on animal production, extent of FMD infection and implementation of FMD control measures in each of the SAARC countries were assessed.

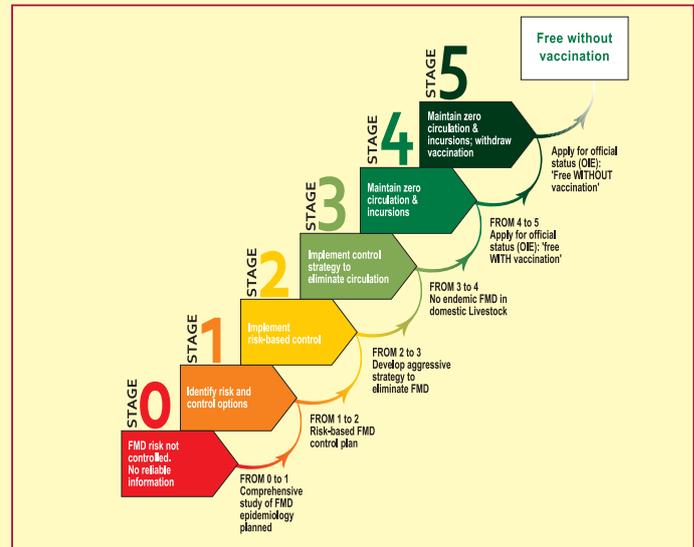
Among the policymakers, Joint Secretary (Livestock Health), Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Government of Bangladesh participated and contributed towards PCP road map for FMD in the region.

It was observed that India is the biggest economy and with the highest claims in controlling FMD and it plays a major role in this region. It is necessary for the Indian authorities to support the regional roadmap approach and to facilitate

in vaccine production and delivery, diagnostic and epidemiology capacity building.

The main recommendations of this workshop are related to structuring a regional FMD approach:

1. Countries continue to use the principles and tools of the Progressive Control Pathway (PCP) for FMD for planning, implementation and assessment of their national FMD control strategy.



Pathway of the 6 stages of PCP-FMD

2. Countries adhere to the regional roadmap developed during this workshop, by meeting yearly and presenting progress (and setbacks) on FMD control to the regional forum.
3. Establishing of a SAARC FMD working group (FMD-WG) with the objective to safeguard a consistent approach for regional FMD control and to monitor regional progress of FMD control.
4. Through RSU, regional workshops are organized to address issues such as biosecurity, risk communications, rapid response at borders, animal movement management and quarantine, trace back and forward.
5. EuFMD/FAO tools on active surveillance (repeated seromonitoring to assess implementation and risk mitigation of FMD control measures), protocols on disease outbreak investigation and checklist for vaccination programme assessment should be disseminated by REC into the sub-region.

Workshop to develop regional roadmap for progressive control of peste des petits ruminants (PPR) workshop in Kathmandu, 7-9 December, 2011

During the 3-day workshop, participants coming from SAARC member countries were involved to develop regional road



Participants attending workshop on Foot and mouth disease-progressive control pathway (PCP-FMD) in Kathmandu.

map for the progressive control of PPR. A total of 23 participants from SAARC countries were involved during the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to understand the control strategies to enhance the prospect of PPR eradication in the SAARC member states. Taking cue from global rinderpest eradication, the participants were hopeful that PPR will be eradicated in a timeframe.

Dr. Santanu Kumar Bandyopadhyay, Senior Technical Coordinator and Team Leader, ECTAD, FAO Viet Nam and an eminent virologist facilitated the workshop.

The workshop participants recommended that to control PPR in South Asia region several issues need to be addressed. The major issues identified were, policy issues, institutional setup and capacity building, outbreak response and contingency plans, legislative support, understanding the epidemiology of the disease including surveillance, outbreak investigation and reporting, vaccine and vaccination, diagnosis, impact assessment in relation to food security and poverty alleviation, advocacy and communication and finally monitoring and evaluation of the control programme in each country.



Participants from member countries attending workshop on Regional Roadmap for progressive control of Peste des petits ruminants (PPR).

RSU support to SAARC Member states

Support to India

RSU staff supported ECTAD-India programme through back stopping missions. Initially Dr. Mohinder Oberoi supported the ECTAD-India team to kick start a surveillance training in Tripura state in November 2011. Later Dr Venkatasubbarao Mandava was temporarily shifted to New Delhi to support ECTAD-India surveillance training activities. He technically assisted two surveillance trainings in Assam and West Bengal in December 2011 and supported the initiation of field epidemiology training programme for veterinarians (FETPV) planned in Chennai.

Support to Nepal

The RSU extended technical support to the ECTAD unit in

Nepal to strengthen emergency preparedness for HPAI. Dr. Khadak Singh Bisht, RSU Assistant Coordinator facilitated a table-top exercise as a resource person on highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and outbreak response which was jointly organized by FAO Avian Influenza programme in collaboration with Department of Livestock Services (DLS), Nepal.

RLDL-FMD expert conducts training in Bhutan, November 2011

A scientist from the Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratory (RLDL) on foot and mouth disease (FMD), India was deputed to National Center for Animal Health, Serbithang, Bhutan to assess the laboratory capacity in terms of FMD diagnosis. The scientist conducted a laboratory training programme for two weeks from November 2 to 16, 2011 in Bhutan. The training focused mainly on the use of various diagnostic techniques and protocols for different types of ELISAs and multiplex PCR. Laboratory protocols and manual was developed and supplied to the laboratory. The scientist also helped in establishing the laboratory facility to carry out ELISA and PCR for FMD virus typing.

RLDL-HPAI expert helps Bangladesh in hands-on training for diagnosis of H5N1 HPAI, October-November 2011

Considering the current situation of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 outbreaks in Bangladesh, a scientist from Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratory on Avian Influenza, Pakistan visited Bangladesh from 25 October to 15 November 2011 to train scientists for diagnosis of HPAI H5N1 to meet the international standards for avian influenza viruses (AIVs) diagnosis.

During this period a number of training programmes were designed. This included identification of lecture topics for general introduction of AIVs, field sampling and its transportation, developing protocols for PCR and Real Time PCR based diagnosis of AIVs. A training program for HPAI H5N1 diagnosis, differential diagnosis and proficiency testing was also designed and conducted.

Workshops and Meetings Attended

Logical Framework Approach (LFA) training in Kathmandu

A 3-day training workshop on 'Using the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) for project planning and monitoring' was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 14 to 16 November, 2011. Thirteen FAO staff members from SAARC and ASEAN Regional Support Units and facilitators from FAO HQ, Rome attended the training. It was also a platform to discuss and deliberate on HPEDs and trans-border issues among the

members. The objectives of the training were:

- Use of LFA for project planning and monitoring, including sessions on M&E as part of Project Cycle Management (PCM), LFA as a Result Based Management approach, and the LF as a planning and monitoring tool.
- To revise the LF of OSRO/RAS/901/EC and propose a user-friendly format for M&E.

Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI) meeting

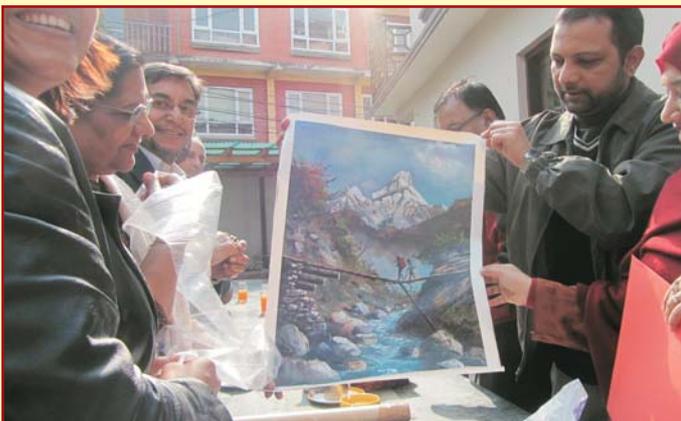
An Expert Consultation on Strengthening the Veterinary Profession in India was organized jointly by Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International (CABI) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) from 25-26 November 2011 in New Delhi, India. The overall aim was to strengthen the veterinary profession to increase its impact on improving food security, food safety and public health, and the livelihoods of producers which is of the primary importance to India. Dr. Venkatasubbarao Mandava, RSU Laboratory Coordinator participated in the workshop.

LIMS Workshop, Phuket, Thailand

Dr. Venkatasubbarao Mandava, RSU Laboratory Coordinator participated in Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) workshop organized by FAO-RAP in collaboration with the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) and Department of Livestock Development, Thailand. The workshop held from 8-9 December 2011 focused to develop guidelines for selecting Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS). Supported by the HPED project, country laboratory experts from Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka also participated in this workshop.

RSU News

Mr. Nafis Khan, Program Officer leaves



Farewell to Mr. Nafis Khan, the outgoing Programme Officer, ECTAD.

Mr. Nafis Khan, Programme Officer, ECTAD was transferred to the FAO-Sub-Regional Office for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States and Yemen (SNG) in Abu Dhabi, within the region of FAO-RNE. He was associated with the unit for nearly 2 years. RSU wishes him good luck in his new assignment.

Dr. Khadak Singh Bisht joins as RSU Assistant Coordinator



Dr. Khadak Singh Bisht, joined RSU as Assistant Coordinator in November, 2011. Before that he served for Nepal Government under Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. Dr. Bisht is a Veterinary Epidemiologist with BVSc

degree from Veterinary College, Bangalore, India and PhD from Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Putra, Malaysia. He was a lecturer for a short period in Agriculture and Animal Science Institute, Rampur, Nepal and later joined the Department of Livestock Services in Nepal Government from 1988 until 2008. He also worked in FAO-ECTAD Nepal as a National Consultant and Deputy Team Leader for Avian Influenza Programme from January 2009 to April 2011.

Christmas Celebration at RSU

Members of RSU and ECTAD Nepal (AI project) celebrated X-Mas on 23 December, 2011. Senior member and Country Team Leader of ECTAD-Nepal, Dr. Tony Williams presided over the celebration.



ECTAD Team Members and Supporters celebrating Christmas at Regional Support Unit.

National Epidemiology Units

The main mandates of establishing Regional Epidemiology Centre at Regional Support Unit is to organize and coordinate Epidemiology networks of national epidemiology units, identify a common disease information system for the sub-region, generate epidemiological information to support risk based planning for disease surveillance and targeted control.

As a result, National Epidemiology Units and focal persons were identified by the governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal to forge an epidemiology and surveillance network in the sub-region.

Afghanistan

Epidemiology Unit

Central Veterinary Research & Diagnostics Laboratory
General Directorate of Animal Health and Production
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
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Bangladesh

Epidemiology Unit

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Bhutan

Disease Prevention & Control Unit

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Nepal

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Upcoming events

- 1) First Laboratory Directors' Meeting and Workshop on Laboratory Networking, 23-24 January 2012, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 2) Training on TADinfo, 24-31 January 2012, Bangkok, Thailand
- 3) Training on GIS/ Spatial Epidemiology, 1-3 February 2012, Bangkok, Thailand
- 4) Scientific Developments and Technical Challenges in Progressive Control of FMD in South Asia, 13-15 February 2012, New Delhi, India
- 5) Sixth Annual Regional ECTAD Meeting, 20-22 February 2012, Bangkok, Thailand
- 6) Workshop on Highly Pathogenic and Emerging Diseases Surveillance in the SAARC Region, 5-7 March 2012, Jaipur, India





Eliminating Animal Health Risks

Regional Cooperation Programme on Highly Pathogenic and Emerging Diseases (HPEDs) in South Asia

► Goals

Contribute to the strengthening and empowerment of SAARC in its ability to prevent, control and eradicate HPEDs, including HPAI, through improved veterinary and public health services and inter-sectoral collaboration on a regional basis.

► Objective

Capacities and capabilities of SAARC to prevent, control and eradicate HPEDs, including HPAI, at regional level are enhanced.

► Outputs

- ④ **Regional Support Unit (RSU)** established with mechanism for Regional Cooperation and collaboration to facilitate regional policies and technical activities under Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs).
- ④ **Regional Epidemiology Centre (REC)** established with networks of national epidemiology units including socio economic analysis organized and coordinated.
- ④ **Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratories** strengthened with the networks of national laboratories in order to provide technical support to improve the laboratory diagnosis of the priority HPEDs and backstop epidemiological studies to develop rational disease control strategies.



► Expected Impact

- ④ An early warning network established contributing to improve strategies for control of HPAI and HPEDs in the region.
- ④ A network of regional diagnostic laboratories and epidemiological teams established to facilitate exchange of disease information and maintain uniform standards through regular quality assurance.
- ④ Animal health services become more central to the business of governments in the region as part of core capacity to deal with zoonotic public health emergencies.
- ④ A mechanism established for information sharing between animal and human health agencies.



Afghanistan



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Maldives



Nepal



Pakistan



Sri Lanka

Regional Support Unit and Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases for South Asia
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