

No. K-50050-4/33/2018-LH
Government of India
Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying

Krishi Bhawan New Delhi
Dated 22nd October, 2020

Sub: Preparedness of the States to prevent ingress of Avian Influenza (AI)

Sir / Madam,

As you are aware, Avian Influenza or 'Bird Flu' is a highly contagious avian disease, having zoonotic potential. The disease causes huge losses in terms of mortality of birds and in terms of trade in poultry and poultry products. The Department has been issuing advisories to States/UTs from time to time on preparedness to prevent ingress of Avian Influenza, which are available on the Department's website (www.dahd.nic.in) at the link 'Avian Influenza'.

The Avian Influenza virus thrives well at low temperatures although there may be outbreaks during any time of the year. As winter is setting in, there is a likely risk of ingress of Avian Influenza in the country, since it is a transboundary animal disease (TAD). Therefore, there is an immediate need for all States/UTs to be in preparedness and keep a watch on any unusual symptom or sickness or mortality in birds (poultry as well as wild / migratory birds) and be fully prepared to prevent the disease occurring there.

Further, it is reiterated that the following measures/ precautions should be undertaken for a robust surveillance against the disease:

i) The extant Action Plan on 'Prevention, Control and Containment of Avian Influenza' is also available on the Departmental website (www.dahd.nic.in). The surveillance plan included therein should be implemented meticulously. Special surveillance is needed to be carried out especially in the wet markets at the border areas, market chain on poultry supply areas with high duck population, water bodies and nesting places of wild birds as stipulated in the surveillance plan. Veterinary Officers should arrange to collect and send samples to the designated laboratories on a regular basis.

ii) Migratory birds play an important role in transmission of the Avian Influenza viruses resulting in Low as well as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. Hence, there is need of strengthened surveillance in areas where migratory birds come during the winter. Special emphasis should be laid on sero-surveillance in the poultry population in such areas.

iii) An information, education and communication (IEC) campaign in the states may be undertaken to familiarize the risk population about Avian Influenza and the precautions that should be taken to prevent it. In case of any unusual sickness and mortality noticed, it should be reported to the authorities concerned immediately. It should be emphasized that poultry owners, people involved in poultry business, wild life staff, etc. report such unusual

sickness/mortality in birds to the nearest veterinary authority for taking action as mentioned in the Action Plan.

iv) States/UTs are requested to assess the district-level preparedness at regular intervals for tackling any eventuality, availability of required equipment, chemicals, etc. There is also a need to keep the logistics (PPE/ masks/ disinfectants/ chemicals etc.) ready. The mechanisms/ procedures/suppliers for these items must be identified in advance so as to make uninterrupted supplies during emergencies.

vi) Finally, bio-security needs to be strengthened in all poultry establishments, Zoos, poultry markets, etc. after assessing such status.

Yours faithfully,

Upamanyu Basu
Upamanyu Basu
Joint Secretary to the Government of India

Distribution:

Principal Secretaries/ Secretaries of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services of all States/ UTS

Copy to

- i) Commissioners / Directors of AH of all States / UTS
- ii) DDG (Animal Science) ICAR, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi for poultry organizations under ICAR
- iii) Joint Secretary (Wildlife) M/o Environment & Forests, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi
- iv) Joint Secretary (NLM), DAHD, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi for central poultry organizations and other poultry establishments
- v) NIC for putting advisory on the DAHD web site, under 'Avian Influenza' link
- vi) PPS to Secretary (AHD)/AHC