

F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.II(Part))
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Central Zoo Authority (CZA)

B-1 Wing 6th Floor
Pandit Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
Telephone:11-24367846/51-52, Email:cza@nic.in
Dated: 04th January 2021

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Preparedness of zoos to prevent ingress of Avian Influenza

The undersigned is directed to refer to this office advisory to zoos for compliance with the extant National Action Plan on **“Prevention, Control and Containment of Avian Influenza”** and its addendum specific to zoos. These advisories are available for ready reference on website of the CZA (<http://cza.nic.in>).

2. Further, there have been recent media reports and confirmation that Avian Influenza (H5-N1) – a highly contagious viral disease with zoonotic ramification - has been detected in free-ranging migratory birds visiting North India, especially in the States of Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.

3. It is, therefore, advised that all zoos remain alert and vigilant for any symptoms among captive animals housed in zoos and incidence, if any, in nearby areas. Preparedness with specific reference to ‘Bio-security’ needs concerning Avian Influenza may also be assessed and strengthened in the respective zoo(s). A recent advisory and generic guidelines relating to Avian Influenza from Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), vide their letter No.8-1/2021 WL dated 03.01.2021 (copy enclosed at Annexure I) may be followed.

4. The CZA has designated the Centre for Wildlife Conservation Management and Disease Surveillance (ICAR-IVRI) as the National Referral Centre on Wildlife Healthcare. Zoos may consult the Principal Scientist and In-Charge, Centre for Wildlife, ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar (Email:cwlincharge@gmail.com, Mobile No.09412294363) for technical advice in the matter .

5. The Action taken on the above points, including best practices adopted, may please be shared with this office for record and monitoring purpose.

Encl: as above



(Dr. Sonali Ghosh)
Deputy Inspector General of Forests (HQ)

To

The Chief Wildlife Warden,
All States & Union Territories

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. The Joint Secretary to the Government of India (Livestock Health), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Room No. 190-A, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi - 110 001, E-mail: jslh-dadf@nic.in
2. The Member Secretary of the concerned State Zoo Authority
3. The Officer in-charge of all zoos
4. The Director, ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar - 243122, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, E-mail: directorivri@gmail.com
5. The Principal Scientist and in-charge, Centre for Wildlife, ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar - 243122, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, E-mail: cwlincharge@gmail.com
6. The DPA, O/o CZA - to upload on website of the CZA.

(Dr. Sonali Ghosh)
Deputy Inspector General of Forests (HQ)

Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Wildlife Division

6th Floor, Vayu Wing
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi-110003

F. No. 8-1/2021 WL

Dated: 3rd January 2021

MOST URGENT

The Chief Wildlife Warden
All States/Union Territories.

Sub: Enhancing steps for control of death of birds-Reg.

Sir/Madam,

Recently, there have been reports of death of large number of birds, including several migratory birds, including in the State of Himachal Pradesh and other States. This is a matter of serious concern. Although, the exact reasons for the deaths are being ascertained, preliminary report indicate that it is a case of Avian Influenza virus.

Considering this grave situation, the Ministry requests the States/UT's to take all possible measures/precautions to prevent the transmission of diseases, if any, in other animals/birds and human beings. Surveillance for mortality of wildlife, particularly in needs to be taken up on priority and States are requested to report such incidences of mortality to this Ministry.

Further, in view of the fact that large number of migratory birds visits India during this season, movement of birds to wetlands is also possible and it is requested to keep strict vigil on the wintering habitats of migratory birds, including wetlands, for any mortality or disease outbreak signs. A **generic guidelines** in this regard is enclosed for ready reference (**Annexure-1**).

In this connection, in the year 2015, the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying had issued an 'Action Plan on Preparedness, Control and Containment of Avian Influenza', which is being forwarded (**Annexure-2**) and could also be utilized for taking suitable measures.

The States/UT's may take needful action on an **URGENT** basis.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-

(Rakesh Kumar Jagenia)
Deputy Inspector General of Forests (WL)
E.mail: digwl-mefcc@gov.in

Encl: As above.

Copy to:

1. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, all States/UT's
2. Pr. Staff Officer to Addl. DGF(WL), MoEFCC, New Delhi/Sr. PPS to IGF(WL), MoEFCC/PS to JD(WL), MoEFCC, New Delhi.

Generic Guidelines relating to Avian Influenza

Personal Care:-

1. Wear rubber gloves and protective clothing that can be disinfected or disposed of and protective eyewear or a face shield while handling animals.
2. Wash hands with soap and water often and disinfect works surfaces and equipment between sites.
3. Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling animals.
4. Minimize exposure to mucosal membranes by wearing protective eyewear (goggles)
5. The influenza virus is sensitive to many common disinfectants such as detergents, 10% household bleach, alcohol and other commercial disinfectants. The virus is much more difficult to inactivate if it is encrusted in organic material such as feces or soil.
6. Take an influenza antiviral drug daily for the entire time you are in direct contact with infected birds or a contaminated environment.

Symptoms:-

Affected birds display symptoms such as Tremors, Diarrhoea, Head Tilt and Paralysis. The disease spreads quickly causing Paralysis and Staggering. The virus is transmitted between affected poultry and recently from poultry to wild birds and vice-a-versa.

Birds Care:

1. It should be ensured that wild birds are not harmed during trapping and collection of serum samples.
2. Preference should be given to the leg vein instead of the wing vein. Wing vein blood collection is reported to result in haemorrhage affecting normal flight, making them susceptible to predators.
3. All wild bird samples are valuable and hence all collection of samples, packing and transport should be done in collaboration with trained animal husbandry/veterinary staff. This is VERY IMPORTANT.
4. Awareness should be spread that any sighting of a dead bird by volunteers, bird watchers, etc. should be reported to the nearest forest/animal husbandry office.

Monitoring of migratory birds:-

1. A State level monitoring committee to be constituted.
2. An action plan to be prepared for monitoring of the migratory birds and dealing with any arising emergency.
3. Collaborate with the State Veterinary Departments in collection of samples of migratory birds and to keep proper vigil. Dead birds should be handled with utmost caution and scientific supervision.
4. Surveillance should not be restricted to the Protected Areas alone, but to all such wetlands and habitats that provide staging grounds to the migrating birds and to areas where there is a possibility of interaction of migratory birds and poultry, more so in backyard poultry.
5. Depute suitable staff/officers to attend the training being organized by the Department of Animal Husbandry on sampling techniques, etc in various regions of the country, as being informed from time to time.
6. All deaths of migratory birds, whatever be the number and cause, **SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE MoEFCC IMMEDIATELY**. The local veterinary department should be contacted immediately for collection and dispatch of samples, as per procedure, for testing. The report of the testing be sent to MoEFCC immediately.
7. Press reports be given judiciously to prevent undue panic and which may lead to unwarranted killing of migratory birds.
8. Intensive surveillance should be undertaken to look for any unreasonable bird behaviors or death amongst wild birds as well as migratory birds.
9. Vigilance should be stepped up in the Zoos also.

Weekly report to the Ministry

1. Important sites, both within and outside PAs which are being visited by migratory birds this year.
2. Number and species of birds arrived.
3. Approximate period of arrival and stay.
4. Any changes in migratory pattern regarding number, arrival sites, etc as compared to previous years.
5. States/UTs should be very particular in informing Ministry by email immediately.