

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

6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Vayu Wing,  
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan  
Jor Bagh Road  
New Delhi-110003.

**F. No. 8-1/2021-WL**  
**Date: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**The Chief Secretary**  
**All States/UTs**

**Sub: Death of large number of birds in Himachal Pradesh and other States.**

Sir/Madam,

There have been reports of large number of deaths of birds, including migratory birds, in the State of Himachal Pradesh and also in other States. Samples have been tested at the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases, Bhopal and have been found to be **Positive for H5N1 Avian Influenza Virus**. A copy of the report of the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases, Bhopal, is enclosed for ready reference (**Annexure**).

2. Considering the serious situation and the possibility of spread of the disease to humans and other domesticated animals/birds, the States/UTs are requested to take all possible steps for containing the spread of the disease in the respective States/UT's on an URGENT basis and also take up surveillance and monitoring of birds, for any signs of disease, and take appropriate measures for controlling it, on priority.

3. This Ministry vide letter of even no. dated 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021 had also forwarded a generic guidelines relating to Avian Influenza to the Chief Wildlife Wardens of all States/UT's and had requested for taking immediate steps for containing the spread of the disease. A copy of the said letter along with the generic guidelines is enclosed as **Annexure-2**.

4. It is requested that the concerned authorities in your State/UT may kindly be instructed for taking immediate action in this regard.

Yours faithfully,



(Rohit Tiwari)

**Inspector General of Forests (WL)**

**E.mail: igfwl-mef@nic.in**

**Encl: As above.**

**Copy to:**

1. Principal Secretary (Forests), all States/UT's.
2. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, all States/UT's.
3. Chief Wildlife Wardens, all States/UTs.

4. Joint Secretary (LH), Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi.
5. The Member Secretary, Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi.
6. The Member Secretary, National Tiger Conservation Authority, New Delhi
7. The Joint Secretary, Wetlands Division, MoEFCC, New Delhi.

**Copy also to:**

1. Pr. Staff Officer to Addl. DGF(WL), MoEFCC
2. PPS to DIG (HQ), CZA, New Delhi
3. PPS to DIG(WL), MoEFCC
4. PS to JD(WL), MoEFCC.



भा.कृ.अनु.प.-राष्ट्रीय उच्च सुरक्षा पशुरोग संस्थान  
 ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases  
 एवियन इन्फ्लूएंजा ओ.आई.ई. संदर्भ प्रयोगशाला  
 (OIE Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza)  
 आनंद नगर, भोपाल, ४६२०२२, म.प्र., भारत  
 Anand Nagar, Bhopal - 462022 (M.P.), India



F. No. 15-100/2008-NIHSAD

Date: 04-01-2021

Time: 5:45 PM

To,

The Secretary,  
 DAHD,  
 Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, GoI,  
 Krishi Bhawan,  
 New Delhi -110 001

Sir,

Preliminary results of samples received for avian influenza testing from Himachal Pradesh at NIHSAD, Bhopal are below:

Ref No & Date	Date & Time of sample receipt	Place of Collection	Sample details	Result
Lr. No.Camp at Jawali-1, dated 01.01.2021 from Deputy Conservator of Forest, Hamirpur Wild Life Division, Hamirpur, H.P.	04.01.2021 10:30 AM	Wild Life Sanctuary, Pong Dam, Himachal Pradesh	Dead bird- 05 (Bar-Headed goose)	All the birds positive for H5N1 avian influenza virus by Real time RT-PCR

Yours Faithfully

04/01/2021  
 (V.P.SINGH)  
 DIRECTOR

Copy to:

1. Chief Secretary, Government of Himachal Pradesh for kind information and necessary action
2. AHC, DAHD, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, GoI, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi for kind information and necessary action.
3. DDG (Animal Science), ICAR, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi for kind information.
4. Joint Secretary (LH), DAHD, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, GoI, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi for kind information
5. Director, Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Government of Himachal Pradesh for kind information and necessary action

---END OF REPORT---

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Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
Wildlife Division

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Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi-110003

F. No. 8-1/2021 WL

Dated: 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

**MOST URGENT**

The Chief Wild Life 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,

  
(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.