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Publication: Avian flu in seals could infect people

The avian flu virus that caused widespread harbour seal deaths in 2011 can easily spread to and infect other mammals and potentially humans. A new study by the U.S. Geological Survey and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital shows that the avian influenza H3N8 strain that infected New England harbour seals could be transmitted to other mammals through the air without physical contact. Transmission by respiratory droplets through coughing, for example, is the main way influenza viruses spread among people. The study also showed that current seasonal flu vaccines do not protect against this seal virus, meaning a new vaccine would be necessary if there ever was an outbreak in humans. "The ability to transmit through the air is an important step in the path toward any influenza virus becoming pandemic," said USGS scientist Hon Ip. "The lack of protection against the seal virus from the annual seasonal vaccine highlights the risks posed by this H3N8 group of viruses." The article, led by St. Jude in collaboration with the USGS and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was published today in the journal *Nature Communications* and is available [online](#). [read more](#)

China: Additional confirmed human case in Xinjiang

According to the Health Department, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region notified to the Mainland, there were two confirmed cases of human infection with H7N9 avian influenza. The two patients are Urumqi residents, had history of exposure to live poultry. No family aggregation cases found.

- First patient was a 66-year-old retiree female, July 14 onset, 17 hospitalized and died on August 3;
- Second patient was a 53-year-old male worker, August 5th symptoms appeared, the 9th hospitalized, mild (reported earlier). [read more](#)

China: China kills nearly 5,000 dogs to control rabies in Yunnan

As rabies sweeps across dog populations in China's southwest Yunnan province almost 5,000 canines have been culled in an anti-rabies campaign. With 5 human deaths in the past three months, the municipal government in Baoshan City is carrying out a campaign to stop the threat, with more than 4,900 dogs killed and 100,000 vaccinated. The human casualties, one in July and four in August, were reported in four townships and villages in Shidian County. Longling County and Longyang District have also reported dog bites. [read more](#)

India: 46 die of encephalitis within a week

As many as 46 people have died of encephalitis in a week and seven in past 24 hours. BRD Medical College statistics reveal that 991 encephalitis cases have been reported since January this year, among which 291 have died and 184 are undergoing treatment in encephalitis ward of medical college. The mortality rate this year is highest in three years. At present, the rate is

29.36%. In year 2011, only 18% encephalitis patients died, in 2012, the mortality rate was 20.93%, whereas in 2013, 29.33%. The increase in the last three years raises question on the claims made by the government. [read more](#)

Nepal: Mysterious disease kills goats in Baglung

Farmers of Raydanda in Baglung district are worried after their goats started to die due to a mysterious disease from Tuesday. The District Livestock Service Office, Baglung, on the basis of symptoms, has suspected an outbreak of PPR disease. The goats have found to develop symptoms like swelling of the head, dizziness, among others. Chief at the Office, Dr Gopal Giri, said that preparation was underway to send a team of veterinaries along with necessary drugs and vaccine to the affected areas. [read more](#)

Viet Nam: 2 additional confirmed outbreaks of H5N6

The Department of Animal Viet Nam (DAH), on 4 September 2014, reported 2 additional outbreaks of H5N6 to the OIE. These outbreaks were in village poultry in:

- 15 August 2014, outbreak occurred in village poultry in Xuan My Village, Trung Hai Commune, Gio Linh District, Quang Tri Province, which caused 350 poultry dead and 1200 destroyed.
- 23 August 2014, outbreak occurred in village poultry in Dong Nhon Nam Village, Tinh Dong Commune, Son Tinh District, Quang Ngai Province, which caused 200 poultry dead and 900 destroyed. [read more](#)