

Bird Flu – Who bear losses ?



Roadmap Ahead

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Bird flu is enzootic in India, every year 2-3 small outbreaks occur in isolated pockets.

Deadly outbreak seen - near winter exit or in spring.

We know that migratory birds, especially gallinaceous family are reservoir of virus. More than 90 species are susceptible to AI.

A single gram of infected soil can infect million birds

Pond water in which infected ducks inhabit can be source of infection

Wild waterfowl are the major natural reservoir of AI viruses.

These birds remain asymptomatic, excrete virus in feces for long period and have no detectable antibody response.

This source of infection often results in a seasonal incidence in some states.

In short we can say virus is everywhere and we cannot eliminate it

What cannot have solution to this problem but we may have wise strategy to reduce losses & to save the interests of stake holders

Who are stake holders ? there are 3 areas

If we want solution we have to prioritize these three things and then make strategy

1. First and foremost is human health

While considering this we should know that.

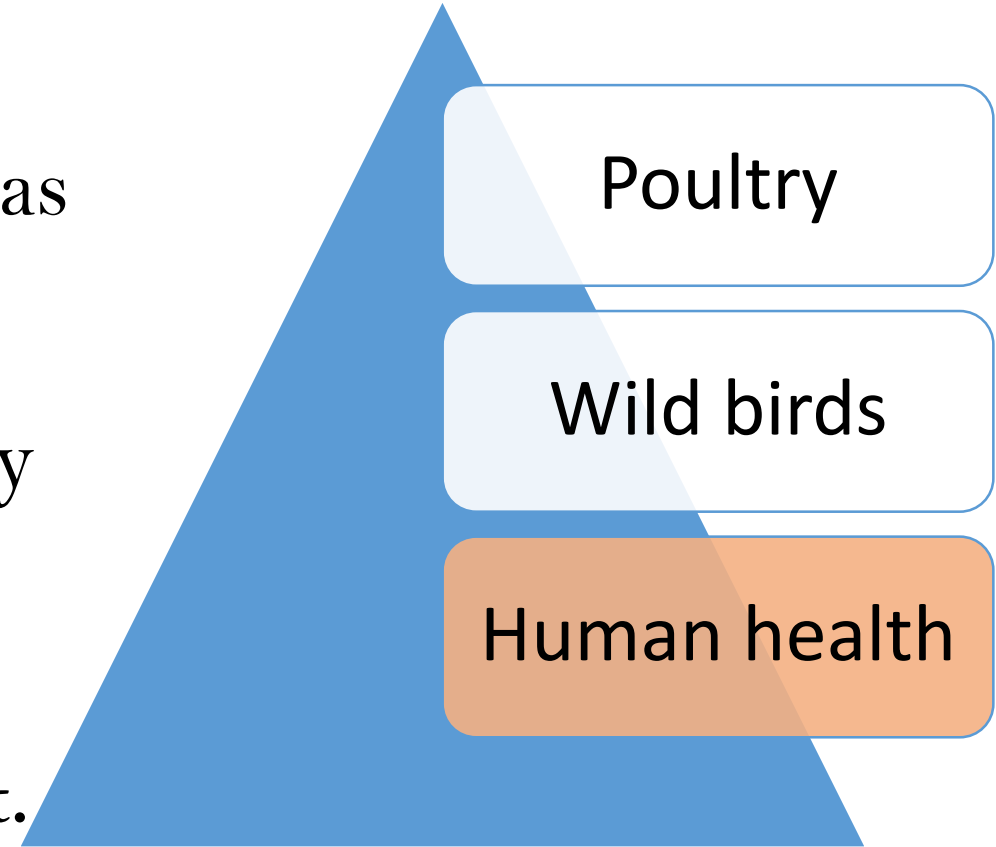
Not all bird flu virus can infect humans – only H5N1 could

H5N1 can rarely infect humans, till now no human AI infection is reported in India since H5N1 found in 1997. Although industry size is multiplied many times.

No human to human transmission occurs.

Nobody get infected by consuming poultry products. No report till now!

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Human factor may not be the first priority while formulating strategy.

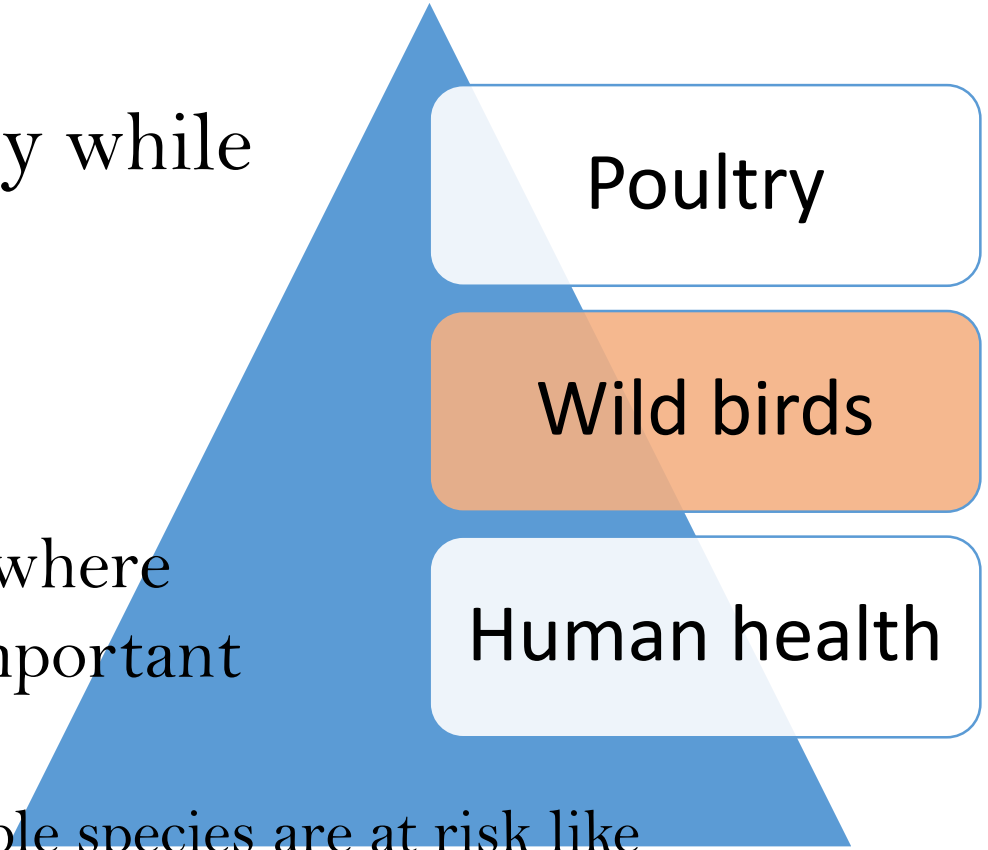
Environment factor is consisting of virus circulation in **WILD BIRDS**

Due to cross species infection, ponds and lakes where infected ducks/waterfowl inhabit might have important source of infection.

These birds remained asymptomatic but other susceptible species are at risk like crows in present case.

But this is natural cycle where we do not need to interfere but we have to remain vigilant about outbreak in commercial flocks

For this, regular serological surveys in and around potential locations is required. Like commercial farms near natural water bodies.



Now most important part which is most ignored

Poultry represent at least 1.5% of national GDP which employed nearly 5-7 lakh people directly

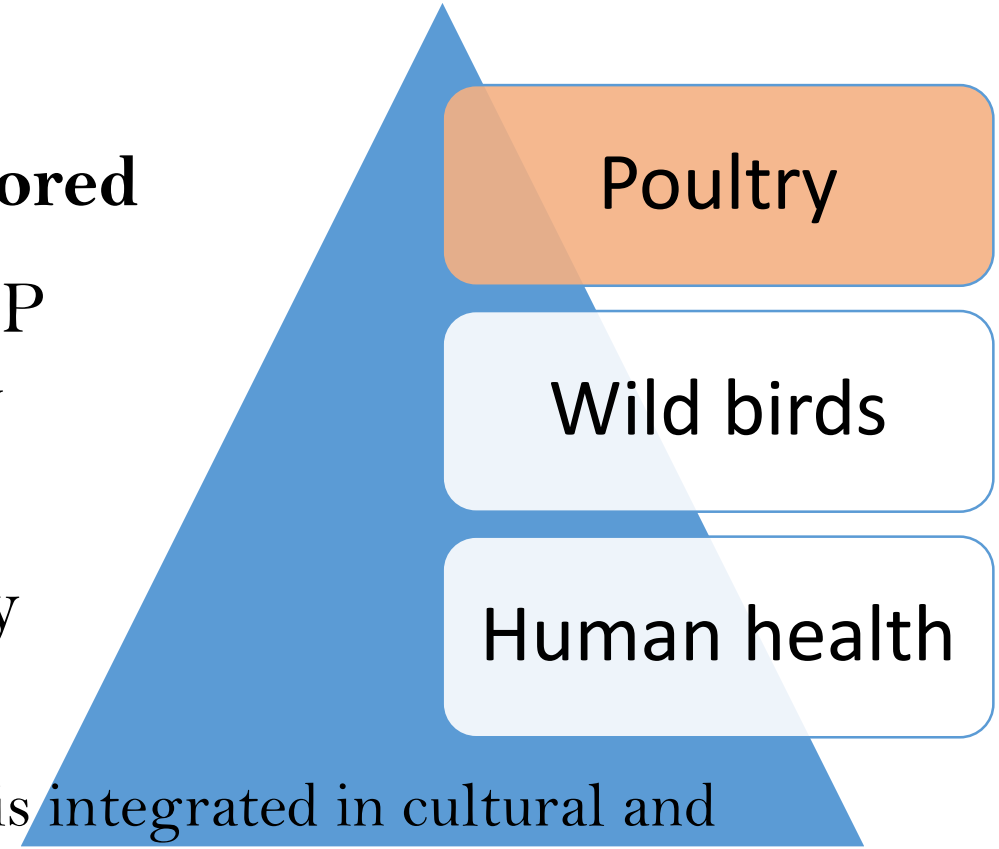
Besides providing employment it provide relatively cheaper option of nutritional security in protein deficient India.

So we cannot think to remove poultry from India as it is integrated in cultural and economic fabric of India. We can only manage the things through proper strategy so that interest of all stake holders can be preserved.

In this 3 main areas of work should be outlined

(1) Strict biosecurity at farms (farmer education) (2) Regular seromonitoring around farms to track mutations or possible outbreaks (3) Vaccination of flocks at least around hot spot locations.

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Vaccination advantages

Spread disease in commercial flock – reduce economic losses

Decrease chances of bird human disease transfer

Lower down probability of generating HPAI from circulating LPAI

Cheaper option than culling and market crash

Thank You

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