



African Swine Fever

Why in News

Recently, Thailand has detected [African Swine Fever](#) in a surface swab sample collected at a slaughterhouse.

// African swine fever (ASF)

The virus is highly resistant to low temperatures and can survive for extended periods of time in the blood, feces and tissue of infected animals.

ASF is a **highly contagious, transboundary viral disease** (*Asfarviridae* family; *Asfivirus* genus).

It can affect both domestic and wild pigs (wild boars and peccaries). **It is harmless to humans.**

According to the OIE, **24%** of its member countries (48 out of 200) **have reported the disease** as present since 2016.

Typical clinical signs of ASF are similar to those of classical swine fever (which is endemic in several countries of the Americas); therefore, a **laboratory test** is required to distinguish them.

The **peracute** form of the virus causes sudden death with few signs.

African swine fever can be transmitted through **direct contact** between sick and healthy animals. It can also be transmitted **indirectly** through feed containing meat from infected animals (the virus can remain infectious for 3 to 6 months in uncooked pork products); **biological vectors** such as ticks of the genus *Ornithodoros*; and contaminated **inanimate objects** (fomites) that can transmit the virus.

Global alarms went off in August 2018, when an ASF outbreak was first reported in **China**. The disease swept through the entire Asian country and spread to **Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Hong Kong**.

According to official data for this period, more than **2.5 million domestic pigs** have died or been killed—67.6% of them in Asia over the past 10 months.

Between 2016 and May 2019, there were a total of **10,211 outbreaks in Africa, Europe and Asia**.

Symptoms include **fever, loss of appetite**, low energy, abortion, internal hemorrhages, visible hemorrhages, and even death.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It is a **highly contagious and fatal animal disease** that infects and leads to an acute form of hemorrhagic fever in domestic and wild pigs.
- Other manifestations of the disease include high fever, depression, anorexia, loss of appetite, hemorrhages in the skin, vomiting and diarrhoea among others.
- It was first **detected in Africa in the 1920s**.
- Historically, outbreaks have been reported in Africa and parts of Europe, South America, and the Caribbean.

- However, more recently (since 2007), the disease has been reported in multiple countries across Africa, Asia and Europe, in both domestic and wild pigs.
- In 2021, cases were also detected in India.
- The mortality is **close to 100% and since the fever has no cure, the only way to stop its spread is by culling** the animals.
- ASF is not a threat to human beings since it only spreads from animals to other animals.
- ASF is a disease listed in the **World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)** Terrestrial Animal Health Code and thus, reported to the OIE.

▪ **Classical Swine Fever:**

- **CSF**, also known as hog cholera, is an important disease of pigs.
- It is one of the most economically-damaging pandemic viral diseases of pigs in the world.
- It is caused by a virus of **the genus Pestivirus of the family Flaviviridae**, which is closely related to the viruses that cause bovine viral diarrhoea in cattle.
- **Mortality is 100%.**
- Recently, the **ICAR-IVRI** developed a Cell Culture **CSF Vaccine** (live attenuated) using the Lapinized Vaccine Virus from foreign strain.

- The new vaccine has been found to induce protective immunity from day 14 of the Vaccination till 18 Months.

World Organisation for Animal Health

- OIE is **an intergovernmental organisation responsible for improving animal health** worldwide.
- It has **182 Member Countries**. India is one of the member countries.
- OIE develops normative documents relating to rules that Member Countries can use to protect themselves from the introduction of diseases and pathogens. One of them is the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.
- OIE standards are recognised by the **World Trade Organization** as reference international sanitary rules.
- It is **headquartered in Paris, France**.

Source: IE

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