



# Avian Influenza Crisis Drill

## Why in News?

The **Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Dairying** and the [World Bank](#) recently organized a two-day simulation exercise in Madhya Pradesh to improve readiness for [Avian Influenza](#) or [Bird Flu](#), in light of reported cases nationally and worldwide.

## Key Points

- The exercise held in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh involved 40 participants from different sectors who **practiced outbreak detection, rapid response strategies, and inter-agency coordination to control the spread of avian flu.**
  - The **drill was conducted in response to the avian flu outbreaks in Kerala** and the increasing global spillover **cases affecting non-poultry species such as cattle.**
  - The programme involved **interactive scenarios mimicking real outbreak situations** to provide crisis management experience.
- The simulation was led by **Hikuepi Katjuongua, a senior agriculture economist at the World Bank**, and **Frank Wong, an expert from the [World Organisation for Animal Health](#)**, with the goal of reducing negative effects on animal and human health.

## World Organisation for Animal Health

- It is an **intergovernmental organisation** responsible for improving animal health worldwide.
- In 2018, it had a total of **182 Member Countries. India is one of the member countries.**
- It **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.
- It's standards are **recognised by the [World Trade Organization](#)** as reference international sanitary rules.
- It is headquartered in **Paris, France.**

## Avian Influenza

- **About:**
  - Avian influenza, **often referred to as bird flu**, is a highly contagious viral infection that primarily affects **birds**, particularly **wild birds and domestic poultry.**
  - In 1996, highly **pathogenic avian influenza [H5N1 virus](#)** was first identified in domestic waterfowl in Southern China.
  - The virus is named [A/goose/Guangdong/1/1996](#).
- **Transmission to Humans and Related Symptoms:**
  - Human cases of **H5N1** avian influenza occur occasionally, but it is difficult to transmit the infection from person to person. As per [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO), when people do become infected, the **mortality rate is about 60%.**
  - It can range from **mild flu-like symptoms**, including **fever, cough, and muscle aches**, to severe respiratory issues like [pneumonia](#), **difficulty breathing, and even cognitive problems** such as altered mental status and seizures.

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