

DISEASE INFORMATION

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INDIA DECLARES PART OF ITS TERRITORY « PROVISIONALLY FREE FROM RINDERPEST »

Text of a communication received on 18 October 1995 from Mr K. Rajan, Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi:

With a view to the eradication of rinderpest, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying of the Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi, has divided the country into four zones (see map p. 134):

Zone A: *North-Eastern Zone:* States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. The bovine population of the zone is between 10 and 11 million animals.

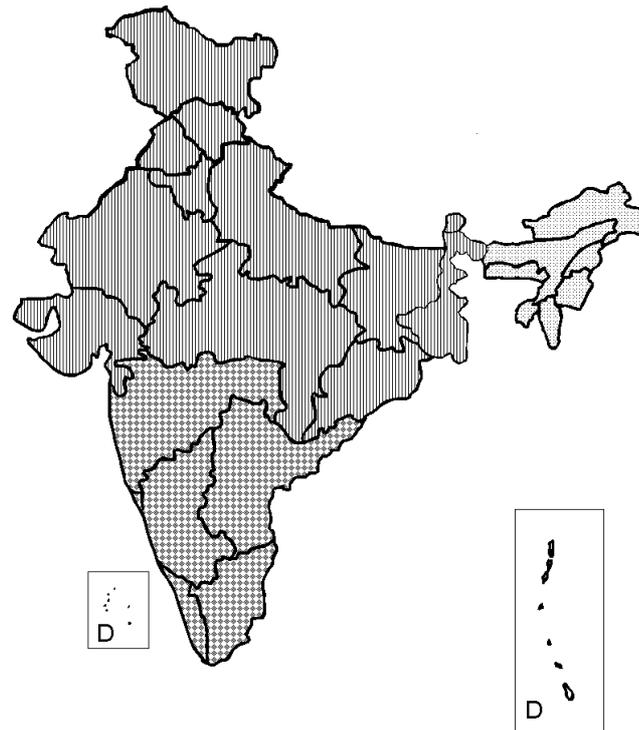
There is no evidence to suggest that rinderpest has been endemic in any of these States at any time during the last ten years. Outbreaks that occurred in Nagaland in 1984 and 1988 (latest outbreaks in the zone) are considered to have originated through the inter-state movement of infected animals of Indian origin. These outbreaks were contained and eliminated.

Zone B: *Indo-Gangetic Zone:* States of Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The bovine population of the zone is approximately 180 million animals.

Until 1989, rinderpest in this zone was either endemic (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal), appeared in sporadic outbreaks following reintroduction (Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan) or was altogether absent (Punjab, Sikkim).

In the four years between January 1990 and December 1993, the only outbreak that occurred was in Orissa in February 1993, in Puri District, in a mixed group of cattle and buffaloes in which six animals died. Ring vaccination was undertaken and no secondary outbreaks were recorded.

In June 1994, based on the favourable incidence situation and the need to terminate vaccination before declaring a zone provisionally rinderpest-free, the Directors of the Animal Husbandry Departments of each State in the zone agreed to suspend all routine anti-rinderpest vaccination work. Nevertheless, in view of the risk of entry of infection across international borders, a 30-km-wide sanitary cordon, including bovines of all ages fully vaccinated against rinderpest, is under development in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat as well as along the inter-state



-  ZONE A (North-East)
-  ZONE B (Indo-Gangetic)
-  ZONE C (Peninsular)
-  ZONE D (Islands)

boundaries with Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, namely in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

Each State submits monthly vaccine usage reports for all districts within the State.

Each State has a minimum of one disease investigation laboratory able to undertake field and laboratory investigation of any possible outbreak of rinderpest.

Zone C: *Peninsular Zone*: States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Rinderpest is endemic within Zone C and apparently occurs both in cattle and small ruminants. Mass vaccination against rinderpest is in progress in various districts of Zone C.

Zone D: *Islands Zone*: islands of Andaman and Nicobar and the Laccadive and Minicoy group of islands.

The islands of Andaman and Nicobar located in the Bay of Bengal and the Laccadive and Minicoy group of islands located in the Arabian Sea have been free from rinderpest for more than a decade.

Both groups of islands have disease investigation laboratories and are capable of undertaking preliminary diagnosis of rinderpest.

Considering the above, the Government of India declares Zone A, Zone B and Zone D provisionally free from rinderpest.

EQUINE MORBILLIVIRUS DISEASE IN AUSTRALIA

Additional information

Text of a fax received on 17 November 1995 from Dr G. Murray, Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra:

Following the death of a farmer from near Mackay, North Queensland, who was infected with equine morbillivirus (see *Disease Information*, **8** [38], 118), epidemiological investigations have been undertaken. There are no horses on the farm with clinical disease and no other premises within Australia have recorded equine morbillivirus clinical disease since the Hendra outbreak in Brisbane in September 1994.

Mackay farm investigation

All domestic animals including horses, goats, cats, dogs, turkeys and geese have been tested, with negative results. There have been no clinical signs suggestive of equine morbillivirus disease. Wildlife species have been sampled on the farm and in nearby areas, but results are not yet available.

Extensive investigations have been undertaken to trace all horse movements onto and off the farm since 1 July 1994.

Equine morbillivirus surveillance

No link has been found with the Hendra outbreak.

A serological survey of over 2,000 horses, over 200 of which were in the Mackay / Rockhampton / Townsville areas, was undertaken in 1994 after the September Hendra outbreak, with negative results.

Since 23 October 1995, the Queensland veterinary authorities have sampled over 3,000 animals from 294 populations on horse premises, at race meetings and other horse events and in mixed enterprise farms. Although horses have been the prominent species sampled, other domestic species, including poultry, and wildlife have been sampled.

To date, the following samples have been taken:

| Reason for sampling | Number of samples |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mackay property investigation / Other | 148 |
| Survey * | 2,624 |
| Trace back (horses) | 144 |
| Trace forward (horses) | 169 |
| TOTAL | 3,085 |

* Targeted survey of properties in the local Mackay area, and random survey of 100 farms throughout Queensland.

A total of 2,349 of the samples have so far been tested, using the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) serum neutralisation test, and are all negative.

Movement controls

Formal movement restrictions have now been removed from the Mackay farm, as there is now no serological evidence of equine morbillivirus infection on the farm.

Restrictions are also being removed from traced horses that have left the farm since 1 July 1994.

Public health

Serological surveillance of people who had been in contact with the deceased man is being undertaken. No evidence of further human infection has been found, demonstrating that this agent is not highly contagious.

VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE OF RABBITS IN AUSTRALIA

Text of a fax received on 17 November 1995 from Dr G. Murray, Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra:

The virus of viral haemorrhagic disease of rabbits introduced on an experimental pen trial site on Wardang Island off South Australia (see *Disease Information*, **8** [37], 111) has spread to wild rabbit populations in South Australia around Yunta, the Flinders Ranges, Port Augusta and, as of today, two areas outside Broken Hill in New South Wales. Viral haemorrhagic disease of rabbits is known to be present only in South Australia and western New South Wales at this time.

Positives from the Flinders Ranges cover an area of approximately 20,000 km² and reported suspect rabbit deaths suggest a continuing northerly/north-easterly spread of the virus.

Affected rabbits from the Yunta area also cover some 20,000 km² and the virus has also spread 150 km due north of Yunta and to the east into New South Wales. However, there has been little spread in a southerly direction.

The spread of the virus is not uniform within the infected pastoral areas. Landholders report areas where few rabbits have died within larger areas where mortality has been wide-spread.

There have also been consistent reports of many very young rabbits being left unaffected as the virus moves through areas.

Emergency use of vaccines is being made by the State/Territory Chief Veterinary Officers.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) will continue to base certification for rabbit meat on conventional supervision of processing of rabbit carcasses. Biological products, e.g. serum, continue to be provided from intensively-housed commercial rabbit colonies. These remain isolated from the current field outbreak of viral haemorrhagic disease of rabbits.

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VIRAL HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE OF RABBITS IN IRELAND

Text of a fax received on 17 November 1995 from Dr M.C. Gaynor, Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Dublin:

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Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: one (1).

Geographical identification of the outbreak: Meath county (in the eastern part of the country).

Comments concerning affected population: a domestic holding of 13 pet rabbits.

Comments concerning diagnosis: the disease was confirmed on 10 November 1995.

Comments to date concerning epidemiology of the disease: the likely source of infection was contact with wild rabbits. All the rabbits on the holding have either died or been slaughtered.

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SHEEP POX AND GOAT POX IN AZERBAIJAN

Translation of a fax received on 22 November 1995 from Dr M. Gousejnov, Director of Veterinary Services, State Veterinary Committee, Baku:

Nature of diagnosis: clinical and laboratory (microscopy and animal experiments).

Date of initial detection of animal health incident: 10 November 1995.

Number of separate outbreaks identified so far: one (1).

Geographical identification of the outbreak: Beylagan district.

Details concerning the outbreak:

| No. | Species | No. of animals in the outbreak | No. of cases | No. of deaths | No. of animals destroyed | No. of animals slaughtered |
|------|---------|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1/95 | ovi | 655 | 57 | 20 | 20 | 0 |

Comments concerning affected population: unvaccinated lambs.

Control measures taken to date: regulatory measures applied.

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