

**Ministry of Healthcare & Nutrition  
Epidemiological Unit**

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**Training Workshop on Rapid Response and Containment of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)**

The four-day Training Workshop on Rapid Response and Containment of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) was held from 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008 at the Hotel Taj Samudra Colombo. This workshop was organized by the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health and was sponsored by the World Health Organization. The workshop drew middle level managers as participants from Ministries of Health, Animal Husbandry & Livestock, local government and armed forces. Regional epidemiologists, Port and Airport health officers, heads of virology and quarantine departments represented the Ministry of Health. The workshop was conducted by experts from the WHO and Epidemiology Unit.

The workshop was declared open by Dr M R N Abeysinghe Chief Epidemiologist, Dr Swarna Herath Director General, Department of Animal Production and Health, Dr Paba Palihawadana, Deputy Epidemiologist and Dr Sampath Krishnan and Dr Ayana Yeneabat of WHO. Dr Palihawadana presented the objectives of the programme and welcomed the participants.

Day one had Dr Ayana presenting an overview on seasonal influenza and also rationale and key concepts of rapid containment and Dr Krishnan speaking on decision making and situation assessment. The last presentation was followed with group work on the subject with the participants being divided into 5 groups to work individually on given scenarios. Each group was assisted by a resource person to steer the group through the scenarios. A spokesperson from a selected group presented their recommendations to the forum and discussed the issues arising within the scenario.

A summary of the previous day's work was presented each morning. Dr Risintha Premaratne and Dr Ranjan Wijesnghe were the resource persons of day 2 discussing non pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical interventions in rapid containment for HPAI respectively. Role play sessions followed group work on given scenarios with a presentation ending the day's work.

Day 3 had Dr Krishnan speaking on ethics and Dr Sarath Amunugama Director, Health Education Bureau on rapid containment communication followed by group work, role play and a presentation. On day 4 Dr Palihawadana spoke on infection control and Dr J Walallawala Director Quarantine of Ministry of Health spoke on International Health Regulations (IHR). Group work followed. Participants drew up plans of action in their respective groups to round up the workshop at the end of day 4. An evaluation of the programme was also done by the participants.