

H9N2

April 28, 2020

Context: Indian scientists have detected the **country's first case of infection with a rare variant of the virus that causes avian influenza, or bird flu**

- Scientists of the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, have reported avian influenza A(H9N2) virus infection
- H9N2 is a subtype of the influenza A virus, which causes human influenza as well as bird flu.
- The H9N2 subtype was isolated for the first time in Wisconsin, US in 1966 from turkey flocks.
- The first case globally was reported from Hong Kong in 1998. A total of 28 cases in China have been reported since December 2015
- H9N2 viruses are found worldwide in wild birds and are endemic in poultry in many areas.
- H9N2 viruses could potentially play a major role in the emergence of the next influenza pandemic.
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), with avian influenza viruses circulating in poultry, there is a risk for sporadic infection and small clusters of human cases due to exposure to infected poultry or contaminated environments.
- H9N2 virus infections in humans are rare, but likely under-reported due to typically mild symptoms of the infections
- Bird flu, also called avian influenza, is a viral infection that can infect not only birds, but also humans and other animals
- There are many subtypes of avian influenza viruses, but only some strains of five subtypes have been known to infect humans: H5N1, H7N3, H7N7, H7N9, and H9N2