



# WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

A publication of the Epidemiological Unit,

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## FLASHBACK 2006:

### Excerpts From Chief Epidemiologist's Report

*The year 2006 was marked with resounding successes, emerging challenges and novel experiences for the Epidemiology Unit. Driven by its motto to improve health, and to enhance quality of life of the people, the dedicated technical and support staff of the Unit will strive even harder to turn each new challenge into a success story in 2007. It has become pertinent in this backdrop to briefly enumerate on the events of last year.*

#### **Disease Surveillance**

Four surveillance reviews were carried out in Anuradhapura, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla and Matara. The findings were shared with district teams to improve surveillance activities in the districts. Consultative meetings, district-level reviews and experts meetings were held to strengthen surveillance of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP), Measles, Rubella, Dengue Fever/Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DF/DHF) and other endemic diseases

The surveillance project for Pneumococcal, Rota virus and Hib infections were continued with the assistance of the South Asian Pneumococcal Network (SAPNA), International Vaccine Institute (IVI) and World Health Organization (WHO). Pneumococcal surveillance was expanded to the Colombo South Teaching Hospital. A meeting of global Pneumococcal investigators was held in February 2006 to share the surveillance information.

The list of notifiable diseases was reviewed, and Chickenpox, Mumps and Meningitis were included in the list. National guidelines were de-

veloped for strengthening sentinel surveillance of communicable diseases, and the draft is already available. This was a prerequisite for expanding the system to include non-communicable diseases in future.

Forecasting of possible outbreaks was made and preventive action taken. Three outbreaks of hepatitis A were successfully controlled in Aranayake, Kalmunai and Thirukkivil. A project proposal was developed to obtain support from AFRIM Laboratory, Bangkok, Thailand for laboratory confirmation of diseases of unknown aetiology including confirmation of Avian Influenza and other influenza-like illnesses.

Action has been taken to revise the surveillance forms and print them as separate booklets allowing the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and Regional Epidemiologist (RE) to keep copies.

A two-week training programme on Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance was also conducted in August 2006 for senior MOOH.

The website of the Unit was improved and regularly updated to be rated as the 7<sup>th</sup> most popular website in Sri Lanka.

#### **Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI)**

Surveillance performance targets of polio eradication were maintained at central and regional levels.

EPI programme was reviewed quarterly with REE. Joint reviews with the Family Health

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Bureau (FHB) were conducted in 15 districts.

An oral polio coverage assessment survey was carried out in the vacant Public Health Midwife (PHM) areas in the Badulla district to review the immunization status of children living in areas with no permanent PHM. Another EPI survey was conducted in the Colombo Municipality area.

The form used to report adverse events following immunization (AEFI) was revised, and a 5 year action plan was developed. A clinic AEFI register and a monthly Consolidated Return for REE were introduced. A central cold room complex was built with machinery provided by the WHO at the Unit. Fifteen new cold rooms were set up at Regional Medical Supplies Divisions (RMSDs) with UNICEF assistance. Electronic temperature recording devices (Data Loggers) were introduced to monitor temperature of cold rooms and refrigerators up to MOH level. Training of REE, Medical Officers for Maternal and Child Health (MOOMCH) and Officers-in-Charge of RMSDs was done on vaccine management.

Forecasting of vaccine and injection safety items was done, and orders for 2007 placed. A comprehensive multi year plan for the national immunization programme was developed. Annual progress report and the application for the introduction of new vaccines (Hib) has already been submitted to the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization (GAVI).

#### ***Dengue Fever/Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DF/DHF)***

Dengue task force meetings were held, and alerts were sent periodically regarding possible outbreaks. Two workshops were conducted with 48 selected MOOH to develop action plans for DF/DHF control in 2006. The projects are now being carried out at MOH level. A dengue brigade for control of dengue was established in Polgahawela as a model.

Based on the recommendation made by the sub committee on clinical management, a set of guidelines for Management of DF/DHF was prepared and distributed among all stake holders. Dengue mortality reviews in hospitals were commenced. In-depth reviews of dengue surveillance activities in high risk areas in the Western Province were carried out. Training of Infection Control Nursing Officers on special dengue surveillance activities was done. "Dengue control weeks" were declared in April and September to initiate the seasonal dengue control activities.

#### ***Chikungunya***

A team from the Unit visited Kalmunai at the outset to launch an epidemiological investigation, and to provide technical support to the district health staff. The epidemic was confirmed within 3 weeks with the support of local and international laboratories. Thereafter, guidelines for control and prevention were issued by the Unit, periodically. The situation is still being monitored closely.

#### ***Japanese Encephalitis (JE)***

No outbreaks of JE were reported in 2006. JE immunization

was carried out in selected high risk areas during May-September 2006. A cost study on JE has been completed.

#### ***Avian influenza (AI)***

Infection control staff in hospitals were trained on AI. IEC material were produced and distributed. Monthly technical committee meetings were held to review the progress of activities being carried out and to solicit the support of all stake holders. Rapid response teams were formed in each district to investigate a potential outbreak. A communication strategy was developed with the support of UNICEF. Personal protective equipment and antivirals were procured, and distributed to selected sentinel hospitals. Project proposals were developed to obtain financial assistance from the WB & JICA.

The Unit established links with the Disaster Management Centre to obtain the support in the event of an outbreak. A joint circular with the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH) was issued for collection of samples in the event of unusual bird deaths. A joint review was held with the DAPH to finalize the operational aspects of the AI Preparedness Plan.

#### ***Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases (CDD)***

No major outbreaks of diarrhoeal diseases were reported in 2006. Action was taken to review and develop plans for selected endemic areas where incidence continued to be high. Alerts of possible outbreaks of dysentery were sent during periods of heavy rains. Guidelines were prepared and distributed among internally displaced people in the Kantale area, and a mechanism to prevent the occurrence of diseases and to maintain surveillance was established.

#### ***Health Sector Development Project (HSDP)***

The focal point and necessary infrastructure at central level were established. Coordination and management capacity at central and regional levels were strengthened. The national level consultative meeting for all REE and MOOMCH on immunization sub-component of the HSDP and the Immunization Quality Assessment Survey was held. Regarding the survey, development of data collection tools, carrying out the pre test and the pilot study, development of database software for immunization data management and district training have been accomplished. The Unit, and the offices of the REE were equipped with photocopy machines, fax machines, desk top computers & printers with HSDP funding. A profile of the Epidemiology Unit elaborating on its past, present and future has also been printed.

#### ***Committees***

The Advisory Committee on Communicable Diseases, National Committee for Certification of Polio Eradication, Expert Committee on Polio Eradication and Laboratory sub-committee on poliomyelitis were conducted as scheduled in 2006.

The refurbishment of the Unit continued throughout 2006. With the dawn of the new year, the Unit will aspire to accomplish its tasks with renewed vigor and commitment.

Table 1: Vaccine-preventable diseases &amp; AFP

23<sup>rd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006 (52<sup>nd</sup> Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province								Number of cases during current week in 2006	Number of cases during same week in 2005	Total number of cases to date in 2006	Total number of cases to date in 2005	Difference between the number of cases to date between 2006 & 2005
	W	C	S	NE	NW	NC	U	Sab					
Acute Flaccid Paralysis	00	00	01 GL=1	01 MN=1	00	00	01 BD=1	00	03	03	123	110	+11.8%
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	-100.0%
Measles	00	00	01 HB=1	00	00	00	00	00	01	03	40	48	-16.7%
Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	49	36	+36.1%
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	02	72	115	-37.4%
Tuberculosis	76	07	04	07	26	00	00	00	120	103	10016	10193	-1.7%

Table 2: Diseases under Special Surveillance

23<sup>rd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006 (52<sup>nd</sup> Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province								Number of cases during current week in 2006	Number of cases during same week in 2005	Total number of cases to date in 2006	Total number of cases to date in 2005	Difference between the number of cases to date between 2006 & 2005
	W	C	S	NE	NW	NC	U	Sab					
DF/DHF*	95	25	13	03	22	05	02	02	167	181	11902	5882	+102.3%
Encephalitis	01 KL=1	00	02 MT=2	00	02 PU=2	03 AP=3	00	01 RP=1	09	02	129	65	+98.5%
Human Rabies	01 GM=1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	73	55	+32.8%

\*DF / DHF refers to Dengue Fever / Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever; Details by districts are given in Table 3.; NA= Not Available

Source : Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases :Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Human Rabies, Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever, Japanese Encephalitis

Special Surveillance : Acute Flaccid Paralysis

National Control Program for Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases : Tuberculosis

Key to Tables 1 and 2 :

Provinces :W=Western, C=Central, S=Southern, NE=North &amp; East, NC=North Central, NW=North Western, U=Uva, Sab=Sabaragamuwa.

DPDHS Divisions :CB=Colombo, GM=Gampaha, KL=Kalutara, KD=Kandy, ML=Matale, NE=Nuwara Eliya, GL=Galle, HB=Hambantota, MT=Matara, JF=Jaffna, KN=Killinochchi, MN=Mannar, VA=Vavuniya, MU=Mullaitivu, BT=Batticaloa, AM=Ampara, TR=Trincomalee, KM=Kalmunai, KR=Kurunegala, PU=Puttalam, AP=Anuradhapura, PO=Polonnaruwa, BD=Badulla, MO=Moneragala, RP=Ratnapura, KG=Kegalle.

Table 3: Laboratory Surveillance of Dengue Fever

23<sup>rd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006 (52<sup>nd</sup> Week)

	Current Week	Cumulative Total from 27 May 2006
Number Tested	70	1305
Number Positive	01	203
Serotypes		
D <sub>1</sub>	00	15
D <sub>2</sub>	01	83
D <sub>3</sub>	00	88
D <sub>4</sub>	00	10
Negative	00	

Source: Genetech Molecular Diagnostics &amp; School of Gene Technology, Colombo

### Immunization Summit 2007

The Epidemiology Unit will be organizing the "Immunization Summit 2007" on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.

Experts from a variety of medical disciplines and key stakeholders will participate in the Summit to discuss the future of the National Immunization Programme, with emphasis on the introduction of new antigens into the schedule in time to come.

**Table 4: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006 (52<sup>nd</sup> Week)**

DPDHS Division	Dengue Fever / DHF*		Dysentery		Encephalitis		Enteric Fever		Food Poisoning		Leptospirosis		Typhus Fever		Viral Hepatitis		Returns Received Timely**
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
Colombo	71	3419	02	356	00	07	00	82	00	45	01	143	00	04	00	69	93
Gampaha	12	1774	00	331	00	10	00	59	00	147	00	211	00	12	00	153	71
Kalutara	12	977	06	506	01	08	00	84	11	72	02	136	00	06	00	47	70
Kandy	20	1509	05	452	00	09	00	115	00	35	01	101	04	107	00	139	77
Matale	04	389	00	344	00	07	00	19	00	21	00	31	00	02	01	30	75
Nuwara Eliya	01	42	01	353	00	00	00	193	00	19	00	12	00	45	01	289	71
Galle	01	260	02	196	00	03	00	13	00	12	00	72	00	21	00	04	25
Hambantota	01	217	01	100	00	09	01	35	00	32	00	51	02	92	00	59	80
Matara	11	537	03	199	02	11	02	81	00	36	06	176	06	253	00	15	100
Jaffna	00	53	00	141	00	04	00	176	00	27	00	03	00	141	00	78	00
Kilinochchi	00	02	00	23	00	00	00	06	00	24	00	00	00	00	00	09	00
Mannar	00	03	00	57	00	00	00	139	00	03	00	01	00	00	00	10	00
Vavuniya	03	20	00	153	00	05	00	96	01	84	00	02	00	00	00	08	50
Mullaitivu	00	02	00	24	00	01	00	36	00	09	00	00	00	00	00	10	00
Batticaloa	00	63	00	242	00	03	00	40	00	16	00	06	00	00	00	215	40
Ampara	00	33	02	263	00	00	00	12	00	04	00	15	00	04	00	19	14
Trincomalee	00	42	02	218	00	01	02	45	00	42	01	03	00	04	00	175	56
Kurunegala	16	681	04	553	00	05	02	87	00	44	00	74	01	34	00	64	65
Puttalam	06	398	01	329	02	03	00	115	00	07	00	21	00	02	00	154	56
Anuradhapura	04	131	04	446	03	08	00	44	00	28	01	47	02	27	02	64	53
Polonnaruwa	01	84	05	155	00	01	00	10	00	124	00	22	00	05	00	23	57
Badulla	02	154	01	786	00	04	00	119	00	45	01	39	00	168	03	184	53
Monaragala	00	43	04	367	00	07	00	76	00	23	01	31	00	98	00	72	80
Ratnapura	01	542	08	758	01	19	01	110	00	39	01	79	01	38	01	189	47
Kegalle	01	481	01	279	00	03	00	59	00	16	03	289	00	62	00	396	45
Kalmunai	00	46	02	252	00	01	00	75	00	17	00	03	00	01	02	264	25
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>11902</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7883</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1926</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1568</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2739</b>	<b>57</b>

Source : Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases ( WRCD ).

\*Dengue Fever / DHF refers to Dengue Fever / Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever

\*\*Timely refers to returns received on or before 6 Jan. 2007. Total number of reporting units = 284. Number of reporting units data provided for the current week: 161.

A = Cases reported during the current week; B = Cumulative cases for the year

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