

India's swine flu toll touches 666

At least 13 more swine flu patients died in India, taking the toll due to the contagious virus to 666, health authorities said Wednesday.

Of these latest fatalities, Rajasthan and Chandigarh reported four each, followed by two deaths in Maharashtra and one each in Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab.

Maharashtra has so far reported 235 deaths and Rajasthan 81. The toll in Delhi due to Influenza A (H1N1) is 35.

The capital city also witnessed 246 cases of swine flu - the highest for a single day in recent times. With these fresh infections, swine flu has affected 6,598 people in the city.

'At least 246 positive cases of swine flu were reported in the last 24 hours. This is the highest number for a single day till now,' Anjana Prakash, the state's assistant nodal officer for swine flu cases, told IANS.

With the onset of winter, the second wave of the flu is expected to hit many more people. 'The flu is in the community now and awareness campaigns are organised to sensitise people to take all necessary precautionary measures,' Prakash added.

In Shimla, a middle aged man died, taking the state's deaths from the virus to four.

'A middle-aged man who had been admitted to Shimla's Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital for quite some time died this (Wednesday) morning due to swine flu. He was tested positive for the virus Tuesday,' swine flu nodal officer Vinod Mehta told IANS.

Shimla and Solan districts in the state reported the maximum number of swine flu cases, he said.

Overall, 400 cases were reported in the country Wednesday. Chandigarh has 26 cases, followed by 23 in Tamil Nadu, 21 in Maharashtra, 19 in Rajasthan and 18 in Haryana.

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