


FLU FOCUS


With the swine flu spreading from Mexico threatening an already weakened global economy, Mint takes a look at the state of the crisis, its ramifications for India and the measures being taken to combat it.

The problem...

The World Health Organization (WHO) has raised its flu alert to the second highest level.



Phase V Virus spreads to at least two countries under a WHO region*, signalling that a pandemic is imminent



Phase VI Pandemic phase, the highest level, is characterized by community-level outbreaks in at least one other country in a different WHO region along with the criteria defined in phase V

WHO follows a six-phased approach for easy incorporation of new recommendations and approaches into existing national preparedness and response plans.

*Area under WHO's six regional offices worldwide

the preparedness...

- ▶ 32 doctors have been deployed round the clock at eight counters at the Delhi airport. The airport has a 32-bed facility at the Airport Health Organization, where suspected patients can be quarantined
- ▶ All other airports will have a minimum of four counters. Each counter will have one doctor and two nurses. India gets flights from 17 international airports
- ▶ Four laboratories will test for virus: National Institute of Communicable Diseases, in Delhi; National Institute of Virology, Pune; National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases, Kolkata; and Regional Medical Research Centre, Dibrugarh
- ▶ Govt has an existing stock of one million antiviral doses; poised to procure another 10 million
- ▶ Despatching drug consignments to states as well as six airports
- ▶ A finalized list of treatment guidelines has also been sent to the state governments
- ▶ The Indian Medical Association has been asked to put up information on its website so that other clinicians are also well informed

and economic fallout

Organization	Forecast
Moody's Economy.com	Potential pandemic could drag on India's economic recovery
Barclays	Demand for products, services may dip
Citi	Developing countries face bigger challenge
Nomura	East Asian countries more vulnerable
Wachovia Economics Group	Global GDP could be adversely affected

Source: Mint research