

THE SCOTSMAN

Fri 4 Nov 2005

## Bird flu could 'push world into recession'

VIDYA RANGANATHAN IN SINGAPORE

POTENTIAL human and economic costs from a bird flu pandemic are huge, the World Bank said yesterday, while the Asian Development Bank warned such an outbreak could push the world economy into recession.

The World Bank, issuing a separate twice-yearly report on East Asia's economies, said the spread of avian flu was so far confined to the rural areas of several Asian countries.

However, there was a big risk to economic growth in 2006 due to potential policy actions such as quarantines and travel restrictions, it said.

Milan Brahmbhatt, an economist and the main author of the report, said: "While the costs of dealing with this have so far been limited to around 0.1 per cent of GDP, from culling birds and implementation of better animal health surveillance systems, the potential impact of a serious pandemic is of grave concern."

The report said that the most immediate economic impacts of a pandemic might arise not from death or sickness but from people and governments responding in an unco-ordinated way - as was the case with the SARS outbreak of 2003.

While the bank said it was foolhardy to try to estimate costs from such a shock, it noted disruptions from SARS resulted in the loss of possibly 2 per cent of East Asian GDP in one quarter.

A 2 per cent loss of global GDP during a worldwide influenza pandemic would represent around \$200 billion (£113 billion) in one quarter, the World Bank said.

The Asian Development Bank said a year-long shock from bird flu in humans would cost Asian economies as much as \$283 billion (£160 billion) and would reduce the region's GDP by 6.5 percentage points, hitting Hong Kong and Singapore the most.

### Web links

- [Dept of Health - pandemic flu](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/EmergencyPlanning/PandemicFlu/fs/en)
- [WHO - Bird Flu fact sheet](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_01_15/en/)

### Related topic



- [Bird flu](http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=161)

**This article:** <http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=161&id=2192022005>

**Last updated:** 04-Nov-05 08:38 GMT

---

**Ads by Google**

**[Uncover Death Records](#)**

Discover the Truth About Anyone's Death File and History.  
[www.Search-Detective.net](http://www.Search-Detective.net)

**[UK Death Search 1984-2003](#)**

Search every Death Record in England & Wales Instantly  
[www.tracesmart.co.uk](http://www.tracesmart.co.uk)

**[Be Your own Detective](#)**

Find any Info on Anyone Criminal Records, Find a Friend  
[www.WebInvestigator9.org](http://www.WebInvestigator9.org)

---