

Digital Livestock Mission to be ready in three months

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India is digitising the birth, health and productivity records of its 53-crore strong livestock under the "One Health" project that seeks a convergence of animal, human and wildlife health to address potential pandemic situations.

Speaking at a workshop on "Mainstreaming animal issues in disaster risk reduction", Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Secretary Atul Chaturvedi said the National Digital Livestock Mission would be ready in three months.

"The idea is to build a 'one health' framework not only in terms of disease mitigation but also in terms of productivity of livestock to boost export potential," he explained, making a passionate case for enhanced investment in animal health.

At the workshop, organised by Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF) and Sphere India, top experts, including National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) members Kamal Kishore and Krishna Vatsa, sought stronger institutional structures for better animal protection during emergencies.

KM Singh, vice-president, PPF, in his keynote address, called for amending the National Disaster Management Act: 2005 to include safe-

AMEND NDMA ACT

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guards for animals. Citing NDMA Flood Guidelines, which say 94,000 animals perish in floods alone annually, he argued, "In the NDMA Act, there is no mention of livestock or the role of animal husbandry even though livestock is the largest source of livelihood with two-thirds of our population depending on it."

The workshop recommended amending the law to define animals "as legal entities rather than property", revisiting curriculum to better prepare vets for animal emergency response and encouraging exservicemen from the veterinary corps to register with state disaster relief mechanisms.

Chaturvedi made a passionate case for enhanced investments in animal health saying if animals are not healthy, humans cannot remain healthy.

Among others who spoke were DIG-NDRF Manoj Yadav and PPF president PC Haldar.