

NTS Bulletin April 2013

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NTS VIEWPOINT

Re-emerging infectious diseases: Time for renewed vigilance

By Mely Caballero-Anthony and Gianna Gayle Amul

Against the trends of increasing global travel, rapid urbanisation and growing population, the threat of infectious diseases looms large on the horizon. In Asia, the series of health crises brought on by SARS in 2003 and bird flu in 2005 remains a constant reminder that infectious diseases bring about grave impacts that extend to the economy and political-security stability.

Tuberculosis (TB), an age-old disease that had been thought to be largely under control, is making a comeback. New strains of coronavirus related to SARS and bird flu are also rearing their heads. These new iterations are often resistant to currently available drug treatments and, importantly, they are also more fatal to humans.

A recent alert from the World Health Organization (WHO) pressed for new vaccines to treat novel coronavirus (NCoV). The WHO also warned that the increasing incidence of drug-resistant TB leaves no room for complacency in the Asia-Pacific, particularly with the region accounting for 60 per cent of TB cases recorded worldwide.

Such warnings have come at almost the same time as reports more than 30 human cases of H7N9 bird flu infection in China. In the Middle East, SARS-related NCoV has proved to be deadly to many. There is also speculation in the media about a possible linkage between the H7N9 bird flu outbreak in China and the thousands of swine and bird carcasses recently found floating on China's rivers.

While the WHO has yet to issue travel advisories, the virulence of the emergent H7N9 strain and re-emerging coronavirus has already prompted calls of a possible pandemic from the US

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Constant news on infectious diseases and possible global disease spread after the SARS, bird flu and swine flu outbreaks of the past decade had led to the media and the public becoming inured to the urgency of the issue. However, this time around, 'pandemic fatigue' must not be allowed to set in.

International institutions and governments must step up funding for the development of new vaccines while cooperation in disease surveillance needs to be enhanced. At the same time as work on pandemic preparedness and response plans are being refined, there is also the need to further strengthen health systems to avert global health crises.

With international travel a modern reality, global hubs in the region such as Singapore and Hong Kong are closely monitoring the situation. In a region that is both a transit and destination point for 230 million travellers annually and home to 30 million migrants, vigilance on the spread of infectious diseases is all the more critical.

Mely Caballero-Anthony is Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). Gianna Gayle Amul is Research Analyst with the RSIS Centre for NTS Studies.

Additional Info:

- 'Historic opportunity to tackle drug-resistant tuberculosis at risk', *Medecins Sans Frontieres*, 19 March 2013.
- Garrett, Laurie, 'Is this a pandemic being born?', *Foreign Policy*, 1 April 2013.
- Kayyem, Juliette, 'Is it time to worry?', *The Boston Globe*, 4 April 2013.
- 'Human infection with influenza A(H7N9) virus in China – update', *World Health Organization (WHO)*, 7 April 2013.

- Herriman, Robert, 'H7N9 avian influenza and novel coronavirus: Is there a pandemic potential?,' *The Global Dispatch*, 8 April 2013.
- 'China's bird flu outbreak not cause for panic: WHO', *Today*, 9 April 2013.
- 'New study gauges novel coronavirus lung damage', *Global Times*, 9 April 2013.
- Abubakar, Ibrahim, Matteo Zignol and Dennis Falzon et al., 2013, 'Drug-resistant tuberculosis: Time for visionary political leadership', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

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CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Tran, Phuong, 'Philippine cities tackle climate change', *IRIN*, 6 March 2013.
- Malhotra, Richa, 'Country-specific climate vulnerability data now online', *SciDev.Net*, 8 March 2013.
- O'Hara, Rosa, 'Green group calls Asia Pulp and Paper forest policy "artful deception"', *Jakarta Globe*, 20 March 2013.
- Vaid, Manish and Tridivesh Singh Maini, 'The changing climate of Bangladeshi migration to India', *East Asia Forum*, 23 March 2013.
- Hotz, Alexander, 'Mekong region facing six degree-warming, climate extremes', *SciDev.Net*, 2 April 2013.
- 'Mitigating climate change through coastal ecosystem management', *UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*, 2 April 2013.
- 'Climate change adaptation M&E in practice; adaptation made to measure – and what is needed next?', Webinar, *SEA Change*, 3 April 2013.
- 'Tenth session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF10)', *International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Reporting Services*, 8–19 April 2013.

Selected Publications

- Tacoli, Cecilia, Budoor Bukhari and Susannah Fisher, 2013, 'Urban poverty, food security and climate change', Human Settlements Working Paper No. 37, London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

This paper highlights the links between urban poverty, food security and climate change. It notes that low and irregular incomes are the root cause of urban food insecurity; but inadequate housing, basic infrastructure and limited access to services contribute to levels of malnutrition and food insecurity that are often as high as, if not higher than, in rural areas.

- International Labour Organization (ILO), 2013, *Sustainable development, decent work and green jobs*, ILC.102/5, Report No. 5 of the 102nd session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva.

This paper asserts that environmental degradation and climate change will increasingly require enterprises and labour markets to adjust their ways of working. Such adjustments would translate to a shift to a sustainable, greener economy, which offers opportunities for social development. The paper draws on a study of 25 countries and situations, and cites examples of social and labour policies that combine social protection, employment creation, and skills development.

- Balaban, Osman, 2013, 'The use of indicators to assess urban regeneration performance for climate-friendly urban development: The case of Yokohama Minato Mirai 21', in Mitsuhiro Kawakami, Zhen-jiang Shen, Jen-te Pai et al., *Spatial planning and sustainable development: Approaches for achieving sustainable urban form in Asian cities*, Netherlands: Springer, pp. 91–115.

This chapter is based on research on the Minato Mirai 21 (MM21) project in Yokohama, a prominent waterfront redevelopment on brownfield sites. The findings give an indication of the extent to which the MM21 project has been able to achieve climate-friendly urban development. The article also highlights the strengths and weaknesses of using indicators to assess urban regeneration efforts.

Events & Announcements

- 'Iterative Risk Management for Climate Change Adaptation Policy and Practice', Training workshop, 22–26 April 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 'Second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action', 29 April – 3 May 2013, Bonn, Germany.
- '2nd Climate Change and Population Conference on Africa', 3–7 June 2013, Accra, Ghana.

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ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Itoh, Shoichi, 'Energy security in Northeast Asia: A pivotal moment for the U.S.-Japan alliance', Northeast Asia Commentary No. 67, *Brookings*, March 2013.
- Bradsher, Keith, 'Chinese solar panel giant is tainted by bankruptcy', *The New York Times*, 20 March 2013.
- Brahim, Sahara Piang, 'Southeast Asia not ready to go nuclear', *East Asia Forum*, 20 March 2013.
- Daiss, Tim, 'Running out of gas: Thailand's growing energy dilemma', *Energy Tribune*, 22 March 2013.
- Fensom, Anthony, 'Japan: On the cusp of energy independence', *The Diplomat*, 26 March 2013.
- Chou, Hui Hong, 'Singapore gets first LNG cargo from Qatar at Jurong Island', *Bloomberg*, 28 March 2013.
- 'Japan turns to coal as yen drives up energy costs', *Reuters*, 28 March 2013.
- 'Japanese cabinet proposes energy sector overhauls', *AP*, 2 April 2013.
- Bax, Pauline, 'Asian palm-oil planters head to West Africa', *Bloomberg*, 3 April 2013.

Selected Publications

- Hiebert, Murray, David L. Pumphrey, Gregory B. Poling, 2012, *Sustainable energy futures in Southeast Asia*, Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

This report focuses on the energy future of the five ASEAN countries that account for the majority of the region's energy consumption, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. Renewable energy is seen as key to the ability of these countries to achieve energy independence. The report identifies some crucial elements for ensuring energy security, including improving energy efficiency, building a good environment for energy trade, expertise sharing, and strengthening cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

- Jamil, Sofiah and Lina Gong, 2013, 'Nuclear energy development in Southeast Asia: Implications for Singapore', *NTS Insight*, No. IN13-01, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

In Southeast Asia, interest in civil nuclear energy cooled down in the immediate aftermath of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear crisis. However, the region has since seen a revival of interest in developing nuclear energy facilities. The paper identifies the factors behind the renewed pursuit of nuclear energy, and the implications for Singapore.

- Jiang, Ping and Keth Tovey, 2013, 'Improving the energy performance of large commercial buildings in China using effective energy management', *International Journal of Green Energy*, Vol. 10, No. 4.

This article focuses on the high use of energy in commercial buildings in China's cities. It asserts that the technical solutions employed to improve the thermal performance of the buildings would have less impact than reducing functional energy use within the buildings. Such reductions may be achieved either by the deployment of more efficient appliances or through effective energy management.

Events & Announcements

- '4th Annual Sustainable Cities', 23–26 April 2013, Singapore.
- 'Biomass Asia Conference', 20–22 May 2013, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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FOOD SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- 'New metric to be launched on hunger and food insecurity', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)*, 13 March 2013.
- Farge, Emma, 'U.N. bodies want to tackle drought to avert food crisis', *Reuters*, 15 March 2013.
- 'India's food bill won't impact rice exports, says food ministry', *Oryza*, 20 March 2013.
- Wisnu, Dinna, 'New perspective for food security and employment on the farms in ASEAN', *The Jakarta Post*, 20 March 2013.
- McClanahan, Paige, 'Doha trade talks critical to stop food price spikes, says WTO hopeful', *Guardian*, 25 March 2013.
- 'Thailand plans to re-export Cambodia rice to EU', *Oryza*, 25 March 2013.
- Appiah, Bernard, 'Climate change could be double-edged sword for farmers', *SciDev.Net*, 26 March 2013.

- Rulistia, Novia D., 'Post-2015 MDGs: Farmers should be prioritized post-2015 to reduce poverty', *The Jakarta Post*, 26 March 2013.

Selected Publications

- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), 2013, *2012 Global Food Policy Report*, Washington, DC.

The report provides an overview of global food policy developments in 2012, highlighting the lack of actual implementation of the numerous commitments to food security. It also points out the potentially damaging effects of the trade-distorting support and protection measures put in place by the US and European Union (EU) in 2012; and discusses food policy developments in Africa, the Arab world, South Asia, East Asia and Latin America.

- Fujii, Tomoki, 2013, 'Impact of food inflation on poverty in the Philippines', *Food Policy*, Vol. 39, pp. 13–27.

The article discusses the effects of food inflation across the different types of poor households in the Philippines. Specifically, it compares the degree of vulnerability of those living in rural and urban areas, and in agricultural and non-agricultural households. The study finds that agricultural households are generally more resilient to food inflation. It concludes, however, that the poorest of the poor remain the most vulnerable to inflation, regardless of whether they are in an agricultural household or otherwise.

Events & Announcements

- 'International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition', 13–15 May 2013, Rome, Italy.
- 'International Conference against Child Undernutrition', 14–15 May 2013, Paris, France.

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HEALTH SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Ruwitch, John and Niu Shuping, 'Dead pigs in China river spotlight heedless industry', *Reuters*, 15 March 2013.
- 'Health agencies warn of global TB threat, funding gap', *Today*, 18 March 2013.
- Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, 'Novel method accurately predicts disease outbreaks', *ScienceDaily*, 22 March 2013.
- Naik, Gautam, 'Science fiction comes alive as researchers grow organs in lab', *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 March 2013.
- American Society for Microbiology, 'Cleverly designed vaccine blocks H5 avian influenza in animal models', *ScienceDaily*, 25 March 2013.
- Li, Hui and Ben Blanchard, 'China's "black clinics" flourish as government debates health reform', *Reuters*, 27 March 2013.
- 'Activists fear less focus on HIV after 2015', *IRIN*, 28 March 2013.
- 'No sign of human transmission in new bird flu appearance: WHO', *Reuters*, 1 April 2013.
- 'New strain of bird flu infects four others in China – Xinhua', *AlertNet*, 3 April 2013.
- 'SARS-like virus seems to cause deep lung infection', *Bangkok Post*, 4 April 2013.



Selected Publications

- Marais, Ben J., Knut Lönnroth, Stephen D. Lawn et al., 2013, 'Tuberculosis comorbidity with communicable and non-communicable diseases: Integrating health services and control efforts', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

This article argues that tuberculosis (TB) control programmes should incorporate an integrated response to avoid overlooking the comorbidity of TB with non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, malnutrition, smoking- and alcohol-related diseases, and infectious diseases. It highlights the synergies and advantages of integrated healthcare and identifies priorities for the integration of interventions for communicable and non-communicable diseases.

- Abubakar, Ibrahim, Matteo Zignol, Dennis Falzon et al., 2013, 'Drug-resistant tuberculosis: Time for visionary political leadership', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

This article highlights the long-term complacency on and political neglect of drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB). It argues for a scaling-up of rapid and accurate diagnosis of drug-resistant TB to avoid the health system failure that the disease can set off if its threat to public health remains unacknowledged. The authors emphasise the need for political leadership to sustain the funding of global and national TB strategies.

- World Health Organization (WHO), 2013, *A global brief on hypertension: Silent killer, global public health crisis*, WHO/DCO/WHO/2013.2, Geneva.

This brief notes that hypertension kills 9.4 million worldwide per year and is more prevalent in low- and middle-income countries with weak health systems. It emphasises the role of public stakeholders in decreasing the burden of cardiovascular disease and improving non-communicable disease surveillance.

Events & Announcements

- 'World Immunization Week', 20–27 April 2013.
- 'World Malaria Day', 25 April 2013.
- '66th World Health Assembly', 20–28 May 2013, Geneva, Switzerland.

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INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT



News & Commentaries

- Cheang, Sopenheng, 'Khmer Rouge insider Ieng Sary dies while on trial', *AP*, 13 March 2013.
- Lubman, Stanley, 'Rebel village's failure also China's', *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 March 2013.
- Cumming-Bruce, Nick, 'U.N. Rights Council to vote on resolution on Sri Lanka', *The New York Times*, 18 March 2013.
- 'Myanmar riots stoke fears of widening sectarian violence', *Reuters*, 22 March 2013.
- 'Nepal: Truth & reconciliation law betrays victims', *Human Rights Watch*, 22 March 2013.
- 'The hardline Buddhists targeting Sri Lanka's Muslims', *BBC*, 25 March 2013.
- 'Death toll in Thailand refugee camp fire reaches 37; UNHCR aids victims', *Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*, 26 March 2013.
- 'Thailand begins peace talks with southern rebel group', *BBC*, 28 March 2013.
- 'Bangladesh: UN human rights experts appeal for end to violence linked to court decisions', *UN News Centre*, 29 March 2013.
- 'UNHCR calls for concrete steps to protect refugees through Bali Process', *Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*, 2 April 2013.

Selected Publications

- Curran, David, 2013, 'Training for peacekeeping: Towards increased understanding of conflict resolution?', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 80–97.

This article looks at a new training programme for UN peacekeepers. The programme incorporates training on non-violent solutions to potentially violent situations, such as interpersonal skills and negotiation strategies, and theoretical knowledge of conflict resolution.

- Human Rights Watch, 2013, *World Report 2013: Events of 2012*, New York, NY.

Human Rights Watch's annual review of human rights practices around the globe summarises key human rights issues in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide, drawing on events from the end of 2011 through to November 2012. The book is divided into three main parts: an essay section, photo essays and country-specific chapters.

Events & Announcements

- 'Preventing mass atrocities through development policies: A roundtable on economic, social and legal aspects', 18 April 2013, Washington, DC, USA.
- 'Extending gender justice to post conflict states through the ICC's complementarity regime: Problems and prospects', 24 April 2013, Brisbane, Australia.
- 'Call for articles: *Forced Migration Review* issue on "crisis migration"', 2 September 2013.

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TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries

- Fisher, Jonah, 'Trailing Singapore's "football match-fixing boss"', *BBC*, 5 March 2013.
- Gecker, Jocelyn, 'Rising drug trade threatens Myanmar's aspirations', *AP*, 25 March 2013.
- Jones, Pete, 'Gold and poaching bring murder and misery to Congolese wildlife reserve', *Guardian*, 31 March 2013.
- 'Indonesian police accused of aiding people-smugglers', *The Australian*, 1 April 2013.
- 'Mexican drug cartels move deeper into US to tighten grip on narcotics market', *Guardian*, 1 April 2013.
- 'Human trafficking victims will no longer be prosecuted, say police', *BBC*, 2 April 2013.
- 'UN adopts global treaty on weapons trade', *Bangkok Post*, 2 April 2013.



Selected Publications

- Environmental Justice Foundation, 2012, 'Pirate fishing exposed: The fight against illegal fishing in West Africa and the EU'.

Global losses due to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing or 'pirate fishing' are estimated to be USD10–23.5 billion per year. West African waters are estimated to have the highest levels of IUU fishing in the world – up to 37 per cent of the region's catch. This report exposes the continued role of European Union (EU) and East Asian countries in facilitating a market for seafood illegally caught in West Africa. It highlights how local fishing communities are fighting back to combat this illegal trade.

- Ayling, Julie, 2012, 'What sustains wildlife crime? Rhino horn trading and the resilience of criminal networks', Canberra: School of International, Political & Strategic Studies, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University (ANU).

States and the international community have been stepping up efforts to deal with illegal trading in wildlife, through introducing law enforcement and regulatory initiatives. This paper considers the networks involved in the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn that is currently posing an existential threat to most rhino species. It examines possible sources of these networks' resilience, both internal and external, and the implications for how the trade could be tackled.

- The Centre for Social Justice, 2013, *It happens here: Equipping the United Kingdom to fight modern slavery*, London.

This report explains how modern slavery in the UK manifests itself and the various forms it takes. Its main contention is that modern slavery is not primarily an issue of immigration as UK nationals are also forced into modern slavery without crossing any international border. It therefore recommends, among other things, the passing of a single Modern Slavery Act that will provide greater clarity for law enforcement agencies in areas such as prosecuting trafficking for non-sexual exploitation.

Events & Announcements

- '9th Annual AML & Financial Crime Conference', 19–21 June 2013, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- 'International Serious and Organised Crime Conference', 29–30 July 2013, Melbourne, Australia.

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WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Famiglietti, Jay, 'The Middle East lost a Dead Sea-size amount of water in 7 years', *National Geographic*, 22 February 2013.
- 'Experts say S'pore needs higher water tariffs', *Today*, 18 March 2013.
- Franco, Jennifer C., Lyla Mehta and Gert Jan Veldwisch, 'Are African land grabs really water grabs?', *CNN*, 22 March 2013.
- 'Israel appropriates 82% of Palestinian water', *Middle East Monitor*, 25 March 2013.
- 'Circle of Blue and Institute for Globally Transformative Technologies announce "Choke Point: Index"', *Circle of Blue*, 26 March 2013.
- University of Notre Dame, 'What role do small dams play in pollution control?', *ScienceDaily*, 28 March 2013.
- Asokan, Shyamantha, 'Indian states fight over river usage', *The Washington Post*, 1 April 2013.
- Taj, Mitra, 'Peru bores through Andes to water desert after century of dreams', *Reuters*, 4 April 2013.
- 'Water rationing to stay: WRA', *Taipei Times*, 6 April 2013.



Selected Publications

- Voss, Katalyn A., James S. Famiglietti, MinHui Lo et al., 2013, 'Groundwater depletion in the Middle East from GRACE with implications for transboundary water management in the Tigris-Euphrates-Western Iran region', *Water Resources Research*, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 904–14.

This study observes that freshwater storage in parts of the Tigris and Euphrates river basins and western Iran from January 2003 to December 2009 showed an alarming rate of decrease. This raises important issues regarding water use in transboundary river basins and aquifers, including the necessity of international water-use treaties and the importance of resolving discrepancies in international water law, while amplifying the need for increased monitoring of core components of the water budget.

- Tortajada, Cecilia, Yugal Joshi and Asit K. Biswas, 2013, *The Singapore water story: Sustainable development in an urban city-state*, Abingdon: Routledge.

This book describes the journey of Singapore's development and the fundamental role that water has had in shaping it. The authors analyse plans and policies; institutions, laws and regulations; water demand and supply strategies; water quality and conservation considerations; partnerships; and importance of the media. The book argues that the case of Singapore illustrates how a society can address development without losing its focus on the environment.

- Gunawansa, Asanga and Lovleen Bhullar (eds), 2013, *Water governance: An evaluation of alternative architectures*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

This volume discusses various types of public and private water governance architectures as well as identifies the trends, challenges, opportunities, and shifts in perceptions with regard to the provision of water supply services. A key argument is that while private sector participation has been promoted by multilateral institutions as part of institutional and financial reforms, it is governments that bear the major responsibility for the provision of water supply services, either as service provider, or regulator or policymaker.

Events & Announcements

- '7th International Water Association (IWA) Specialist Conference on Efficient Use & Management of Water', 22–25 October 2013, Paris, France.
- 'Water World Middle East', 19–21 October 2014, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

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About the Centre:

The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.