



# Migratory Birds & Zoonotic Diseases Scenario

## Reinforcing Non-Proliferation Norms in the Disinformation Age



Bio-Safety & Bio-Security Centre  
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Amman, Jordan

# ZOONOTIC DISEASES IN BIRDS



## Introduction

The scenario takes place in a water reserve while an international group of researchers is collecting migratory birds in the context of a research project to address health related issues. At the same time, group of tourists is touring the reserve with a guide, and the group watched the team. The tourists become eager to enquire of the guide about the researchers and their work. Ali is a local person and he works inside the reserve. He is attempting to explain to the visitors what they did. Ali indicates the tourists to speak with a member of the project team who is running an awareness campaign and handing out brochures about bird diseases to locals and visitors to the reserve. The researcher starts clarifying to the tourists the disinformation related to their research activities.

This work is prepared to raise the awareness of nonproliferation norms in disinformation age. During and after COVID-19 pandemic, some people start claiming that scientists in given countries are using their research to build biological weapons or to use animals as a route to transmit zoonotic and infectious diseases to hostile countries.

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3 I have seen them around a lot in the reserve during my tours with tourists, but I do not know exactly what they do. My colleagues informed me that they collect birds, medicate them, and then release them.

2 It looks like they're catching birds. Look inside the cottage; one person is carrying a bird.

1 What are those people doing over there, sir?



2 I believe that the birds are being treated with a harmful substance.


4 Are you suggesting that those individuals might be connected to this?

3 A group of researchers from specific countries are allegedly working on migratory birds to transmit diseases to a hostile country, according to breaking news I saw on a TV channel last week.

1 So, they are not hunting them. So why are they dressed in this way?

5 I'm not sure, maybe!





1 Good day to everyone. You mentioned the birds and diseases, which I overheard.

2 Yes, the tourists are interested in learning more about the researchers in the cottage.

3 Let me explain to you please.

4 These are international researchers from various countries that have been collaborating local researchers for a few years on a study including lab analyses of migrating birds during several seasons.

2 I'm not certain,  
but I believe they are  
searching for infectious  
agents.

6 Yes,  
viruses and other  
pathogens.

4 Like viruses...

8 Of course  
not. It is  
a scientific  
work.

7 Does this work  
have any connection  
to terrorism?

5 Viruses can be  
transmitted by birds!?

3 Infectious agents?  
What do you mean?

1 What sort of  
laboratory analysis?





3 Do you want to hear about the researchers' work? They are launching a campaign to raise awareness of their work throughout the community.

2 All of your information is incorrect.

4 Certainly, sure, that would be fantastic.

1 According to what we have heard, such work could cross-border disease transmission between people and animals.



2 I informed them of what I knew, but it appears that they have a misunderstanding of your research.

1 Hello, we briefly heard about your work via Ali.

3 No need to worry; I can explain.





1 We are investigating the potential for migratory birds to transmit dangerous diseases to people.

2 Why do you specifically do it for migratory birds?

3 Birds might potentially transport zoonotic diseases between nations and transmit them to unaffected nations.

5 Oh, that is really crucial.

4 We perform analysis to detect potential zoonotic diseases. For the protection of people and to stop further outbreaks in human populations, this is important.



1 Yes, our project qualifies as a bio surveillance study. To address issues with human and animal health, similar initiatives are being carried out all over the world.

3 You all have a significant role to play in this project.

4 We!! How?

2 we see.

5 We will provide you with few copies of the brochure to get out to your friends in order to dispel rumors and false information that could spread fear if they are not dispelled or explained correctly.

3 Thank you professor, for this thorough explanation

2 Yes, of course. We appreciate the explanation.

1 In particular, the individuals who believe that we produce biological weapons or transmit diseases across nations via migratory birds.

4 I am grateful.





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