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WHO employs directors for Western Pacific and Southeast Asia regions

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Poonam Khetrapal Singh reappointed as WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia



The WHO has appointed Dr Takeshi Kasai as Regional Director for WHO's Western Pacific Region, and re-appointed Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh for a second term as Regional Director for WHO's Southeast Asia Region.

New Regional Director for Western Pacific (WPRO)

Dr Kasai said he plans to build on the decade of leadership and legacy of the outgoing Regional Director. He is a Japanese national, has worked for WHO for more than 15 years. As Director of Programme Management for the last 4 years, he served as deputy to the Regional Director.

Prior to this, Dr. Kasai was instrumental in developing and implementing the *Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases and Public Health Emergencies*, which guides the Member States to improve readiness and response in public health emergencies. Dr Kasai also served as the WHO Representative in Viet Nam from 2012 to 2014.

A physician by training, his career in public health began nearly 30 years ago, when he was assigned to a post on the remote northeast coast of Japan, where he saw first-hand the value of building strong health systems from the ground up.

Re-election of the Regional Director for South-East Asia (SEARO)

"It is a privilege to once again be appointed as Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia Region. The confidence you have reposed in me is humbling," said Dr Khetrapal Singh, whose first term as Regional Director was marked by numerous initiatives and public health achievements.

Dr Khetrapal Singh, an Indian national, is the first woman Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia, and assumed office on 1 February 2014. On 5 September 2018, she was unanimously nominated by for a second 5-year term.