



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA AND
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)**



Press release 21 April 2010

Tenth Human Case of Avian Influenza H5N1 in Cambodia

The Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Kingdom of Cambodia wishes to advise members of the public that a 27 year old man from Kampong Leave District, Prey Veng Province, died on 17th April as a result of respiratory complications after contracting human avian influenza virus H5N1. The man is the tenth person in Cambodia to become infected with the H5N1 virus and the eighth to die from complications of the disease.

The patient became sick at home with high fever on 13th April and was later admitted to the local hospital on 16th April with symptoms of coughing and shortness of breath. He was transferred to the Calmette Hospital in Phnom Penh on 17th April as his condition deteriorated. He was immediately admitted to the hospital's Intensive Care Unit for treatment but died later that day from complications. Samples that were sent to the Pasteur Institut tested positive for influenza H5N1.

"Avian influenza H5N1 is still a threat to the health of Cambodians - I urge communities to be on the look-out for sick poultry and to report poultry die-offs to the MoH and MAFF hotlines so that they can be investigated before people start to get sick" said HE Mam Bun Heng, Minister of Health.

H5N1 influenza is a flu that normally spreads between sick poultry but that it can sometimes spread from poultry to humans. The H5N1 influenza virus does not spread easily between humans. Human H5N1 Avian Influenza is a very serious disease that almost always requires hospitalization. The H5N1 influenza is different to the H1N1 pandemic virus. The H1N1 virus is a mild disease similar to the seasonal flu. The H1N1 virus spreads easily between people so it is easy to catch but the majority of those affected recover completely without treatment.

As part of the Ministry of Health's routine outbreak response measures, government Rapid Response Teams (RRT) are now in the area conducting field investigations to identify the man's close contacts and to initiate preventative treatment as required. A public health education campaign is being conducted to inform families on how to protect themselves from contracting avian influenza. The government's message is - wash hands often; prepare food safely; keep children away from poultry; keep poultry away from living areas and do not eat sick or death poultry.

Health officials are also coordinating with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) teams who are investigating possible poultry deaths in the area.

As of 20th April 2010, there have been 10 laboratory confirmed cases of H5N1 avian influenza virus in humans in Cambodia, eight of whom died. Globally since 2003, there have been 494 laboratory confirmed cases of avian influenza with 293 related deaths.

The Ministry of Health will continue to keep the public informed of developments via the MoH website www.cdcmoh.gov.kh where relevant health education materials can also be downloaded.

For more information on human influenza please call the MoH Influenza Hotline numbers: **115 (free call); 012 488 981 or 089 669 567**

Or contact:

Ministry of Health

Dr Sok Touch: Tel +855 12 856 848

Dr Ly Sovann: Tel +855 12 825 424

World Health Organization

Dr Pieter van Maaren: Tel +855 23 216 610

Dr Nima Asgari: Tel +855 23 216 610

