



**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA, AND THE WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION (WHO)**



Avian Influenza in Cambodia- Update 29 March 2005

The Ministry of Health in Cambodia has today confirmed the country's second human case of avian influenza.

The 28-year-old man, from Kampot Province, developed symptoms on 17 March and was hospitalized in Phnom Penh on 21 March. He died on 22 March. The same day, laboratory tests by the Pasteur Institute in Phnom Penh confirmed that the man was infected with H5 avian influenza virus.

The Cambodian government immediately launched an investigation to search for possible additional cases and identify possible sources of exposure to the virus. The investigation team, which is continuing its work in Kampot Province, includes Cambodian Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agricultural officials joined by staff from the WHO country office and the Pasteur Institute in Phnom Penh. FAO is assisting the investigation of animal disease.

Numerous deaths among chickens in the area have been reported and samples taken from sick chickens have tested positive for avian influenza. The results from the investigation indicate the deceased man had contact with sick poultry. An 18 year-old boy initially identified as an additional suspected case has tested negative for the avian influenza virus. Samples taken from twenty seven other people, including family contacts of the confirmed case and Phnom Penh medical staff involved in his care, have all tested negative for H5 avian influenza infection. Results from a further six people from Kampot Province have also tested negative for H5 influenza virus.

Cambodia's previous case, a 25-year-old woman who died in late January, was also from Kampot Province but lived in another district.

The majority of poultry in Cambodia are raised in small backyard flocks in rural areas, making surveillance for outbreaks especially challenging. A campaign to educate rural populations about the dangers of contact with dead or diseased poultry is being undertaken by the government, with support from WHO.

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