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| 6049 | 13.01.2021 | 15.01.2021 | Mumbai, Thane, Ratnagiri, Beed, Parbhani, Latur Maharashtra | www.hindustantimes.com/English https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/bird-flu-200-more-birds-found-dead-in-maharashtra-tally-touches-1-839-in-5-days-101610481199288.html |
| Title: | Bird flu- 200 more birds found dead in Maharashtra- tally touches 1,839 in 5 days | | | |
| Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC | Information communicated to SSU- Maharashtra | | | |

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With a growing number of bird deaths being reported in Maharashtra, the risk of avian influenza, or bird flu, spreading across the state is also rising. On Tuesday, over 200 birds were found dead in the state, taking the tally of dead birds to 1,839 in the past five days. As of Monday, confirmed cases of bird flu cases have been recorded in Mumbai, Thane, Ratnagiri, Beed, Parbhani and Latur districts.

Late on Tuesday evening, Bhandara district in Vidarbha region reported the death of poultry birds. State animal husbandry commissioner Sachindra Pratap Singh said the exact number of deaths is yet to be ascertained, but if the number was large, the administration would not wait for official confirmation from ICAR-National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) in Bhopal, the nodal body for testing bird flu cases. Instead, the local administration would treat the deaths as sign of a bird flu outbreak by enforcing a containment plan.

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

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"If the number of deaths is in large numbers at one location then it means it is a case of bird flu. Confirmation from the laboratory in such cases is just a formality because bird flu is virulent and thus, we have decided to immediately impose a containment plan in the concerned area, except culling of birds. We start culling only in case of laboratory confirmation," said the commissioner.

On Friday, over 200 chickens died in Yavatmal district of Vidarbha while 11 and three birds died in Amravati and Akola districts respectively. Akola has also reported the death of four crows in the past 24 hours. However, the state has not received any new reports of confirmed cases of bird flu from NIHSAD.

Singh clarified that the state has not imposed any ban on supply, sale and purchase of poultry birds in Maharashtra. As a precautionary measure, sale and purchase of poultry birds is suspended only in a 10-kilometre radius from confirmed bird flu cases. The commissioner said the Centre is not in favour of enforcing a ban because it believes this would cause panic rather than serving any practical purpose.

Following a confirmation of the H variant of avian influenza from Pune's Western Regional Disease Diagnostic laboratory (WRDDL) in samples collected from Latur, the local administration started culling poultry birds and enacting other preventive measures in the district.

The Centre has authorized the state government to impose a containment plan in case WRDDL finds the H variant of bird flu in order to contain the infection at the earliest.

According to guidelines issued by the Central government, in case of confirmed cases of bird flu, the local administration must cull poultry birds within a one-km radius of the particular poultry farm where bird deaths due to avian influenza have been found. A surveillance zone must be set up in a 10-km radius within which no birds may be sold or purchased. The particular village where the affected poultry farm is situated will be declared a prohibited area, which means no one can enter or exit its boundaries. A medical team will be set up to carry out examinations of locals.

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