

Bird flu not confirmed in humans: West Bengal official

The West Bengal government Thursday said there has been no confirmation of bird flu in humans, a day after four workers involved in culling operations were put under medical supervision for 'suspected symptoms'.

'No one has tested positive with bird flu symptoms in Malda district. A medical team, comprising 17 experts from the union health ministry, is constantly monitoring the situation there,' West Bengal Health Services Director Sanchita Bakshi told IANS.

The union health ministry had issued a statement Wednesday in the national capital on four state Animal Resources Development (ARD) workers, involved in culling and mop-up activities in Malda, being found with symptoms of bird flu.

'The expert team has examined all of them and no human infection has been confirmed so far,' Bakshi said, adding that the surveillance team has been working in the affected areas for the past two weeks.

The bird flu virus resurfaced at a state-run poultry farm at English Bazaar in Malda two weeks ago. About 200 chickens have died at the poultry farm since March 13.

The H5N1 virus that causes avian influenza has hit parts of 13 out of 19 districts in the state. Around four million poultry birds were culled in West Bengal.

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