

Mysterious disease claims thousands of birds in Tripura

About 3,000 birds, including poultry fowl, have died due to some mysterious disease during the past one week in Tripura, officials said here Wednesday.

Villagers said more than 3,000 chickens, ducks, crows and other birds have first fallen sick and then died at bordering Kamalpur, 160 km north of here.

A team of doctors of animal resource development department (ARDD), led by its deputy director Chandan Kumar Roy, has rushed to the area and started collecting blood samples of the birds.

'Several dogs and five jackals, which had consumed the affected birds, were also found dead,' the villagers said.

'We don't think the birds have died of bird flu. We suspect it to be Ranikhet disease. However, we would send the blood sample to national laboratories for confirmation,' said Ashim Burman, director ARDD.

Ranikhet is a highly infectious and fatal viral disease, which attacks poultry of all ages. It is also known as newcastle disease.

Earlier, the detection of the H5N1 virus in chickens at the small poultry farms in Moulabibazar district of Bangladesh, opposite to Kamalpur, had prompted the Tripura government to take measures, including sealing of borders, to stop the movement of poultry and poultry products between the two countries.

'We have asked the BSF to maintain a strict vigil along the Indo-Bangla border to prevent illegal trade of poultry and poultry products from Bangladesh,' Burman said.

The state forest department has also asked its officials to keep a watch on Tripura's 10 big water bodies where migratory birds from India and abroad are currently breeding.

(© IANS / India eNews)