

Japan culls 10,000 chickens to contain bird flu

January 22 2011

Japan began slaughtering some 10,000 chickens Saturday at a poultry farm in western Miyazaki prefecture in a bid to contain an outbreak of bird flu, the local government said.

Officials in the prefecture, 900 kilometres (560 miles) southwest of Tokyo, said 36 chickens were found dead on Friday at the poultry farm.

Preliminary tests confirmed that six of the birds had died of the H5 subtype of the [avian flu](#) virus, the officials said.

In an effort to prevent a larger outbreak, the local government decided to slaughter all the chickens at the farm while setting up 20 checkpoints for disinfection and banned any movement of [chickens](#) within 10 kilometres.

It was the first [bird flu](#) outbreak since 2007 in Miyazaki, where a foot-and-mouth outbreak also forced the slaughter of almost 300,000 farm animals last year.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister Naoto Kan set up a task force Saturday morning to "promptly" introduce necessary measures to contain the bird flu outbreak, officials said.

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