

Bird flu claims sixth victim this year in Indonesia

March 27 2012

A 17-year old construction worker has died of bird flu on Indonesia's Lombok island, the sixth death from the virulent disease this year, a health ministry official said Tuesday.

The man developed fever on February 28 and was admitted to a local hospital five days later where he died on March 9, the ministry's head of animal-borne [infectious disease control](#) said.

"A laboratory result confirmed that he tested positive for the [bird flu virus](#)," Rita Kusriastuti told AFP, adding that the man contracted the H5N1 virus from poultry living around his house.

"Some ducks and chickens in his neighbourhood died of the virus, which has also been confirmed by a lab result," she said.

Concerns about avian influenza have risen in Asia since China in late December reported its first fatality from the virus in 18 months. Since then one more person has died in China.

Vietnam and Cambodia also recently reported deaths from avian influenza and the spread of the [H5N1 virus](#) in chickens in Hong Kong prompted a mass cull of birds.

Indonesia has been the nation hardest-hit by [bird flu](#), with 155 deaths reported since 2003, according to the latest figures given by the [World Health Organization](#), which exclude the latest death in Indonesia.

The virus typically spreads from birds to humans through direct contact, but experts fear it could mutate into a form that is easily transmissible between humans, with the potential to kill millions in a pandemic.

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