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Samples of 23 persons tested H5N1 negative, says Health Minister

CHENNAI – 17 Nov, 2026 Minister for Health K.G. Arunraj on Monday said that samples of 23 persons, who are mostly poultry workers and veterinary staff in affected areas, have tested negative for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1).

Addressing reporters on the sidelines of inspection of government hospitals in Vellore town, Dr. Arunraj said that 54 persons, who are mostly poultry workers and veterinary staff, were identified as these people were associated with affected poultry farms in Cuddalore. Of them, samples of 27 persons were collected and sent for testing. Results of 23 samples that have come so far have tested negative of H5N1 avian influenza virus. "The findings of 23 samples that were tested shows that the virus has not spread among humans. Despite sample results, surveillance has been intensified in affected areas," he said.

The Minister further said that at least 16 poultry farms in Cuddalore district were affected with Avian Influenza (H5N1). The Department of Public Health has conducted 27



medical camps in a 10 kms radius of the affected farms as part of preventive measures. Continuous surveillance is also being done by the Public Health Department in coordination with the Department of Animal Husbandry, he said.