

Woman detained for spreading bird flu rumors

A woman in central China's Hubei Province was detained for spreading rumors of a deadly bird flu outbreak, police said Saturday.

A post went viral on China's biggest social network, WeChat, Thursday saying an outbreak of H7N9 human infection had attacked eight medical workers and some family members after a villager in the suburbs of Xiantao City came down with the epidemic.

The post caused widespread panic and police launched an investigation, only to find it was sheer fabrication.

A woman surnamed Chen surrendered herself to police Thursday night, saying she had fabricated the rumor and spread it on WeChat.

She was put in detention for five days starting Friday.

China has stepped up prevention of human H7N9 avian flu which has led to 87 deaths at least nationwide since January. In addition, 269 H7N9 human infections have been reported in China this year.

The latest case was reported in southwest China's Guizhou Province on Friday. The patient, 45, was from Danzhai County in the Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture of Qiandongnan.

All close contacts were under clinical observation and no signs of infection had been detected so far, the provincial health and family planning commission said Saturday.