

Scientist: Bird flu not biological weapon

February 3 2006



The avian influenza virus originated naturally and is not a biological weapon, a senior Russian scientist has said.

Oleg Kiselyov, director of the Russian Influenza Research Institute, said Thursday, "We have not advanced enough to create such a genetic machine," the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

If the bird flu virus had been created artificially in order to be used as a biological weapon, scientists would have discovered this, he said.

Kiselyov called for the signing of international agreements on biological security in order to effectively fight the spread of bird flu.

"Work in this area is not keeping up to pace," he said. "We need to have

swift information on what is happening in neighboring countries. Monitoring must be global."

Russia registered its first bird flu cases in Siberia last summer, and saw the virus spread westward to the European part of the country in October. However, no cases of human infection have been reported.

Health and Social Development Minister Mikhail Zurabov said Thursday the Russian government would allocate more than \$46 million to fight bird flu, including the development of a vaccine, poultry immunization, expert training and the purchase of diagnostic equipment, RIA Novosti reported.

Copyright 2006 by United Press International

Citation: Scientist: Bird flu not biological weapon (2006, February 3) retrieved 9 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-02-scientist-bird-flu-biological-weapon.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.