

Bird flu hits China and Mexico

BEIJING: Authorities in China's remote north-western region of Xinjiang have culled more than 150,000 chickens following an outbreak of bird flu, officials said.

The outbreak of the H5N1 strain of avian flu initially killed 1,600 chickens and sickened about 5,500, the Agriculture Ministry said on Monday.

In an effort to contain the disease, agricultural authorities quarantined the area and culled 156,439 chickens.

The outbreak occurred on June 20 but was

only confirmed as H5N1 bird flu on Monday, the agriculture ministry said.

In **Mexico City**, the government declared a national animal health emergency on Monday in the face of an aggressive bird flu epidemic (H7N3 strain) that has infected nearly 1.7 million poultry.

More than half the infected birds have died or been culled, the agriculture ministry said of an epidemic that was confirmed on Friday by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation. **AFP**