

Health officials rule out Ebola outbreak in DR Congo

June 3 2013

A senior health ministry official in the Democratic Republic of Congo on Monday ruled out an Ebola outbreak in the northeast of the country, after possible cases were reported by United Nations staff.

"There were six cases, including four children under five and two adults, who suffered from fever and haemorrhagic symptoms. We have carried out analyses at the INRB (National Institute of Biomedical Research) and the results are negative... It's not Ebola," Benoit Kabela Ilunga, who runs the contagious diseases department at the ministry, told AFP.

Kabela added that further tests were in hand to determine which disease had killed three of the children among the six cases reported last Wednesday by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

"Other diseases can be associated with bleeding, like [typhoid fever](#), meningitis, [yellow fever](#) (and) severe malaria," the doctor said.

OCHA had announced suspect cases recorded between May 1 and May 12 at Mongo in the Bas-Uele district of the northeastern Orientale province, about 240 kilometres (150 miles) from Isiro, where the last [Ebola outbreak](#) killed 34 people out of 62 confirmed cases between May and November 2012.

To date, no treatment or vaccine is available for Ebola, which kills between 25 and 90 percent of those who fall sick, depending on the

strain of the virus, according to the [World Health Organisation](#).

The disease is transmitted by direct contact with blood, faeces or sweat, and by sexual contact or unprotected handling of contaminated corpses.

Ebola, one of the world's most virulent diseases, was first discovered in the DRC in 1976 and the country has had eight outbreaks.

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