

Qatar announces third MERS death

November 19 2013

An expatriate living in Qatar had died after he contracted MERS, bringing to three the number of deaths from the coronavirus in the Gulf state, health authorities said Tuesday.

The 61-year-old man had also suffered from "[chronic illnesses](#)," said Qatar's Supreme Council of Health in a statement published by the official QNA news agency.

Another foreign man, aged 48, who had contracted the virus, was discharged from a Qatar hospital after being successfully treated for three weeks, the same statement said.

Neither of the two men were identified.

In September, Qatar announced two other deaths from MERS of a man and a woman.

The World Health Organisation said earlier this month that it has been informed of 153 laboratory-confirmed MERS cases worldwide so far, including 64 deaths, most of them in Saudi Arabia.

Experts are struggling to understand the disease, for which there is no vaccine.

It is considered a deadlier but less-transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that erupted in Asia in 2003 and infected 8,273 people, nine percent of whom died.

Like SARS, MERS appears to cause a lung infection, with patients suffering from a temperature, coughing and breathing difficulties.

But it differs in that it also causes rapid kidney failure, and the extremely high death rate has caused serious concern.

In August, researchers pointed to Arabian camels as possible hosts of the virus.

And the Saudi government said on November 11 that a camel in the kingdom has tested positive for MERS, the first case of an animal infected with the coronavirus.

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