

Sierra Leone declares Ebola emergency in district

June 12 2014, by Clarence Roy-Macaulay

The Sierra Leone government announced a state of emergency in the Kailahun district from the outbreak of the Ebola virus which has claimed 17 lives in this West African nation, banning public gatherings and closing schools.

According to government figures released Thursday, there are 46 confirmed cases and another 122 suspected ones in the district near the border with Liberia.

In a press conference Wednesday, however, local parliamentarian Momoh Moiwai said the [death toll](#) was actually 28.

The government statement issued Wednesday night said all schools in the district will be closed to minimize Ebola transmission, while public gatherings including cinemas and night clubs would be prohibited.

Vehicles entering and leaving the district will also be screened at checkpoints, added the statement.

More than a month after Guinea President Alpha Conde told reporters the Ebola [outbreak](#) that originated in his country was under control, the death toll continues to climb in his country as well as in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

At least 231 people have died since the outbreak of the fearsome disease, which causes bleeding internally and externally and for which

there is no known cure. Guinea, where the outbreak began, has recorded just over 200 deaths.

Experts say the outbreak may have begun as far back as January in southeast Guinea. Ebola typically begins in remote places and it can take several infections before the disease is identified, making a precise start date virtually impossible to pin down.

It's one of the worst outbreaks since the disease was first recorded in 1976 in simultaneous outbreaks in Sudan and Congo, according to Doctors Without Borders and may wind up being the worst outbreak ever.

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