

'Clever' Japan firm donates high-tech masks for Ebola fight

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A little-known Japanese company has donated 10,000 high-tech face masks to several Ebola-hit African nations and says it is now getting calls from New York City, which confirmed its first case of the virus Thursday.

Clever, a maker of [air filters](#), said it is sending thousands of the \$75 masks for use by doctors and other [health professionals](#) in Guinea, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"We got a call from the government of Guinea asking for our product," said Tsuyoshi Nakagawara, a board member of the firm which is based in central Aichi prefecture, a major industrial centre.

"Initially they offered to buy the masks, but that requires going through months of procedures so we offered to donate them.

"We've also received calls from individuals in France, and since this morning we're getting calls from New York," he added.

The move comes on the heels of an announcement earlier this week by Japanese giant Fujifilm that it would increase its supply of an experimental Ebola drug to help stem the spread of the virus.

Clever says its Pittarich mask—originally developed for the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus, known as the MERS—is coated in chemicals that kill 99 percent of viruses, including Ebola, when they

come into contact with the specialised device.

Guinea wanted to use the more high-tech masks to prevent infections among its health staff, Nakagawara said.

Hard-hit Sierra Leone was not on the list of countries that Clever is donating masks to because there is no Japanese embassy in the small West African nation, he added.

Ebola, which has killed nearly 4,900 people in West Africa, is transmitted only through contact with an infected person's blood or other bodily fluids.

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