

14 dead, dozens ill from alcohol poisoning in India

January 12 2015

At least 14 people died and dozens of others were seriously ill after consuming toxic liquor in northern India Monday, officials said, in the latest incident of alcohol poisoning in the country.

The victims were rushed to various hospitals after the incident was reported in Kharta village near the capital of Uttar Pradesh state.

"The number of people who have now lost their lives due to [alcohol poisoning](#) has increased to 14 and around two dozen are being treated in the trauma centre of King George's Medical University," a local police spokesman told AFP.

Local media reports gave a much higher number of victims in serious condition.

"At present 117 persons are admitted at the medical university and six are undergoing treatment at Balrampur hospital," the Press Trust of India news agency quoted the state's chief medical officer S.N.S Yadav as saying.

The state government said it was taking a serious view of the incident.

"The CM has... ordered a (statewide) drive against illegal liquor," Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav's office said on Twitter.

His spokesman Rajendra Chaudhary told AFP that the government had

suspended a dozen officials from different local departments over negligence.

"The guilty will not be spared," he said.

Mass deaths from consuming adulterated alcohol are common in India, where people often imbibe cheap country liquor.

Police arrested 12 people in October 2013 after more than three dozen villagers died from toxic home-brewed liquor in Uttar Pradesh.

Nearly 170 people died in 2011 in the eastern state of West Bengal from consuming moonshine.

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