

Last known Ebola case in Guinea recovers: MSF

November 17 2015

The last known Ebola case in Guinea, a three-week old girl, has recovered from the virus, the medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said Tuesday, starting the countdown to the end of the epidemic.

An official announcement of the end of Ebola, which has claimed 2,500 lives throughout the country, is still some way off as a period of 42 Ebola-free days—twice the incubation period of the virus—is required.

The baby Ebola patient, whose 25-year-old mother died of the disease last month, was treated at the MSF centre in the capital Conakry and declared cured on Monday.

"Nubia has responded well to the treatment she received," said Laurence Saily, MSF emergency coordinator in Guinea.

"We are pleased that she has been tested negative, but as she is the first infected baby to have recovered, she will continue to receive specialised medical support before going back home."

The current epidemic is the worst ever outbreak of the haemorrhagic fever which first surfaced in 1976 in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo.

According to the latest toll given by the World Health Organization (WHO), the epidemic has left 11,300 dead, mainly in the west African states of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, out of almost 29,000 cases.

Experts agree that the real death toll is almost certainly significantly higher than the official data, which has been skewed by the under-reporting of deaths in many probable Ebola cases.

Last week the WHO declared Sierra Leone to be Ebola free. Liberia was declared to have beaten the virus in September.

Hopes are high that Guinea will join them, meaning the tri-nation epicentre of the outbreak will be in the clear.

Nubia's family is from Guinea's Forecariah prefecture, near the Sierra Leone border, the last area Ebola-affected area in the country.

"The government and the communities have worked hard with us to arrive at this result. We must still remain vigilant for any potential new cases so that our achievements will not be destroyed." Saily cautioned.

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