

Schools closed in Zambia as cholera toll rises to 61

January 9 2018

The start of Zambia's school year has been postponed and all public gatherings banned to contain a cholera outbreak that has killed 61 people, officials said Tuesday.

Church services were cancelled on Sunday and a night-time curfew has been imposed to limit movement in Lusaka's densely-populated slum district of Kanyama, one of the worst affected areas.

Street vending has also been outlawed and nightclub hours reduced, while the army has been patrolling the streets for the last 10 days to ensure compliance with the tightening restrictions.

"The country has recorded 114 new cases in the last 24 hours bringing the total to 2,672 since the [disease](#) broke out. The cumulative death toll is 61," Health Minister Chitalu Chilufya told journalists Tuesday.

The current outbreak began in late September.

The school year was due to start on Monday and no date has been set for term to begin.

Cholera is a water-borne diarrhoeal disease that can kill within hours if left untreated, but is easily cured with oral rehydration, [intravenous fluids](#) and antibiotics.

Clean water and sanitation are critical to controlling transmission.

President Edgar Lungu has said he was "deeply concerned" at the spread of the disease, blaming water from shallow wells, unsanitary conditions in residential and public areas and contaminated food.

On December 30, he ordered the military to assist efforts to control the disease.

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