

Uganda extends Ebola lockdown in two hotspots

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Uganda's president extended a six-week lockdown Saturday on two

districts at the epicenter of an an Ebola outbreak that has claimed 55 lives but said its spread was being curbed.

Since the outbreak was declared on September 20, Ebola has spread across Uganda and reached the capital Kampala, though [health authorities](#) this week said case numbers were falling.

The two central districts at the heart of the outbreak, Mubende and Kassanda, were placed under a 21-day lockdown by President Yoweri Museveni on October 15.

The measures—including a dusk-to-dawn curfew, a ban on personal travel, and the closure of markets, bars and churches—were extended on November 5 by another 21 days.

On Saturday, Museveni ordered that the lockdown on Mubende and Kassanda to be renewed for 21 days, describing the situation as "still fragile".

"If we open now and a case appears, we will have destroyed all the gains made in this war," Museveni said in a national address read by his deputy, Jessica Alupo.

"I therefore appeal for calm and understanding. Our [health workers](#) will continue to do all it takes to save lives and bring the epidemic to an end."

According to WHO criteria, an outbreak of the disease ends when there are no new cases for 42 consecutive days—twice the incubation period of Ebola.

Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng told AFP this week that the number of new cases being registered was declining and there were signs Uganda was "winning" the fight.

Uganda's WHO office said Thursday that as of November 22, no case had been declared for nine days in Kampala, 10 days in Mubende and 12 days in Kassanda.

Museveni said it was too early to celebrate "but overall I have been briefed that the picture is good".

The [outbreak](#) has claimed 55 lives out of 141 cases, the country's [health ministry](#) said on Friday.

Ebola is spread through bodily fluids. Common symptoms are fever, vomiting, bleeding and diarrhea.

Outbreaks are difficult to contain, especially in [urban environments](#).

The strain now circulating is known as the Sudan Ebola virus, for which there is no vaccine, although several potential jabs are heading towards clinical trials.

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