Five dead as cholera outbreak hits Cameroon capital

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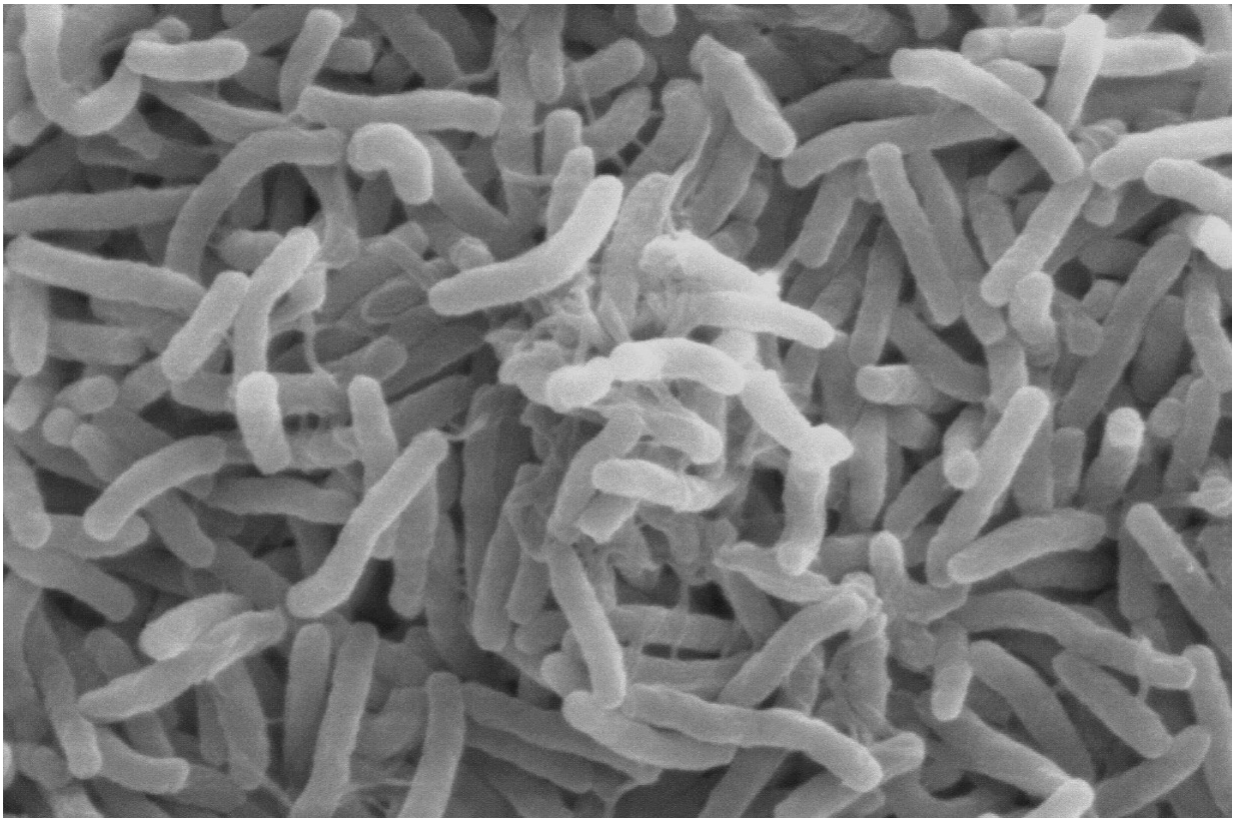

Scanning electron microscope image of Vibrio cholerae. Credit: Wikipedia

Five people in the Cameroon capital of Yaounde have died from cholera over the last month, according to the health ministry, which warned of a "resurgence" of the disease.

The ministry said the five had died since the disease reached the capital last month, and at least 88 cases have been identified since mid-March in the central region of the country, which includes Yaounde.

Health Minister Manaouda Malachie said in a statement dated Wednesday that there was a "resurgence" of an epidemic first declared in October 2021.

He added the country's monitoring system had been put on alert.

Cholera—an acute diarrhoeal illness which can be fatal in hours if left untreated—reappears periodically in Cameroon, which has a total population of some 25 million.

The previous update in October tallied 272 deaths and 12,952 cases over 12 months across the country.

But the latest areas hit include four districts of Yaounde, which is home to some 2.8 million, as well as the nearby towns of Mfou and Obala.

The number of new cholera cases in Africa, having risen sharply in early 2023, fell 37 percent in late February, the World Health Organization said last month.

But the UN body voiced fears that flooding in southern Africa posed a high risk of spread, reporting cases in 12 countries, notably Mozambique and Malawi, which are enduring record outbreaks.

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