

Nigeria records 39 mpox cases this year

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Nigeria has recorded 39 cases of mpox since the beginning of the year, a health official said as concern mounts over the global spread of the disease.

The cases were across the country and have not been fatal, according to

Jide Idris, the director-general of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

"A total of 39 confirmed cases out of 788 suspected cases and no deaths have been recorded," Idris told reporters on Thursday.

The World Health Organization (WHO) this week declared the rapid spread of a new more dangerous mpox strain, Clade 1b, a public health emergency of international concern—the highest alarm it can sound.

So far Nigeria has only seen cases of a milder strain, Odianosen Ehiakhamen, who heads Nigeria's mpox technical working group, told a local broadcaster on Thursday.

Nigeria saw its first mpox case in 1971 and has confirmed cases every year since 2017, Ehiakhamen said.

The WHO declared the mpox surge in Africa a global public health emergency on Wednesday.

Sweden, the following day, announced the first case outside Africa of the more dangerous variant of [mpox](#).

The UN health agency was concerned by the rise in cases and deaths in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where at least 548 people have died this year.

Previously unaffected countries such as Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have reported outbreaks, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

Mpox is caused by a virus transmitted to humans by infected animals, but it can also be passed from human to human through close physical

contact.

The disease causes fever, muscular aches and large boil-like skin lesions.

Nigerian Health Minister Muhammad Ali Pate said on Thursday that Nigeria now requires all travelers to complete an online health form before arrival to curb the spread.

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