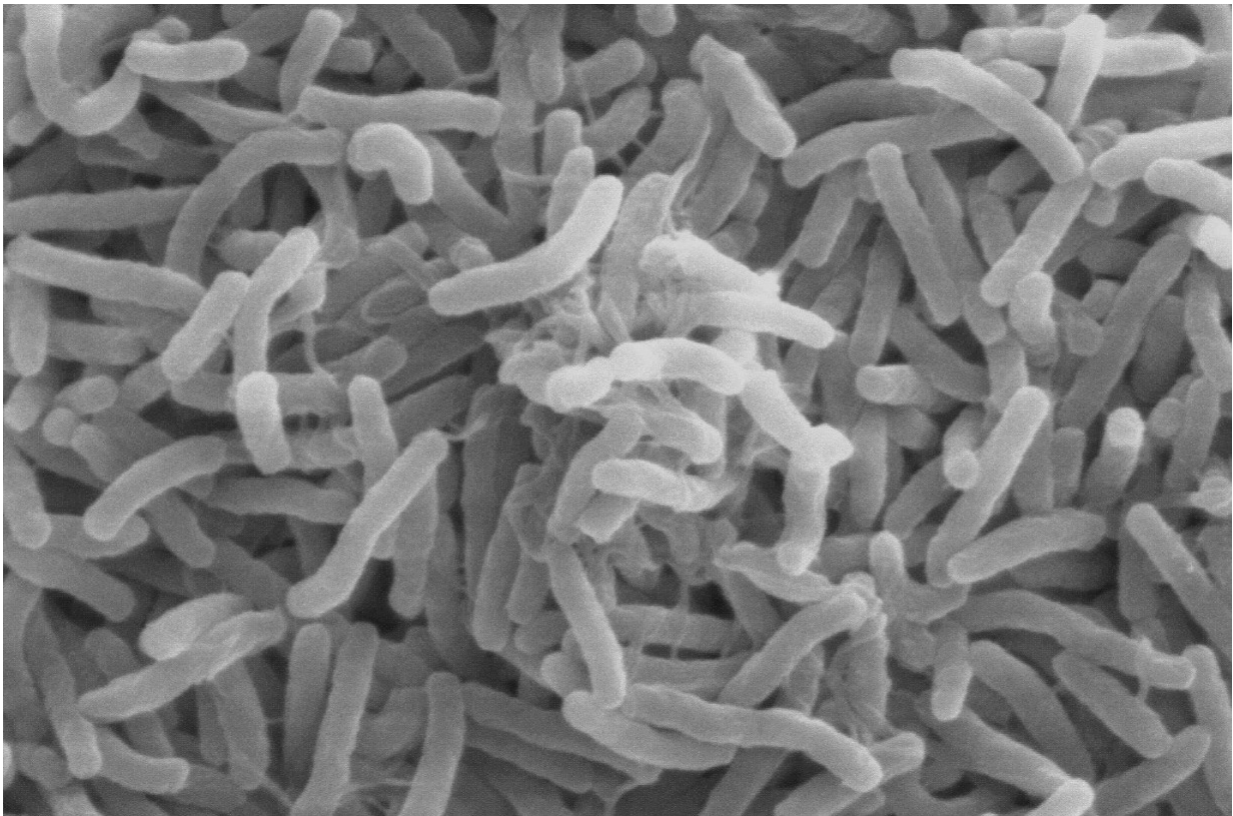


# Sudan health minister declares cholera epidemic

August 18 2024

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Scanning electron microscope image of *Vibrio cholerae*. Credit: Wikipedia

Sudan's health minister on Saturday declared a cholera epidemic after weeks of heavy rain in the war-torn country, in a video released by his ministry.

"We are declaring a [cholera epidemic](#) because of the [weather conditions](#) and because drinking water has been contaminated," Haitham Ibrahim said in the video.

He said the decision was taken in conjunction with authorities in the eastern state of Kassala, United Nations agencies and experts after the "discovery by the public health laboratory of the [cholera](#) virus".

The northeast African country has been engulfed in a war since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under the country's de facto ruler Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

The conflict has unleashed one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with more than 25 million people—upwards of half the population—facing acute hunger.

Famine has been declared in a displacement camp in the vast western region of Darfur.

For weeks the country has seen torrential rainfall, with Kassala state badly hit. The authorities there have appealed for "immediate" and "urgent" international aid.

Thousands of people have been displaced by flooding, causing an increase in sickness including diarrhea, especially in children.

Cholera causes [severe diarrhea](#), vomiting and [muscle cramps](#), and generally arises from eating or drinking food or water that is contaminated with the bacterium, according to the World Health Organization.

It can cause severe dehydration, leading in some cases to death within a

few hours.

The WHO, a UN agency, said 307,433 cases of cholera and 2,326 deaths have been reported in 26 countries up to July 28.

Sudan's war has greatly hampered the work of international humanitarian organizations.

Both sides in the conflict have been accused of committing war crimes, including indiscriminate bombardment of built-up areas.

The war has killed tens of thousands of people, with some estimates of up to 150,000, according to US envoy to Sudan Tom Perriello.

More than 10 million people have been displaced by the fighting.

Ceasefire talks began on Wednesday in Switzerland, hosted by US, Saudi and Swiss mediators, although the Sudanese army refused to take part.

Previous negotiations in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia failed to produce an agreement.

Sudan faces what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis in recent memory, as the fighting shows no sign of abating.

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