

Hemorrhagic fever claims 3 lives in western India

19 January 2011

(AP) -- An Ebola-like hemorrhagic fever has killed three people in western India and dozens of doctors will screen a community of about 16,000 people in efforts to contain the disease, a state health minister said Wednesday.

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A woman died of the insect-transmitted illness two weeks ago in the Gujarat state village of Kolat and a doctor and nurse who treated her later also contracted the illness and died, state Health Minister Jay Narayan Vyas said.

India's National Institute of Virology later confirmed that the three died of Crimean-Congo [Hemorrhagic Fever](#), an Ebola-like disease where patients can bleed to death if not treated quickly. The illness mainly affects animals, but ticks that live on sheep and cattle can pass the virus to people, who can transmit it through their blood or [saliva](#).

The government has appointed 38 medical teams - each including doctors and veterinarians - to screen all 16,000 residents in the area of Kolat, near the state's commercial capital of Ahmadabad.

Doctors and nurses in the region have been warned to take utmost precautions when treating patients showing symptoms of the deadly fever, Vyas said.

"The Gujarat government has launched an all-out campaign," Vyas said.

The woman's husband and brother-in-law also were critically ill with the fever and were being treated in a government hospital in Ahmadabad, he said.

A.C. Mishra, director of the virology institute, said the Gujarat government has moved quickly against the illness.

"It's a high-risk disease, but there's no need for panic yet," Mishra said.

APA citation: Hemorrhagic fever claims 3 lives in western India (2011, January 19) retrieved 16 January 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-01-hemorrhagic-fever-western-india.html>

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