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Last known Ebola patient in Mali cured: health official

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The last patient to be treated for Ebola in Mali has made a full recovery, a senior health ministry official told AFP Thursday.

"The recovery of a second Malian patient infected with the Ebola virus was officially recorded in Bamako Thursday," the official, who did not wish to be identified, said.

The patient had already tested negative for Ebola on December 5 but was kept in hospital for several more days to be treated for another, unspecified illness, the official added.

As of Thursday, he was "completely cured."

The source said the patient was the only person being treated for Ebola in Mali after another person treated for the deadly virus was discharged from hospital 12 days ago after being declared Ebola-free.

No new cases of infection have been reported in Mali for several days.

Twenty-six people who could have had contact with Ebola patients were still under medical observation Thursday, but around half of the group was to be freed from the restrictions Thursday night, the health ministry said.

Seven people have died of Ebola in the west African nation, with the first fatality a two-year-old girl brought from neighbouring Guinea to

stay with relatives.

Shortly afterwards, a Muslim cleric, also from Guinea, died in the capital Bamako. He transmitted the virus, directly or indirectly, to seven other people, five of whom died.

Worldwide, the epidemic has killed nearly 6,400 people in under a year, mostly in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

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