DR Congo tests 12 more patients for Ebola

August 3 2019

Goma's population density heightens the risk of Ebola spreading

Twelve people were ordered to undergo testing for possible Ebola infection in Goma in DR Congo on Saturday, only days after three patients in the densely populated city tested positive for the disease, the country's presidency said.

"A total of 12 people from various centres on the outskirts (of Goma) are undergoing testing after the response team triggered the alert protocol," it said in a statement.

Six others suspected of carrying the virus were discharged after testing negative on Friday, the presidency added.

A one-year-old girl became the third patient to test positive for Ebola in Goma, local officials said Wednesday.

She is the daughter of the second patient, a gold miner, who died earlier in the week.

His wife, also infected, and the young girl were in stable condition on Saturday, the presidency said.

Goma is the capital of North Kivu province, which has borne the brunt of the year-old epidemic that has claimed more than 1,800 lives.

Meanwhile two vehicles carrying members of a team fighting Ebola were shot at on the road between Beni and Butembo, two North Kivu towns that have also suffered badly from the outbreak.

"Happily no one was injured," police colonel Richard Mbambi told AFP.

Violence against medical staff in the affected provinces where various militias operate has been one reason authorities have struggled to battle the epidemic.

Other countries in the region fear the virus could spread from DRC to their territories.

Mozambique on Saturday set up disease checkpoints along its border

with Malawi as a precaution, and officials said Rwanda on Thursday briefly shut its border with DRC.

The Ebola virus causes fever, vomiting and severe diarrhoea, often followed by kidney and liver failure, internal and external bleeding.

The disease is spread by contact with infected body fluids and is fought by tracing contacts and quarantining them.

There is no medical cure for Ebola, although an unlicensed but tested vaccine has been widely deployed to help protect frontline workers.

The latest epidemic is the second deadliest on record after more than 11,000 people were killed in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia between 2014 and 2016.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: DR Congo tests 12 more patients for Ebola (2019, August 3) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-08-dr-congo-patients-ebola.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.