

MERS virus kills man in UAE

27 January 2016

The MERS coronavirus has killed a man in the United Arab Emirates, the Abu Dhabi health authority said on Tuesday.

The 73-year-old was confirmed to be infected with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) earlier this month and also infected a woman who has since recovered, the authority said in a statement carried by WAM state news agency.

In June 2014, UAE authorities said MERS had killed 10 people and infected 68 others in the seven-member federation since March 2013.

Neighbouring Saudi Arabia remains the country worst hit by the virus, with 1,286 cases of infection and 551 deaths, according to Saudi authorities.

Globally, there have been 1,630 confirmed cases and 586 fatalities, according to the World Health Organization.

MERS is considered a deadlier but less transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that appeared in Asia in 2003 and infected 8,273 people, nine percent of whom died.

Like SARS, it appears to cause a lung infection, with patients suffering coughing, breathing difficulties and a temperature.

MERS differs in that it also causes rapid kidney failure.

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