

New Ebola case diagnosed in DR Congo's Goma: health official

30 July 2019



Ebola virus particles (red) on a larger cell. Credit: NIAID

A new case of Ebola has been registered in the eastern DR Congo city of Goma, a key transport hub, a Congolese health official said on Tuesday, as the virus death toll rose to 1,790.

It is the second case of Ebola detected in the lakeside city of more than two million people, close to the Rwanda border.

"I have just been informed of a case of Ebola in Goma," Dr Aruna Abedi, coordinator of the Ebola response in North Kivu province, told AFP.

Health officials said the latest case involves a man from a northeastern rural community, who arrived in Goma on July 13 and was later diagnosed.

Efforts to contain the virus have repeatedly been hindered by mistrust of health officials and militia violence, particularly in rural areas.

"Our response teams have just detected and isolated a second case on July 30, 2019. It is initially not being linked to the first case," said an

official statement, signed by Congolese professor and leading Ebola researcher Professor Jean-Jacques Muyembe, seen by AFP.

According to the statement, the patient was being treated in the Goma Ebola Treatment Center after arriving in the city from a mining area of Ituri province.

Congolese health officials said that "all measures are being taken to strengthen surveillance at points of entry and sanitary control", amid concern the virus could spread to neighbouring countries.

Earlier this month, a pastor tested positive and later died after arriving in Goma by bus, sparking fears the disease could spread quickly through the densely populated city.

The latest Ebola outbreak to hit Democratic Republic of Congo has killed 1,790 people since August last year, according to figures released on Tuesday.

In mid-July, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern"—a rare designation only used for the gravest epidemics.

The Ebola virus is highly contagious and has an average fatality rate of around 50 percent.

It is transmitted to humans from wild animals and spreads among people through close contact with the blood, body fluids, secretions or organs of an infected person.

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