

West Africa Ebola Most Challenging, WHO Says



Conakry, Apr 9 (RHC), – The current Ebola outbreak in West Africa is one of the “most challenging” ones ever to strike since the disease emerged four decades ago, says the World Health Organization (WHO).

"We have not had an Ebola outbreak in this part of Africa before," Keiji Fukuda, the WHO assistant director general, said on Tuesday, adding, "This is one of the most challenging Ebola outbreaks we have ever faced."

According to the WHO's latest figures, there have been 157 suspected cases in Guinea, 101 of them fatal.

"Ebola is clearly a severe disease. It's an infection with a high fatality rate. But it's also an infection that can be controlled," the WHO official noted.

The WHO did not announce any travel restrictions for Guinea, however other countries in the region are bracing against the epidemic, with Senegal closing its border with the neighboring country.

Stephane Hugonnet, a WHO medical officer

who returned from Guinea last weekend, said “there is a risk that other countries might be affected, therefore we absolutely need to remain vigilant.”

There is currently no known cure for Ebola, whose symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting and bleeding.

The virus spreads through direct contact with blood, feces and sweat. It can also be spread through sexual contact or the unprotected handling of contaminated corpses.

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