

## **Ebola Resurfaces**

### **What is the issue?**

\n\n

\n

- Ebola crisis in 2014 had a severe effect on multiple African governments.
- The disease has returned in parts of “Democratic Republic of Congo” (DRC) with new outbreaks getting reported recently.

\n

\n\n

### **How is the current outbreak playing out in Congo?**

\n\n

\n

- Recently, just days after World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that the Ebola crisis had ended in DRC, newer incidences were reported again.
- The current outbreak in Northern Province of Kivu appears to be unrelated to the previous occurrence about 2,500 km away at Equateur Province.
- While Ebola is a constant threat in DRC, the detection of incidences is said to be an indicator of a properly functional health surveillance system.
- Importantly, the response of the DRC government to the current episode was praised as prompt and skilful (having learnt from previous events).
- On its part, the WHO too released \$1 million from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies immediately after the outbreak was reported.
- Its multidisciplinary team began an active search for cases and people who had come in contact with those who were infected.
- Then, treatment facilities and mobile laboratories were set up and the community educated on safe practices.

\n

\n\n

## **How is the current episode in contrast with the 2014 one?**

\n\n

\n

- In 2014, Ebola had struck three West African countries namely - “Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone” and caused high mortality.

\n

- At that time, local and international health initiatives to counter the outbreak were slow and resultantly the disease spread widely.

\n

- Notably, in contrast to the current WHO response, its “Emergency Committee” convened in 2014 only after some 1,000 people had died.

\n

- Further, the current episode has not been declared as a ‘Public Health Emergency of International Concern’, by the WHO.

\n

- This is mainly because, the swift response by the DRC government, WHO team and other partners is felt to have averted any major risk.

\n

\n\n

## **At what stage is the vaccine development at?**

\n\n

\n

- “VSV-EBOV” vaccine, which was developed recently by Canadian researchers, is now under testing, and holds considerable promise to curtail Ebola.

\n

- Notably, pending comprehensive trial results, the vaccine has already been approved for compassionate use in case of emergencies.

\n

- Currently, the first batch of more than 4,000 doses of vaccine was recently dispatched to DRC through a WHO monitored project chain.

\n

- Health workers and vulnerable populations are being selectively administered the vaccine to curtail the spread of the disease.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n\n

\n

