

WHO: Ebola poses low risk globally

Bunia: The new outbreak of a rare Ebola type in Congo and Uganda poses low global risk, the World Health Organisation said on Wednesday, but responders on the ground described being underprotected and undertrained for a rapidly spreading virus with no approved medicine or vaccine.

The risk assessment came as the leader of the WHO team in Congo said the outbreak with over 130 suspected deaths could last at least another two months.

WHO has declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

So far, 51 cases have been confirmed in Congo's northern provinces of Ituri and North Kivu, as well as two cases in Uganda, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday. Beyond that, there are 139 suspected deaths and almost 600 suspected cases.

Anxious healthcare workers in eastern Congo said on Wednesday they are underprotected and undertrained in the rapidly spreading outbreak of a rare type of the virus in one of the world's most remote and vulnerable places.

"It's truly sad and painful because we've already been through a security crisis, and now Ebola is here too," said Justin Ndasi, a resident of Bunia, site of the first known death that was announced last week after what experts call a worrying delay in detecting the virus.

Czech transfer

A US doctor will be transferred from Uganda to a hospital in Prague on Wednesday after he came into contact with a patient infected with Ebola, Czech health officials said.

The doctor was showing no symptoms of the deadly virus and would be hospitalised as a precaution following a request from the US, Czech health minister Adam Vojtech said.

"There is no real risk to the wider public," Vojtech told a press conference.