

Ebola delays India-Africa meet

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi: India on Thursday announced the indefinite postponement of the fourth India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS IV) that was scheduled to take place in the capital from May 28 to May 31 in view of the Ebola outbreak in Central Africa.

Announcing this on Thursday, the external affairs ministry said the two sides exchanged views on the evolving health situation in parts of Africa.

“Recognising the importance of ensuring the full participation and engagement of African leaders and stakeholders, and mindful of the emerging public health situation on the continent, consultations were held between the Government of India, the chairperson of the African Union, and the African Union Commission regarding the

holding of the summit and associated activities. Following these consultations, the two sides agreed that it would be advisable to convene the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit at a later date,” the ministry said.

The first International Big Cat Alliance Summit, which was scheduled to be held in the capital on June 1 in conjunction with IAFS IV as several African countries host big cats and are partners in global efforts at conservation, has also been postponed. The new dates of this summit will be announced at a later date in consultation with participating countries and stakeholders.

Earlier in the day, the Centre issued a health advisory for travellers arriving in the country, specifically from Congo, Uganda and South Sudan, advising them to seek medical attention if they suffer from any



Residents wash their hands before crossing the Kanyaruchinya checkpoint in Congo on Wednesday. (Reuters)

disease-related symptoms.

The advisory was issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) for passengers arriving from or transiting through Ebola-affected countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and South Sudan.

Passengers from these African countries are advised to seek immediate medical care within 21 days of arrival if they experience symptoms such as fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, weakness or fatigue, headache, unexplained bleeding, muscle pain and sore throat. Passengers are also advised to share their travel history.

The DGHS strictly advised that any passenger who had direct contact with blood or body fluids of a person suspected or confirmed to have Ebola disease must immediately report to the airport health officer or health desk before immigration clearance.

A case of Ebola has been confirmed in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's South Kivu province — hundreds of kilometres from the outbreak's epicentre — the rebel alliance that controls the area said on Thursday.