

Ebola cases rise sharply in eastern DR Congo

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Twenty-three cases of Ebola have been recorded in four days in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, where deadly violence is hampering efforts to end the 16-month-old epidemic, authorities said on Thursday.

Ten cases were recorded on Tuesday alone in Mabalako in North Kivu province, after six on Monday, according to the Multisectoral Committee for Epidemic Response (CMRE).

Three out of the six were practitioners of traditional medicine, it said.

On Wednesday, three cases were recorded in North Kivu, including one in the Biena neighbourhood—which has had no new Ebola cases for the last 85 days.

More than 2,200 people have died since the epidemic was declared on August 1, 2018.

As of November 22, the rate of new cases had fallen to 10 per week.

CMRE said "security reasons"—attacks on Ebola health workers and sites by armed groups and angry youths—had "paralysed" work in the key zones of Beni, Biakato and Mangina.

The attacks led to a pullout of locally-employed Ebola workers in Biakato by the UN's World Health Organization (WHO) and Doctors Without Borders (MSF).

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