

Hemorrhagic fever outbreak reported in DRC

by UPI

KANANGA, Democratic Republic of Congo - More than 100 people have died of a hemorrhagic fever since June in the Democratic Republic of Congo, health officials said. Jean-Constatin Kanow, the provincial doctor in Kasai Occidental Province, told the U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks that 217 people have contracted the disease in four villages in the Mweka area and 103 have died. Three of the dead were children. The epidemic was recognized on June 8. Two village chiefs had died and everyone who participated in preparing for their funerals became sick and died, Kanow said. "We suspected a typhoid fever but now we think it is a hemorrhagic fever," said Kanow. The republic has had several outbreaks of hemorrhagic fever. In 1995, an outbreak of Ebola killed 250 people in the city of Kikwit, and there was an outbreak of Marburg last year. The disease in Kasai Occidental is spread by personal contact. Those infected develop a fever, vomiting and diarrhea, which can lead to fatal dehydration and blood loss.

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