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Govt rules out Ebola outbreak

BY EMMANUEL AINEBYOONA
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KAMPALA. The Ministry of Health yesterday dismissed reports of an Ebola outbreak in the country but rather confirmed that a patient in Mubende District died of the Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever.

Addressing journalists in Kampala yesterday, the State Minister for Health in charge of general duties, Ms Sarah Opendi, asked the public to disregard reports alleging an Ebola outbreak.

"We would like to inform the public that there is no Ebola outbreak in Mubende or any other part of the country. What was quoted in the media is rather a case of Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever (CCHF)," Ms Opendi said.

She said a 35-year-old man from Nkoko Sub-county in Kakumiro District was admitted on May 21 to Melt Care Clinic with a high fever and vomiting.

"Since he was not improving, the relatives transferred him to Galde Medical Clinic in Kakumiro District on May 23 from where he was referred to Mubende Regional Referral Hospital," Ms Opendi added.

MEASURE

As a way of controlling Ebola from spreading into Uganda, Ms Opendi said there is screening of travellers at Entebbe airport. This targets all passengers who have had a history of travel of not less than 21 days to DRC.

However, Ms Opendi said despite the patient presenting with Ebola-like signs, laboratory investigations at the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) showed that the man had died of CCHF.

"The clinician on duty at Mubende hospital immediately transferred the patient to the hospital isolation room where he received intravenous fluids. Unfortunately, he died during that same night at about 1am. Samples were taken off the body and were sent to the UVRI," Ms Opendi said.

The director of Clinical Services at the Health ministry, Dr Charles Olaro, said the attendants of the deceased, who include his expectant wife and four others, are being closely monitored in isolation to avoid the disease from spreading.

He added that all hospital staff who got in contact with the deceased were provided with digital thermometers and were instructed to take their body temperatures twice on a daily basis.

Ms Opendi said a national rapid response team from the ministry and World Health Organisation

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