

WHO experts meet at Geneva over Ebola crisis

07 August 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: As West Africa grapples with the deadly outbreak, global experts at the World Health Organization are meeting in Geneva to discuss newer measures to curtail the spread.

CDC has raised its Ebola alert to the highest level, while WHO is considering declaring Ebola as a global health emergency. The ramped up alert by CDC not only allows the federal agency to free up hundreds of workers to focus specifically on the Ebola crisis, but it also indicates that the CDC view this as a long-term health crisis.

US president Mr Barack Obama said that US has been working with Europe and the WHO to provide the necessary resources to contain the epidemic. He said in an official statement, "The disease has spread rapidly as countries could not efficiently identify and isolate the victims. Ebola can be controlled very effectively if we use the right protocols."

Meanwhile, the Indian government has maintained that the risk of Ebola spreading in the country is very low. However, the country's Union health minister Mr Harsh Vardhan expressed concern over the 44,700 Indians living in Ebola affected regions. Of this, 300 are CRPF personnel deployed in Liberia for UN peace keeping operations.

In a written statement to the Indian parliament, Mr Vardhan added that 500 Indians were in the Republic of Guinea, 3,000 in Liberia and 1,200 in Sierra Leone, from where maximum number of Ebola cases have been reported. Nigeria has a much larger presence of nearly 40,000 Indian citizens.

"If the situation worsens, there is a possibility of these people returning home," he added.

The Liberian President, Mr Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has declared a state of emergency in the country, stating that extraordinary measures were necessary to save the people of Liberia from the clutches of the deadly virus.

Mr Sirleaf said, "Ignorance and poverty, as well as entrenched religious and cultural practices, continue to exacerbate the spread of the disease".