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Epidemic spread of “Borceia flu” across Oceana; fear of political instability increasing

By Nadine Stevensen; Associated Press

OCEA (AP) – Despite the best efforts of national and international partners, the Borceia flu is spreading across the country in epidemic proportions. Initially isolated in areas around Borceia and a few rural enclaves, the disease is spreading at a rapid pace and the first cases of infection have already been reported in the capital. The initial sites of quarantine are now overrun with infected individuals exhibiting signs of advanced stages of the disease, described by some as rabid behavior.



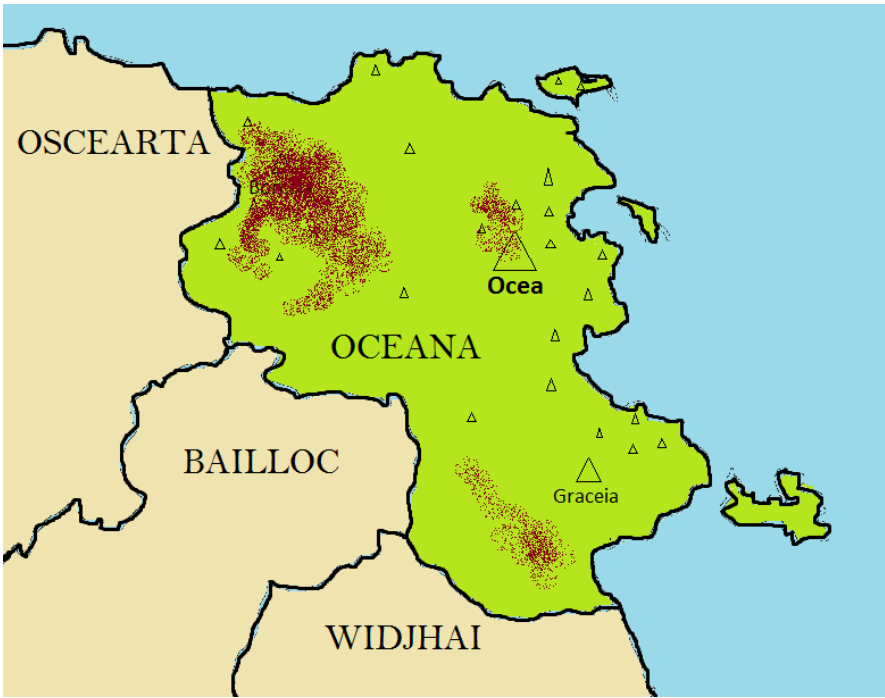
Hospital staff are among the most susceptible to infection.

In the wake of the infection, humanitarian aid workers are concerned about the secondary effects of the disruption to civil society. They are doing their best to cover basic needs like food security, shelter and water supply. Generous support from the PSYR group and cooperation with the national military further promote these humanitarian missions. Maintenance of the quarantine areas is assured by military forces and UN peacekeeping forces.

Medical and pharmaceutical professionals are most directly concerned by the epidemic. The PSYR group is actively researching a vaccine for the disease. Their recent announcement that they will provide vaccine to all afflicted individuals free of charge as soon as it becomes available was universally applauded by national and international humanitarian and governmental agencies. In their statement, PSYR recommitted themselves to the protection of their workers and to their involvement in the economic growth of the area, including in the neighboring country of Oscearta.

The UN has offered status and protection to NGO workers active in the country. They have also committed to work in conjunction with the PSYR group, providing financial resources for the development of a vaccine. The UN will also provide security and assistance in the distribution of the vaccine when it is available. Most significantly, in order to avoid a flare up of conflict between Oceana and its neighbor to the west, Oscearta, the UN has deployed a number of peace-keeping troops to the border. The Oscearta military has not yet retreated from their posts on the border, but the administration has indicated that it is open to communicating with Oceana counterparts through UN intermediaries.

Most aid partners agree that the PDO-leaning government has been instrumental in facilitating relief efforts, but the government’s role in these operations has been overshadowed by the unfortunate remarks made in the most recent government press release. The statement failed to reassure the public and instead caused panic in the population by invoking the language of terrorism and referring to the situation as a “zombie crisis”. The rural MCF organization claims that these statements indicate the moral bankruptcy of the current administration and called on all citizens to resist moral decline. Formerly working in bipartisanship with the administration, the ONP sees the statements as an act of fear-mongering desperation, and has chosen to break ranks with the PDO government, suggesting that the government step down. The political opposition and the international community will be watching closely to see if the current administration can recover from this misstep.



Affected areas