

No Ebola case in India, health minister rules out reports

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Dr Harsh Vardhan, the union health minister, has expressed satisfaction with the infrastructure in place at all entry points to the country to detect people arriving with symptoms of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

World Health Organization had sounded an international emergency on August 8 but before that the Minister had placed India's surveillance and tracking systems on full alert.

"Till now, 12,257 passengers have been screened at various international airports. Several departments of the central government are working in tandem with state governments to ensure total surveillance. I personally inspected the arrangements at Bangalore International Airport on Thursday," the minister said.

Reports appearing in some media about a Nigerian national having tested "positive" for EVD in New Delhi's Dr Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital have been denied by the minister.

"Our vigilant officials did indeed send a person to RML Hospital. His blood samples were sent to National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and National Institute of Virology, Pune. We are assured that they tested negative and there is no cause for worry," Dr Harsh Vardhan said.

The samples were subjected to Antigen Elisa and RT-PCR tests. In addition, scientists at the Pune facility carried out sequencing and all tests confirmed that the Nigerian national was free of the dreaded Ebola virus.

Meanwhile, WHO has reported that worldwide 2,127 EVD cases have been detected till August 13 and the total fatalities is 1,145.