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Russia Allocates More Than $19 Million to Fight Deadly Ebola Virus

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A table of specialist personal protective equipment.

A day after two West African students were hospitalized over fears of Ebola, Russia's Foreign Ministry said it had allocated almost $19 million to help fight the virus, which has claimed the lives of more than 4,000 people since December.

That figure is significantly lower than the $1 billion in federal funds the U.S. is planning to spend to help contain the highly contagious Ebola virus in West Africa — including funding for 4,000 military personnel to the region, medical research and other measures to stop the disease from spreading.

Of the Russian budget, 214 million rubles ($5.2 million) will go to humanitarian aid projects to West Africa — the area most affected by the outbreak of the virus, the ministry said in an online statement on Friday.

A further 162 million rubles ($3.95 million) has been put aside for research into the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of the virus, while 155 million rubles ($3.8 million) has been spent

helping the country prepare for a national outbreak of Ebola, the statement added.

A total of 248.7 million rubles ($6 million) has been put toward strengthening international efforts to battle the virus, including those led by the World Health Organization, the ministry said.

As of mid-September, Britain had donated about $40 million in aid to battling Ebola, China had donated about $37 million and Germany had committed about $3 million, the Washington Post newspaper reported.

Last week, Russia's health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor announced that 16 cases of suspected Ebola had been recorded in Russia, though all the incidences proved out to be false alarm.

On Thursday, two students from the West African country of Guinea-Bissau were admitted to hospital in Russia's Oryol region — fanning fears of Ebola — though chief sanitary doctor Anna Popov later told Interfax news agency they did not show serious signs of infection and their admission had been part of regular procedure.

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