Unlicensed Doctor in Cambodia Charged in Mass HIV Infection

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A self-styled doctor has been detained and charged over reusing needles and syringes and infecting nearly 120 people with HIV in the Cambodian village of Roka, reports Agence France-Presse (AFP).

The doctor is 55-year-old Yem Chroeum, and he has been charged with three separate counts, including the intention to infect others with HIV/AIDS, murder with a cruel act, and operating an unlicensed clinic, according to prosecutor Nuon San.

The doctor's motives remain unclear. He faces a maximum sentence of life in prison if convicted only of murder with a cruel act.

About 800 people live in the village located in the western province of Battambang. The HIV cases came to light in November when a 74-year-old Roka man tested positive for the virus, followed by his granddaughter and son-in-law. Since then, hundreds of residents have been tested for HIV.

Investigations into the village outbreak are underway by the Cambodian Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization and UNAIDS.

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