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NEWSFLASH - AUGUST 2019

RWANDA SHUTS BORDER WITH DRC

Rwanda has shut its frontier with the Democratic Republic of Congo after a third case of the Ebola was detected in the border city of Goma. A unilateral decision was made by the Rwandan authorities that affected citizens from both countries who had to cross the border as part of their daily life. Cross-frontier links are intense. Many people have jobs on the other side of the border while others have homes or put their children in schools in the neighbouring city. Health experts fear outbreaks of contagious diseases in major cities. In an urban setting the density of population, anonymity and high mobility make it far harder to isolate patients and trace contacts compared to the countryside.

DRC EBOLA OUTBREAK DECLARED GLOBAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

The World Health Organization has declared the Ebola crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo a public health emergency of international concern. The outbreak in DR Congo has killed more than 1,600 people. The first case was detected in Goma. There should be no restrictions on travel or trade and no entry screening of passengers at ports or airports outside the immediate region

BA PILOT STRIKE

British Airways has failed in its attempt to block strike action by its pilots meaning they are free to start industrial action from next month. A Court of Appeal rejected an appeal by the airline for an injunction to stop its pilots from walking out in a disagreement over

pay. No strike dates have been set as yet but the union is obliged to give BA two weeks' notice of any industrial action.

HEATHROW AIRPORT STRIKE

Staff at Heathrow Airport are planning a strike on the 5th and 6th of August as well as the 23rd and 24th of August 2019. Virgin Atlantic says it is aware of the strike and will continue to monitor the situation closely. The airline says it is confident that the airport will have contingency plans in place to keep disruption to a minimum. British Airways plans to operate its schedule as normal and recommends passengers to monitor the latest information on its website. Over 4 000 workers, including security guards, engineers and passenger service operatives and drivers are set to walk out during the planned strike.

AIR NAMIBIA UPS SA FREQUENCIES

Air Namibia is to up flight frequencies that were withdrawn in June after the airline suspended operations to Luanda and reduced frequencies on some flights between Windhoek and Cape Town and Johannesburg

SINGAPORE AIRLINES UPGRADE THEIR LOUNGES

Singapore Airlines will be upgrading its lounges at Singapore's Changi Airport. Renovations on the SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges are due to commence in August and will be completed in sections. Affected passengers will be re-accommodated in temporary lounges.

BOLIVIA HEALTH ALERT

The Influenza H3N2, Arenavirus Hemorrhagic Fever and Respiratory Syncytial Virus are currently prevalent in Bolivia reports The US Embassy. Travellers are advised to consider the flu vaccine to prevent flu.

QATAR AIRWAYS TO LAUNCH NEW FLIGHTS

Qatar Airways will launch a new service to Gaborone and Botswana, via Johannesburg starting on the 27th of October 2019.

COMAIR INCREASES DOMESTIC FREQUENCIES

Passengers on British Airways operated by Comair will be able to enjoy increased flight frequencies from mid-September. BA will operate 34 additional flights a week on routes serviced from Johannesburg - Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth as well as between Cape Town and Durban.

NIGERIA DEMONSTRATION ALERT

There have been violent demonstrations in Abuja Nigeria by protesters affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Nigeria Reports of gunfire exchanged between protesters and the Nigerian Police have been released. Travellers are advised to avoid areas of demonstration.

ITALY: AIRLINE STRIKE

A planned strike by Alitalia set to cause travel delays for passengers flying through Italian airports on has been delayed. The strike has now been rescheduled for the 6th of September 2019.