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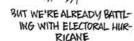
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Tragedy: Mum, 5 kids die after corn meal

TRAGEDY struck in Maiduguri, capital of Borno State, at the weekend when a 40-year-old woman and her five children died after eating corn suspected to have been poisoned.

The six had the meal for dinner on Friday, but died at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital on Saturday, having failed to respond to medical treatment.

Only the head of the family, Yussuf Ali, survived as he was away from home when the meal was served.

Confirming the incident, Borno State police command spokesperson, Mohammed Sani said that Ali, a farmer, had left Maiduguri for his farm on the outskirts of the city and spent the night there.

He said the police gathered from neighbours that the mother of the children bought the poisonous food from an itinerant hawker.

Sani said the police would leave no stone unturned in investigating the matter and bringing the itinerant food hawker to justice.

Daily Champion recalls that cases of food poisoning resulting in mysterious deaths have been rife in recent times.

Early this year, a prominent politician in Ekiti State, Mrs Abosede Olori who was in her early 50s slumped and died after allegedly eating poisonous kolanut.

The tragedy struck after attending a political gathering of the women's wing of her political party.

Olori was said to have been persuaded to chew the kolanut after exchanging pleasantries with the givers.

She, thereafter vomited and later went into coma before she died.

Exactly a year ago, a family of five residing in Kobi village in Asokoro District of Abuja died after a meal of rice and beans.

Livinus Dausa (husband), Rebecca Dausa (wife), Jesse, Gambo and Baba (children) were said to have consumed the meals the previous night.

Residents of the area woke up to find all of them dead.

The National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) later attributed their death to *otapiapia* (rat poison) also known in medical parlance as Dichlorvos.

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