

## Two more die in Rivers *ogogoro* consumption

From Clarice Azuatalam,  
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**T**HE lawmaker representing Gokana in the Rivers State House of Assembly, Mgbulelo Lebura Israel, has said two more persons died yesterday, following the consumption of suspected contaminated local gin, *ogogoro*.

He said several others were hospitalised.

Nearly 60 persons reportedly died last week in various communities in Rivers State, especially in Gokana, Woji and Bonny, following their consumption of the local gin.

Israel was contributing to a "motion of urgent public importance" introduced by House Leader Martins Amae-whule.

He said: "As we speak, report just came in that two other persons died this morning; some others were taken to the hospital.

"We have a family where the father, the mother and a child died because of the consumption of the local gin."

The lawmaker said relief materials should be sent to the affected families.

Speaker Ikuinyi Ibani urged the Ministry of Health to appear before the Assembly.

The Assembly, Ibani said, would know how to join other relevant agencies to tackle the matter.

The Speaker also urged the Ministry of Health to investigate the deaths and identify the source of the local gin.

Ibani noted that the state comprises more coastal communities which consumed the local gin to ward off cold.

The Speaker said public enlightenment was important in disseminating information on the danger of consuming the illicit gin.

On the enforcement of the ban on *ogogoro*, as directed by the Federal Government, he said: "The issue of enforcement is important. I don't think the agency charged with the enforcement will extort people."

A five-man ad hoc committee, headed by Micheal Chinda, was set up to conduct a public hearing and report back to Assembly on Tuesday.