

Two die after drinking from stream

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· Several critically ill

At least two persons are feared dead and over 40 critically ill after drinking from a stream suspected to have been poisoned in Oboso community in Ogoja local government area of Cross River State.

Two other surrounding communities also depend on the stream for drinking water, it was gathered.

Ogoja, in the northern senatorial district of the state, is eight-hour drive from Calabar, the state capital.

The incident, which happened on Friday, has left the communities in mourning mood.

The sudden deaths and illness had led to fears of the outbreak of a strange ailment in the communities.

Commissioner for Health, Dr Inyang Asibong, in a statement, confirmed the incident.

He said the strange illness was characterised by “sudden onset of vomiting, foaming in the mouth, body weakness a spitting out of blood with some deaths already recorded in three communities in Ogoja local government area of the that share a common water source.”

The commissioner assured all was being done to get to the root causes of the occurrence.

The ministry, he informed, had dispatched a team made up of epidemiologists, doctors, community health workers a other related health staff to the affected communities to ascertain the real situation on ground and offer immediate medical assistance to those affected.

Director General of the State Primary Healthcare Development Agency, Dr Betta Edu, urged affected communities to stop fetching water from the stream with immediate effect.

”People should buy commercial water for now. Even after buying the commercial water, bottle or pure water, they shi still try to boil it before drinking.

“They should be careful of where they eat for now, because if that poisoned water is used to prepare food it could sti dangerous.

“The community should be careful for now. If they have relatives in other areas, they can move there for now.

“We are on top of the situation. Those who are ill by the poisoning and in the hospital would get their treatment taker care of by the government,” Edu said.