

Metallic poisoning, not Ebola killed UNICAL student—FG

Friday Olorok, Abuja

THE Federal Government has given a clue to what might have killed a 21-year-old male student of the University of Calabar, who was suspected to have died of Ebola Virus Disease. It said the deceased died of "metallic poisoning."

The government specifically said that it came out with that verdict after it received the result of confirmation test on the cause of the deceased death.

The Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Health, Mr. Linus Awute, made the clarification in Abuja during an interview with *The PUNCH*.

According to him, what killed the student had to do with the management of his "lifestyle in terms of what he ate or what he took, which happens now and then."

Our correspondent reported that the patient was diagnosed with a suspected case of hemorrhagic fever on October 7, 2015.

The government had notified the nation that preliminary tests carried out on the blood samples of

in ascertaining that it is not Ebola and it is not any hemorrhagic fever has been done. The number of days for which it can infect another person or any other person around him to show similar symptoms has also been exceeded.

"So, one can comfortably conclude that it is not Ebola; it is not any other infectious disease. It has to

do with the management of the person's lifestyle in terms of what he ate or what he drank. It is just that in this era when we have to be vigilant about infectious diseases, you don't see such things and take it for granted. So, that is why we had to respond in the way and manner that is expected of us as the custodian of the health

system of Nigeria."

In its earlier test, the government claimed that initial findings by the laboratory necessitated additional tests, leading to a delay in the release of the result.

"The result of these tests is now out and I wish to inform the nation that the blood sample from the patient tested negative to all

pathogenic viruses known to man. Further tests were conducted to establish any bacterial or fungal infection involvement and this also proved negative. The possibility of poisoning or intoxication with a chemical cannot be ruled out at this stage. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control will continue with this investigation in collaboration with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control," Awute said.

