

Gombe warns cassava farmers as poisoning kills one, 10 hospitalised

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Cassava

By Chima Azubuike

The Gombe State Commissioner for Health, Dr Habu Dahiru, has called upon cassava farmers to desist from selling products with high content of hydrogen cyanide following an identified death case and 10 others who are hospitalised in the state.

The commissioner made this disclosure in a public advisory released by the Ministry of Health on cassava consumption in the state on Monday.

Dahiru also appealed to the farmers to put humanity first, instead of the audacious chase for wealth.

Our correspondent reports that Governor Muhammadu Yahaya had called on Gombe residents to focus on farming cash produce like cassava to combat hunger.

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“On August 1, my team at the PHEOC received a report about six persons from Madaki Quarters here in the metropolis, who presented to the hospital with abdominal pains, diarrhoea, and vomiting after eating boiled cassava. One person died while five children from another family in the state low-cost presented to another hospital with the same complaints, after eating boiled cassava,” Dahiru added.

While urging farmers on the need to exercise restraints, the commissioner harped on the need for fear of God, adding “Farmers should ensure they sell only sweet cassava, popularly known as Farinn rogo, which has less than 50mg/kg of hydrogen cyanide and avoid the bitter variety Bakinn rogo), which contains huge amounts (400mg/kg) of cyanide.”

Dahiru noted that the ministry had begun sensitisation in Tumu, Futuk, and other cassava-producing communities, as well as cassava marketers' associations across the state.

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