

Man, wife, 3 children die after garri meal

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From **Aloysius Attah**, Onitsha

Grief overwhelmed indigenes of Ndieke Umuatuegwu Uhuobo, Okija, in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State yesterday, as the corpses of five members of the same family, who died after a meal of garri and soup, were brought home from the hospital.

Tears flowed freely as villagers wept for Albert Chukwudiebele, his wife and three children, who died following food they ate in the evening.

Trouble started for the family at the weekend when Chukwudiebele ate the food prepared by his wife, on return from work, His wife also ate the food as well as their three children.

Not quite long after eating, it was gathered, Chukwudiebele complained of stomach pains and started vomiting blood soon after. The children also had the same problem. Before help could come, the lastborn of the family, aged three, died.

Chukwudiebele, his wife and the other two children were rushed to the hospital for medical attention, where they died.

A source said Chukwudiebele's wife was the last to pass on yesterday, before villagers brought the victims' corpses home, with a decision to find out what happened to them in a traditional way.

It was gathered that the only survivor in the family was the 95 years old mother of Chukwudiebele, who did not eat the food.

A team of policemen from Okija Division, led by the Divisional Police Officer, Superintendent of Police Musa Ibrahim, stormed the Chukwudiebele compound a few minutes after their corpses were brought home yesterday, but it was hectic controlling the surging crowd of mourners and sympathizers, including commercial motorcyclists who thronged the compound to catch a glimpse of the dead bodies.

Police Public Relations Officer for the Anambra State Command, Nkiru Nwoke, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, confirmed the incident, saying the victims' corpses had been evacuated to the mortuary, pending autopsy report.

She said the police had commenced investigation into the incident.

A family of six also died months back under same circumstances in Ekwulumili community, in Nnewi South Local Government Area of Anambra State.