

Poisoned Stream Kills Two in C'River, 40 Others in Critical Condition

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A woman fetching water from the stream



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Bassey Inyang in Calabar

No fewer than two persons are feared to have died after drinking water from a stream in Oboso Community in Mbube clan, Ogoja Local Government Area of Cross River State,

suspected to have been contaminated with a poisonous substance.

Aside from the dead, local sources in the area have disclosed that at least forty people who also drank water fetched from the stream are in critical health conditions and are receiving medical attention from various health facilities in Ogoja and nearby communities, about 400 kilometres from Calabar, the state capital.

The incident, which occurred on Friday has also resulted in the outbreak of a strange ailment in the community and two others that share the same water source.

Health workers and medical experts, who are yet to ascertain the nature of the ailment, are battling to save the lives of those under their medical care.

Following the incident the affected communities have been thrown into mourning, in an atmosphere enveloped by fear of the unknown.

Reacting to the development through a press statement, the State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Inyang Asibong, said, "The attention of the Ministry of Health had been drawn to cases of strange illness characterised by sudden onset of vomiting, foaming in the mouth, body weakness and spitting out of blood with some deaths already recorded in three communities in Ogoja Local Government Area of the state that share a common water source."

The Commissioner assured all that the ministry of health is doing all within its power to get to the root cause of the occurrence and has dispatched a team made up of epidemiologists, doctors, community health workers and other related health staff

members to the affected communities to ascertain the real situation on ground and offer immediate medical assistance to those affected.

The Director General of the State Primary Healthcare Development Agency, Dr. Betta Edu, who also commented on the incident appealed to the affected communities to immediately stop fetching water from the contaminated stream.

“People should buy commercial water for now. Even after buying the commercial water, bottle or pure water, they should 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 still be 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 taken care of by the government,” she said.