Beat: Local

WHO COMMISSIONNER FOR HEALTH DECLARED AN END OF LASSA FEVER OUTBREAK IN BORNO

DR SALIHU KWAYABURA

Paris, Zanzibar, 23.03.2020, 02:52 Time

USPA NEWS - Following concerted partners´ response, led by the World Health Organization, the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Salihu Kwayabura has declared an end of Lassa fever outbreak in Borno State. The current outbreak, which was the second in almost five decades, was isolated from a 30-year old man from Garba Buzu settlement in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council on 23 January 2020. With the technical guidance of WHO, a team comprising of the Commissioner for Health as Chairman, the Chief Medical Director of the Hospitals Management Board, an infection prevention group at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, UNICEF among others initiated response activities including robust surveillance, contact tracing, risk communication and case management as soon as the index case was reported.

As of 25 February 2020, 21 cases were reported including 3 confirmed cases with 2 deaths from 9 Local Government Areas. These include Jere, MMC, Gwoza, Monguno, Bayo, Mafa, Biu, Chibok and Askira Uba. Since then, no new cases of Lassa fever were isolated from any part of Borno State.----------
Although, the outbreak of Lassa fever has been declared over in the State, surveillance and risk communication continue, to ensure that no suspected cases are missed and that the public protects themselves. “WHO will not lower its surveillance guard and risk communication on Lassa fever despite that the outbreak has been declared closed,“ says WHO Emergency Manager, Dr. Collins Owili. In another development, the Borno State Commissioner for Health has also briefed journalists on the Borno State preparedness for COVID-19. Acknowledging that Borno State has not confirmed a case of COVID-19, Dr. Kwayabura stated that it is imperative to scale up preparedness especially surveillance and risk communication. “We do not have any cases of COVID-19 in Borno State yet, the State Ministry of Health with the support of WHO and partners has activated Emergency Operations Centre that developed a comprehensive preparedness plan in case of COVID-19 outbreak,“ says Dr. Kwayabura.----------
The Commissioner for Health explained that Borno State initiated temperature screening at the airport for all travelers as well as detailed documentation and close monitoring of travelers arriving from countries where COVID-19 transmission is active. Other response trims include case management, infection prevention control, contact tracing, surveillance and risk communication. He enjoined the media to educate the public on basic hand-hygiene, coughing etiquette and temperature monitoring. Source: WHO Regional Office for Africa.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-16660/who-commissionner-for-health-declared-an-end-of-lassa-fever-outbreak-in-borno.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jedi Foster P/O Rahma Sophia Rachdi

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