

PRESS RELEASE

FOOD AND DRUGS BOARD

The Food and Drugs Board (FDB) wishes to bring to the attention of the general public that a consignment of 6000 bags of rice imported by Supermaritime based in Tokaradi, which is found to have been fumigated with high concentration of Aluminum Phosphide (a 57% poisonous compound) because of heavy weevil infestation resulting in residual fumigant which poses serious public health and safety concerns has been quarantined in a warehouse at the Takoradi Port.

Aluminum Phosphide has both acute and chronic health hazards on the eyes, skin, central nervous system, gastrointestinal tract, poisoning of central nervous system, cyanosis, unconsciousness and death. Indeed, ingestion can be fatal while the dust from it can irritate and burn eyes.

Mild exposure causes malaise, ringing of ears, fatigue, nausea, pressure in the chest; while moderate poisoning cause's weakness, vomiting pain above the chest, diarrhea and difficulty in breathing. Severe poisoning may cause fluid in the lungs, dizziness, unconsciousness and death.

Information gathered by FDB indicates that the importer allegedly fed a cockerel with the fumigated rice resulting in the death of the bird within five (5) minutes.

Though investigation further indicates that the importer has already re-bagged over two thousand (2000) bags, the Food and Drugs Board, in collaboration with the Customs Excise and Preventive Services (Takoradi Port) and the Western Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture has put measures in place to ensure that the said rice is not offered for sale.

The implicated 6000 bags of rice are under quarantine in a warehouse at Takoradi Port that can be identified by the following features:

Packaging:	Yellow polypropylene bags with green stripes at both edges and three black stars
Net Weight:	50kg
Inscription:	Pakistan Long Grain White Rice
Manufacturer's Name and address:	Absent
Expiry Date:	Absent
Batch/Lot No.:	Absent

The FDB wishes to inform the general public that should anyone find the said rice on the market, the FDB or the Police Service should be contacted or informed for immediate action.

SIGNED

**DR. STEPHEN K. OPUNI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**