

Electrocution: Court orders PHCN to pay N25m

A Katsina-Ala High Court judge in Benue State, Justice Tersea Kume, has ordered the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) and Jos Electricity Distribution Company Plc to jointly pay N25 million damages to the family of a man, Akpenwuan Chia, who was electrocuted by high tension electricity cable in Ukum Local Government Area in August, last year.

Delivering judgement in a suit filed by Edward Ikyoive, counsel to the elder brother of the victim, Mr Aondo Chia, Justice Kume also ordered that the defendant to pay interest of 10 per cent monthly until the judgement sum is liquidated.

The plaintiff sued the defendants, claiming N1 billion as general damages for negligence, which caused the electrocution of his younger brother.

Justice Kume said he relied on the evidence of the plaintiff that it was due to negligence by officials of PHCN, who failed to remove the high tension cable, which electrocuted the victim about 8.20pm on the fateful day when he was returning from the compound of a chief to his home.

The judge said it was the careless conduct of PHCN officials that caused the death of the 40 years old man.

She averred that if the high tension cable, which was suspended mid air across the road, had been quickly removed after the report was made to PHCN, the incident would have been averted.

Justice Kume urged officials of PHCN to ensure quick attention to some of its damaged cables, especially where reports had been made by its customers, to avoid such ugly incidents.

Counsel to the plaintiff, Mr Edward Ikyoive, described the judgment as “sound”.

The lawyer said though no amount could compensate for the value of life, the money would support the children and wife of the deceased.