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PHCN cable kills five in Ibadan

Akinwale Aboluwade, Ibadan

At least five traders were killed in Ibadan, Oyo State on Monday when a distribution cable belonging to the Power Holding Company of Nigeria fell on them at the Apata Market.

Although there were speculations that seven people died in the incident, the Oyo State Police Command said five people were killed.

Our correspondent gathered that the electricity cable fell on the victims around 7am.

Some of those affected were selling vegetable at the popular Agbekoja section of the market.

Among the victims was a pregnant woman identified simply as Tawa, who was said to be the only child of her mother.

Tawa's mother reportedly slumped and died when the news of her daughter's

death was broken to her.

A nursing mother was also said to have been killed in the incident but her one-year-old son was rescued.

According to a tailor in the neighbourhood, Sikiru Ajiboye, residents of the area had earlier lodged a complaint about the state of the cable to the PHCN management.

He said, "The incident could have been averted if the PHCN management had reacted positively to earlier complaints."

Ajiboye, who recalled that the cable had problems on several occasions, said two people had been killed before.

He stated, "We don't know what to do. We had been complaining about the bad state of the cable. Apart from not being the standard size, the cable is also too old and weak."

He added that rather than

•The cable. Photo: Akinwale Aboluwade



change the cable, PHCN officials always came to repair it instead of replacing it.

A trader in the market, who identified herself as

Mama Taiba, said, "They (the PHCN officials) always extort money from us whenever we demand for their service."

Eyewitnesses said the

death toll in the market would have been higher if the cable had fallen during a busy period.

A survivor, Afsat Abiade, who is receiving treatment

at the Garden of Eden Hospital, Apata, said she was the first victim to be brought to the hospital. She said other victims that were later brought died shortly

'Don't allow my husband to die

Etim Ekpimah, Uyo

MRS. Mary Dickson, whose boat operator husband, Mr. Dickson Dickson, and his friend, Mr. Godwin

Onofi, were killed by youths from Effiat in Mbo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, has called on constituted authorities to

ensure that justice is done.

The killing of the duo resulted in a reprisal in which the Transitional Chairman of the LGA, Mr. Okpo Ekere, was shot by youths from Ebughu during a protest. Ekere died in an Indian hospital last Tuesday.

Mary is alleging that there is a plot to play down the murder of her husband and his friend because of Ekere's death.

She said the manner in which her husband and his friend were killed was too heinous for the crime to be swept under the carpet.

Both men were said to have been beheaded and buried.

Mary said, "If the government knows that it is actually working and is ready and willing to protect life and property, let it ask the police to produce those criminals.

"Saying they have been arrested is not good enough. The police might have arrested the wrong people. I want justice for my husband and Onofi. We are poor, we don't have money to go to court, that is why we have resorted to calling on God for help."

She said while the death of her husband and his friend was painful, it was more painful that their corpses could not be recovered for proper burial.

Mary said before her husband was killed, he had obtained an N8m loan to buy a boat and boat engine, adding that he could only repay N3m before his death.

She explained that the boat, which was left ashore had been stolen with the engine, saying she could not raise the N5m debt her husband left.

Mary added that life had

been tough for her and her children except for the support she had been getting from her husband's brother.

Dickson's brother, Mr. Simon Dickson, said he was privy to the incident that led to his death.

Simon said, "There were two 75hp outboard engines in the boat. When Effiat youths waylaid us, they removed one of the engines, we traced them to Inua Abasi, with the remaining outboard engine. The boys are Effiat boys; we know them, especially their leader, who is usually called Ikuma."

"The two engines were new; that was the first day they were put on water. When they removed one of the engines, they asked for N500,000 before they could release it. We pleaded with them and offered N200,000. We told them that the boat was new and we did not have enough money with



•Mary

•Dickson. Photos: Etim Ekpimah

Church focuses on widows' welfare

Kunle Falayi

GENERAL Overseer of the Victorious Army Ministry International, Rev. Joseph Agboli, said the condition of widows in the society necessitated the church's

monthly welfare packages for widows.

Agboli said most widows were dejected because they were mocked by members of the society in most cases, but added that the church would continue to improve their welfare.

Speaking to journalists ahead of the church's 17th Faith Celebration Anniversary, the cleric said, "Our church has taken it upon itself to see to the welfare of widows every month because of their position in the society.

"We don't just focus on widows who are members of the church but others from outside our fold. We welcome them here and they benefit from our distribution of clothing, beverage, foodstuff and other things we give

out."

Agboli said a major part of the church's anniversary would focus on helping widows.

On the security situation in the country, the cleric added that those who were affected by Boko Haram bombings to 'vengeance to God.'

Traders



after.

The Divisional Police Officer, Apata, Mr. Agboola Abiodun; a youth leader in the community, Mr. Wahab Bamidele and other youths

in the area took part in the rescue efforts.

The Chairman, Ibadan South-West Local Government Community Development Council,

in vain'

us.

"But they took the engine away in their boat. We had to follow them with the remaining 75hp outboard engine. Later, we were able to raise N100, 000 which my brother (Dickson) took to them in addition with the N200, 000 we had earlier offered. They took the money but refused to give us the engine, insisting that we should pay the balance of N200, 000 before we could get the engine."

He added that when the matter was reported to the head of the youth, he instructed them to release the engine but they were adamant.

He said, "While we were waiting at Effiat's shore, we did not know that Onofi and my brother who took the money to them had been killed until after three days.

"Precisely, we got to know they had been killed on May 17, 2012 and up till now we have not seen their corpses.

The two engines and the boat were acquired from loan. The two engines cost N3m while the boat costs N5m.

Where are we going to get the money to repay the loan? He was only able to repay N3m out of the N8m. Since the day of the incident, nobody from Ebughu has gone to Ute or Effiat for fishing or to carry passengers.

A fisherman, Okon Okpo, urged the police to ensure that those who perpetrated the act were arrested and brought to book.

He said, "They are criminals. Criminals can come from anywhere; it does not mean it is only in Effiat they exist. It is duty of the police to rid of the society of bad elements."

Earlier, a senior police officer, who craved anonymity, said three persons had been arrested in connection with the murder of Dickson and Onofi.

Alhaji Lasisi Popoola, lamented that it was the third time this year that the PHCN cable cut off and killed some people.

The market was shut to enable the PHCN management to repair the cable.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Mrs. Olabisi Ilobanator, said only five people were killed, while some survivors were taken to the hospital for treatment.

She said the command stationed policemen at the entrance of the PHCN office, Apata, to forestall a breakdown of law and order.

She said, "We did that to prevent people from taking the law into their hands."

Community gets electricity after 16 years in darkness

Simon Utebor

LIGHT shone for the first time in Ibukun-Oluwa community in Onigbongbo area of Ota-Atan, Ogun State, after close to 16 years in darkness.

Efforts to electrify the community four years ago could not be actualised as it was only given a transformer that was not installed.

But the dream of the community was realised

when the senator representing Ogun West Senatorial District, Akinola Odunsi, provided them with electricity, according to a statement on Sunday.

While inaugurating the project, Odunsi said his gesture was in fulfilment of his electoral promises to the people of his constituency, adding that he was also motivated by the plight of the people.

He decried a situation

Stop and Arida.

Our correspondent learnt that the case had been in court for many years but in April, a High Court in Ikeja ruled in favour of Isheri Olofin.

However, the verdict did not go down well with indigenes of Idimu who vowed to take the case to the Court of Appeal.

It was learnt that regardless of the planned appeal, some indigenes of Isheri Olofin had already begun threatening residents of Idimu to pay them

or vacate the land.

It was one of the disagreements that escalated into violence.

A landlord in Idimu craved anonymity for fear of reprisal, said both parties should have maintained status quo since one of them was planning to appeal against the judgment.

He said, "The matter has been in court for over 10 years and during that period hundreds of people bought pieces of land from both parties.

"But now that the verdict favours Isheri Olofin, the indigenes of Isheri want land owners to vacate them or vacate the land."

"So, we appealed to the court to maintain the status quo since we were filing an appeal. Because if the Court of Appeal rules in favour of Idimu, we have paid, it would be a loss."

The clash was said to have paralysed some activities in the affected areas on Monday as many schools remained shut.

Meanwhile, the son of the King of Isheri Olofin had been hit by a car on Sunday night.

According to sources, the Prince, Ibikunle Balogun, was on a motorcycle during the clash when he was hit by a car and died on the spot.

When contacted, a spokesperson for the police command, Braide, said there was no clash in the area. She had confirmed the death of the prince.

She said, "The Divisional Police Officer, Idimu, told us that there was no clash. The prince was on a motorcycle when he was hit by a car and died."

"The driver was immediately arrested and is being detained. He will be charged with manslaughter."

Husband asks wife to drop name for refusing sex

Temitayo Famutimi

A 44-year-old man, Israel Owoyomi, on Monday told an Oshodi Grade 'B' Customary Court, Lagos that he ordered his wife, Toyin, to stop bearing his name because of her refusal to have sex with him.

Toyin had filed for a divorce on the grounds that her husband was an infidel and that he asked her to stop bearing his name.

Reacting to the allegation, Israel said he made the decision after being denied sex for months.

He said, "In 2008, my wife started denying me sex. She did that for several months. I petted her and sought to know why she decided to do that after over 11 years in marriage."

"When she wouldn't tell me, I turned my back on her and ordered her to stop bearing my name until she explains the reason behind her action."

"Unfortunately, after a year, her parents confronted me that she accused me of using rituals to have sex with her."

Refuting the money-making ritual allegation, Israel said, "How could I be so desperate and callous to use her for money rituals. Besides, I have never been fetish all my life and I wonder where she got that information from."

"When I was in the university, I fought against cultism as a students' leader, I can't suddenly change and become a cult member overnight."

"Besides, between 2008 when she accused me of planning to use her for ritual and August 2011 before she left my house, why have I not successfully used her for the ritual?"

Israel said since then, Toyin had been going about town and telling everybody that he had wanted to use her for rituals.

The acting Court President, Mrs. R.I. Adetola, said the disagreement between the couple could be settled.

Adetola said, "This court is not a court that destroys marriages. I am convinced that by now, each party should have realised their mistakes in this matter. I urge you to sheath your swords, reconcile and be best of friends."

However, Toyin said though she had forgiven her husband, she was no longer interested in the marriage.

She said, "I have forgiven Israel but I can't continue with the marriage. If I had known 10 per cent of what I now know about him then, I wouldn't have been married to him."

The case has been adjourned till July 23 for further hearing.

soon in grants and acquisition.

The Chairman, Community Development Association of the area, Mr. V.A. Robinson, lauded the initiative, saying it would aid the growth of small and medium scale entrepreneurs within the community.

Robinson also pleaded with the Senator to assist them in getting potable water and influence the government to build a secondary school for the