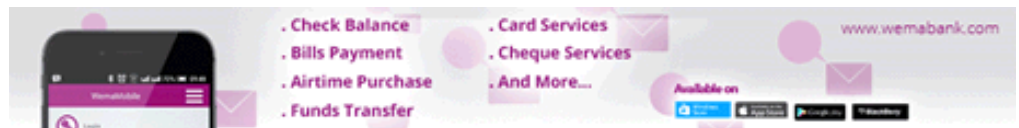


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49 electricity workers killed in six months

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A power transmission facility.

Between January and June this year, 49 employees of electricity distribution companies in the country lost their lives while on duty as a result of the poor implementation of safety measures by the firms.

This is coming as the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission says it will sanction the Eko, Ikeja and Port Harcourt electricity distribution companies for recording extremely low safety compliance levels, a development it blames for the loss of lives.

During the same period, 51 employees of the Discos were injured against the 50 injuries recorded for the whole of 2014.

In a presentation in Abuja on Tuesday by the Senior Manager, Engineering Department, NERC, Mr. Abdulrasheed Busari, the commission stated that 54 per cent of the deaths and injuries recorded in the first half of 2015 were due to unsafe acts by the companies.

Other factors that led to the loss of lives and injuries, according to NERC, are wire-snap, negligence and vandalism.

The commission wondered why the Discos had failed to adopt stipulated safety standards, stressing that while employees of the distribution firms were being killed, their counterparts in the power generation companies were keeping up with the required safety measures.

A breakdown showed that 10 persons lost their lives in Enugu Disco, three in Abuja, four in Benin, six in Ibadan, two in Ikeja, one in Jos, seven in Kaduna, six in Kano, three in Port Harcourt and four in Yola during the six-month period.

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However, no life was lost in the generation companies during the period under review.

Busari stated that although the Enugu Discos recorded the highest number of deaths during the period, its safety standards were better than many of its counterparts.

He said most of the power firms were perpetual defaulters when it came to reporting accidents and incidents that happened in their various areas of operation.

The Chairman, NERC, Dr. Sam Amadi, while speaking during the meeting organised for safety officers in the industry, said the regulator would look into the issue and penalise the Discos that had continued to flout safety orders.

Amadi, who was represented by the Deputy General Manager, Engineering Standards and Safety, NERC, Mr. Abdullah Muhammed, specifically noted that the compliance levels of Eko, Ikeja and Port Harcourt Discos were abysmally poor and declared that they would face sanctions.

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