

High-tension wire kills school-leaver, injures landlord

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The wires, Deborah

Olaleye Aluko

Tragedy struck on Fagbeyiro Street in the Alakuko area of Lagos State after a high-tension wire fell on a 14-year-old girl, Deborah Faleke, who was electrocuted.

Our correspondent learnt that Deborah, who had come to stay briefly with her elder sister, Bukola Ogunbajo, on the street, just left secondary school, having finished sitting for 2016/2017 West African Senior School Certificate Examination about three weeks ago.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the wire – which belonged to the Ikeja Electric – fell on the girl immediately electricity was restored to the area around 10am on Saturday.

It was gathered that Deborah was at the gate of the apartment when the wire fell on her head and also injured a landlord in the area, whose name had yet to be ascertained.

Our correspondent learnt that the victim's elder sister, Ogunbajo, and neighbours rushed Deborah to a hospital, but she was rejected. She was rushed to another hospital, where she was confirmed dead.

It was gathered that the incident was reported at the Alakuko Police Division.

PUNCH Metro learnt that some Ikeja Electric officials also visited the street on Saturday to reconnect the damaged high-tension wire, promising Ogunbajo's landlord, identified only as Ogudugu, and the deceased's family that a meeting would be held with them.

When our correspondent visited the area on Thursday, Deborah's father, Pastor Ademola Faleke, who lived on Ilupeju Street, said Deborah was his last child.

He said, "On Friday, I went out of Lagos State for a ministration. So, the girl went to stay with her eldest sister on Fagbeyiro Street. That was not her first time.

"I was at Iyana-Ipaja on Saturday on my way back when I was called on the telephone and told about the incident. There was no rainfall. Deborah was not sent on any errand. She was just passing through the gate when the wire fell on her. The marks on her body showed that the wire fell on her head.

"She was rushed to a hospital. The workers there said they did not have adequate equipment. So she was rushed to a second private hospital on Adegbola Street, where she later died. The doctor issued a death certificate to us.

"She just finished secondary school; she was also my interpreter. She was very active in church. I want the electricity distribution company to at least show some concern. My daughter, who is my joy, has been taken away by a careless electrical connection."

Speaking with *PUNCH Metro*, the landlord, Ogudugu, said the Ikeja Electric officials promised to come on Thursday to hold talks with him.

He said, "There was a wooden hanger that connected the three high-tension wires. When electricity was restored that day, the wood caught fire and one of the wires snapped and fell. There was confusion in the whole area on Saturday. The officials promised to visit my house around 1pm

today (Thursday). I am still waiting to receive them.”

A resident of the area, who gave his name only as Olusola, said, “A landlord was injured. He is still being treated in a hospital. Nobody could move near the girl for fear of being electrocuted.

“I want to enjoin the electricity distribution companies that any high-tension wire passing through a community should be placed on a suspended hanger so that if any of them breaks, it will not fall on people.”

The Lagos State Deputy Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Damasus Ozoani, confirmed the incident.

He said, “The police received the report of the electrocution. The high-tension wire cut off on the street and fell on the girl. Investigation is ongoing.”

The Head, Corporate Communications, Ikeja Electric, Felix Ofulue, had yet to reply to a text message sent to his mobile phone on the incident.

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Contact: editor@punchng.com