

# Abuja transformer explodes, kills pregnant woman, five others

July 6, 2016



## Adelani Adepegba, Abuja

There was pandemonium at the Tundunwada area of Lugbe, a satellite town in the Federal Capital Territory when a transformer exploded and electrocuted six persons, including a pregnant woman who recently moved into her house in the area.

About four persons were also said to have been injured during the incident, including a six-year-old boy, Destiny Okolo, who suffered injuries on his face and left ear.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the transformer was on fire for about 10 minutes during which it sent devastating electric current to some residential apartments in the area.

Our correspondent, who visited the community on Tuesday, gathered that the incident happened around 9pm on Saturday.

Abuja Electricity Distribution Company officials were seen investigating the incident and pacifying the residents in the locality.

Findings indicate that the pregnant woman, whose name could not be immediately ascertained,

wanted to switch off her fan when she was electrocuted. Her son was said to have raised the alarm which alerted her neighbours to her death.

The lad was said to have been taken to a Catholic church pending when his father, who is a resident in Lagos, would arrive in Abuja.

Geoffrey Atoh, 24, whose friend, Joseph Terva, was electrocuted, explained that the victim was about stepping out of his apartment when he was killed.

"We were outside when the transformer exploded and started burning for about 10 minutes. Everyone was afraid and started running helter-skelter. It was later that I heard that my friend, Joseph, was electrocuted. We rushed down to his house and found that he had died," Atoh explained.

Donald Dooga, who lost his brother, Joseph Moses, 22, told our correspondent that his sibling died before they could get him to the hospital.

Dooga said Moses was electrocuted as he was about changing the fuse of his electricity switchboard when he saw the blaze from the transformer.

He said, "When Joseph saw the explosion and the huge fire from the transformer, he rushed to the switchboard to change the fuse, but he was electrocuted in the process. Somebody told me that my brother had been electrocuted, so, we rushed him to the hospital, but he died on the way."

He said the deceased had just completed his secondary school education and was working as a barber to raise money to further his education.

"We have informed our parents in Benue and we will take him there for burial soon," he added.

Little Destiny was recuperating at home when our correspondent visited, but his father said he had spent over N11,000 on medical bills.

His mother said she was on the verandah when she felt electricity current passing through the floor tiles.

"We attempted to run from the house, but the electric current injured Destiny in the face and

behind the ear. Another person, Edwin Joseph, was also injured in the waist," she said.

A survivor, Donald Terlumun, said he was dozing in his room when screams outside. He added that his room was vibrating and as he made to leave the house, he was jolted by the electric current.

He said, "As I made to step out, the door shocked me and threw me against the wall. I shouted and made for the door again and the next thing was that I was flung outside where I hit my face on the ground. I later opened my eyes to find myself in the hospital."

Terlumun who had a swollen face and some cuts, stated that he had spent N20,800 on hospital bills.

His neighbour, Nathaniel Nyinjo, blamed the AEDC for the incident, saying they had visited the community and promised to compensate the injured.

He said, "The AEDC has already admitted its fault and promised to visit us during the Sallah holiday. But if they failed to compensate the injured and the families of the deceased, they should forget about restoring power around here and we will take them to court."

Another survivor, Pius Moses, who was injured in both feet, said he had spent N14,500 to treat his injuries.

There were conflicting reports about the number of the dead. While a community leader, Felix Omeje, put the number of the dead at six, the community's chief security officer, Geoffrey Ukeje, said he personally took three dead bodies to the hospital, noting that only four persons were injured.

Omeje blamed the AEDC for the tragedy, attributing the explosion to a wrong connection by the power firm.

The Head, Corporate Communications and Community Relations, AEDC, Mr. Oyeboade Fadipe, said investigation had commenced into the incident.

He declined to speak about compensations for the victims until the cause of the accident had been established and a decision taken by the management.