

Three PHED ex-workers arraigned over illegal operations, death

Dennis Naku 12 December 2021

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The Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Plc, on Sunday, said three of its former workers were arraigned before the Rivers State High Court for illegal operations.

The firm said the illegal operations resulted in the electrocution of a man, Eugene Damini, in the Mopol 19 Junction, Port Harcourt, on October 3, 2021.

The Head of Corporate Communications, PHED, John Anonyai, disclosed this in a statement on Sunday.

Anonyai, in the statement made available to our correspondent, gave the suit number as PHC/3152/CR/2021.

The statement read, "The former staff of the Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Plc, Mr Uche Nwale, Mr Chike Ugo and Mr Choko Thankgod, conspired to illegally provide services of relocating an electric pole on the premises of Mama Tin Bakery, located opposite Mopol 19 Barracks, opposite Mummy-B Road, GRA, Phase Four, in Port Harcourt, where the incident occurred.

"They were illegally tampering and meddling with PHED distribution network and facilities.

"The former staff were said to have been engaged by the owner of Mama Tin Bakery to relocate a pole for her on PHED's 11KV line for a fee of N100,000 only.

“In order for them to achieve their nefarious objectives, they engaged the services of Mr Paul Oyil, a Hiab truck driver, to use his Hiab to help them lift and relocate the pole.

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“Paul Oyil, in turn, engaged the services of his motor boy, late Eugene Damini, who was electrocuted to death at the scene of the unauthorised operation.

“While they climbed the pole and removed the pot insulators, cross arms and other electrical accessories holding the line in place, the Hiab driver started lifting the pole to transfer it to a new hole already dug for it in a new location.

“However, he negligently lifted the pole above safety limits and the pole being lifted contacted an energised PHED 33KV line, leading to the electrocution and death of Eugene Damini, who was illegally guiding and holding the electric pole.

“The former staff members of PHED are aware that the management had several times warned members of staff and the public against the dangers of illegal operations, and the risk of conducting any form of activities around high tension power lines or similar facilities of the company.”