

Suspect dies as vandals launch fourth attack on Gombe community power cable

Chima Azubuike, Gombe

A suspected power cable vandal has been electrocuted in the Labour Quarters area of Gombe State.

Eyewitnesses said the man arrived in the area around 3am on Thursday with another member of his gang, who dropped him off at the location.

A resident, Zakari John, said

3 three Lagos shops

from among 56 shops in the three-storey plaza, was met well alight and extinguished from escalating to adjoining structures in the boisterous Lagos market.

"It is on record that the fire was completely put out around 7.40am with the combined efforts of the Federal Fire Service, as an investigation into the cause is ongoing while no casualty was recorded."

the incident was the fourth time criminals would make an attempt to vandalise the power cable in the area.

John revealed that three previous attempts were successful as the criminals removed the Jos Electricity Distribution Company installations, leaving the community in darkness for over a week.

He stated that Labour Quarters suffered outage until some residents contributed and replaced the stolen items.

He said, "This is the fourth time now; the last three times they were successful and it cost us days in darkness. Luck ran out on this one, who climbed and started vandalising the transformer."

"We noticed when the power tripped off in a way that we considered unusual and we heard when a vehicle carrying others dropped him and he began to operate. When criminals come,

they go for copper wire. What the company did was to change from copper to aluminium, which is less attractive. He started cutting the cable, but didn't know of a dangling live cable that touched his head and roasted him."

John appealed to JEDC to illuminate the transformer areas to enable residents to identify vandals, adding that closer ties between the community and the firm would solve the problem of theft.

The Head of Communications, Jos Electricity Distribution Company, Dr Friday Elijah, urged residents to keep vigil around electric installations in their domains.

Elijah said, "It is our primary responsibility to safeguard these assets, but some of the people when they come we are not on ground; what we want them to do is to help us."

He noted that efforts were on to install solar lights around installations to ward off vandals.