

Family tackles EKEDC as electrocution

Naomi Chima

THE family of an electrician, Yusuf Balogun, have been grieving after he got electrocuted during an attempt to restore power supply to households on Ladipo Labinjo Street, off Coker Road, in the Surulere area of Lagos State.

He was said to be working for the Eko Electricity Distribution Plc as of the time of the incident but the firm had since faulted the claim, saying the deceased was a member of a field team engaged under a contract for services with a third-party human resource service provider.

PUNCH Metro gathered that Balogun, alongside four other colleagues, visited the

community to fix a persistent electrical malfunction that had been depriving residents of access to the power supply.

During the operation on March 27, 2023, it was learnt that the electrician was on the brink of completing the job on the electric pole when the power supply was suddenly restored in the community.

The sudden power restoration electrocuted Balogun who was working on the pole and he fell to the ground, and in the process, sustained varying degrees of injury around his head, face, legs, and arms.

It took the intervention of residents in the community to rush Balogun to the Federal Medical Centre, Ebute Metta, where he died while receiving



• Balogun

treatment.

Speaking with our correspondent, the deceased's wife, Titilayo, said she was at work when her brother-in-law informed her of her husband's condition, adding that she

broke down in tears when she saw the lifeless remains of her husband in the hospital.

Titilayo said, "My brother-in-law called me around 5:30pm to come to the hospital as my husband had been taken

Lagos man dies of

there. I left my workplace in shock and immediately went to the FMC, Ebute Metta.

"When I got there, I was devastated seeing my husband's corpse inside the ambulance; I kept on screaming and asking what happened but no one could tell me anything.

"When I was entering the hospital, I heard people discussing the incident. They kept saying that there were five of them, including my husband that went to the place to fix the pole but none of them was available at the hospital.

"We buried him the next day but to date, there has been no news from his company, no news on the other four colleagues that were with him at the scene of the incident either. What they did to my husband is bad, he was a team leader and deserved more than this."

According to a petition filed

by lawyers for the deceased family, Titilope Anifowose and Abiola Ibrahim, no official from the EKEDC showed up for Balogun's burial and the power firm had yet to officially communicate to the family on the circumstances surrounding his death.

The petition read in part, "The wife requested explanations but no one including one 'Baba Orobo,' a senior EKEDC worker, could give any tangible explanation as to the cause of the accident and the reason why it took hours for him to receive medical attention. No explanation could be given as to the whereabouts of his clothes and belongings.

"After a protest by the wife, the deceased's identity card, ATM, and cell phone were produced. By Islamic rite, his body was taken by his family to his house for burial the next day. Sadly at the burial, no

official from EKEDC showed up, and neither did his family receive any contact or visitation from his office."

The family, in the petition, demanded N250m as compensation for Balogun being a breadwinner and father of three children.

When contacted by our correspondent for a reaction, the General Manager, Corporate Communications, EKEDC, Babatunde Lasaki, made available a press statement dated April 14, 2023, in which he said the deceased was not a staff member of the firm and that he did not obtain a permit to work before embarking on the assignment that cost his life.

The statement read in part, "The deceased was a member of the field team engaged under a contract for services with a third-party human resource service provider - Alexandra

Marius, the deceased employer.

"The incident occurred while the deceased was working on replacing a damaged Cross Arm on the BAGCO 11KV feeder, which tripped in the early hours of Monday, March 17, 2023.

"Contrary to the deceased employer's and Eko Disco's safety standards, the deceased and his team at Ijora District embarked on clearing the fault without obtaining permits to work, station, and guarantee both of which represent official approval for fault clearing."

While saying that the deceased family had been contacted, the firm's spokesperson added, "Further to this, we and Alexandra Marius have contacted the deceased's next of kin on our records and all necessary arrangements are speedily being made to give respite to the deceased family and the deceased's salary has been paid up to date; all the processes are being closely followed to ensure the same is speedily concluded."