

Lagos community commends Ikeja Electric on meter roll out

...as Disco cautions against meter bypass

Adedayo Odulaja

In an apparent reaction to the ongoing metering exercise across its network, customers have commended Ikeja Electric Plc for redeeming its promise to bridge the metering gap, while also expressing delight at the improvement in supply within its area of coverage.

Chairman of Shomolu Community Development Committee (CDC), Mr. Oduguwa Adedapo, who spoke in this regard, commended the company for the massive deployment of meters to Shomolu and environs while noting that the exercise is a laudable achievement.

The CDC chairman further urged IE to ensure that all the houses in the environs are provided with prepaid meters.

"While commending the company, I also want to advise the company to ensure that migration of customers to the prepayment metering is made a lot easier by looking into the contentious issues relating to outstanding electricity bills.

"This will enable customers migrate immediately to recharge after exhausting the initial token in the meter," he said.

In a similar vein, the President

of the Co-operative Society of the Association of Printers in Shomolu, Chief Babajide Mark Anthony, said the association was ready to cooperate with IE to ensure smooth operation.

He advised the Disco to fast-track the installation of meters and attend to minor complaints on time in order to build more trust and instill confidence in its customers.

While reacting to the remarks, IE's Head of Corporate Communications, Mr. Felix Ofulue, reiterated IE's position to sustain the metering exercise in an equitable manner such that all category of customers in IE's network that are yet to be metered will definitely benefit from the roll out plan.

He expressed concerns about the trend of asset compromise being witnessed in some of the areas that have already been metered.

He added: "Our records reveal that a lot of customers who were recently metered, especially in Shomolu and environs have not vendored or purchased units on their meters, several weeks after exhausting the initial token.

"Typically, this is the process that should follow after the complimentary units on the prepaid meter have been exhausted. This is worrisome."

Army kills 14 terrorists, rescue 21 hostages

•Ndume decries escalation of attacks in North-East

Ndubuisi Ugah
WITH AGENCY REPORTS

The Nigerian Army yesterday said it had killed 14 Boko Haram insurgents and rescued 21 hostages in Pulka village in Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State.

The *News Agency of Nigeria* (NAN) reports that the insurgents had on Tuesday, ambushed a military escort at Amdaga area in Pulka and burnt one passenger vehicle as well as abducted some travellers.

This emerged as the senator representing Borno South Senatorial District in the National Assembly, Senator Ali Ndume, expressed concern over escalation of insurgents' attacks on Nigerian troops and locals in the North-East.

Confirming rescue of the hostages, the Director of Army Public Relations, Brig.-Gen. Texas Chukwu, who disclosed this in a statement in Maiduguri, said some indigenes were alleged to have harboured the insurgents that ambushed the civilian vehicle.

The statement reads: "The troops have neutralised 14 Boko Haram and rescued 21 civilians, comprising six women and 11

children.

"Troops of 192 Battalion of 26 Task Force Brigade of Operation LAFIYA DOLE, in conjunction with Civilian Joint Task Force, neutralised the insurgents on Thursday.

"The troops engaged and subdued the terrorists, following a superior fire power of troops in the village. Four men injured during the attack are being attended to at the military hospital."

Meanwhile, Ndume, who represents Borno South Senatorial District, stated this while speaking with journalists on the situation.

The senator said Boko Haram had launched several attacks which led to mass casualties of troops in the last two month in Borno and Yobe states.

He added: "Honestly, I am worried on the sudden resurgence of Boko Haram in the North East.

"Some weeks ago, it was alleged that 48 soldiers were killed. On Tuesday there was another attack in Wala-Pulka in Gwoza where it was alleged that many passengers were abducted.

"There was attack sometime ago in Jillli where many soldiers were killed, another came in Zari. There was another one in Njimtilo and

Bama axis. I learnt also that there was an attack on commuters along Maiduguri to Ngala. All these attacks occurred in two months.

"So, honestly, I am really worried and I am sure the security agencies are equally worried. I appreciate that changes were made as a result of the last attacks, but that is not enough.

"Agreed that the insurgency has been defeated, but there are black spots which security agencies need to address.

"These are some of the black spots that are known which the military must identify and make the area clean instead of staying on trenches waiting for what will happen."

According to him, the insurgents are now taking the war to military formations.

"I think there should be some changes so that Boko Haram don't even think of coming to attack any troops.

"That means the military formations must always be on alert. I am not a military man, but whenever somebody always comes to your house without any fear, that means you are relaxed or sleeping," Ndu-me said.