

# KANO/JIGAWA CHRONICLE



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■ Kano state Governor, Abdullahi Umar Ganduje (right) in hand shake with Emir of Kano, Muhammad Sanusi II at kofar mata prayer ground yesterday. Photo Sani Maikatanga

## KEDCO to disconnect 350,000 customers in Kano

### ...As Residents groan over persistent power outage, outrageous bills

By Yusha'u A. Ibrahim

Despite persistent power outage, the Kano Electricity Distribution Company (KEDCO) has embarked on massive disconnection of 350,000 customers in Kano state, *Chronicle* can report.

*Chronicle* gathered that 9,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers have been penciled down for the disconnection exercise which the company embarked upon recently.

Our reporter gathered that within two days of commencement of the exercise, a total of 2,300 customers have been disconnected around Kano east and Kano industrial areas.

However, some customers, who spoketo *Chronicle* on the development, expressed disappointment with KEDCO, describing the exercise as wickedness.

Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa said, "it is wickedness for KEDCO to start disconnecting its customers at this material time when electricity supply was insufficient in the state. Throughout this month we have not enjoyed electricity at all. It is wrong for the company to descend on its customers in this way.

"KEDCO has not given us enough electricity, yet it embarked on massive disconnection. Most of these debts KEDCO is claiming, are not justifiable because they were generated based on estimated bills of which a lot of people have not consumed.

"You can find a small house with a bill of N10,000 or N15,000 and if you check you will discover that the occupants did not even own facilities such as electrical kettle or pressing iron. How can you justify such an outrageous bill?"

Another customer, Ibrahim Abubakar said, "The exercise is a clear cheat. KEDCO is becoming something else nowadays. All they are after is to get revenue by hooks or crooks. We are in total disagreement with the recent approach to revenue generation by KEDCO.

"We learnt that the man that is doing this, is operating on acting capacity and probably he is doing this to impress his MD and other top management officers of the company."

Aminu Isyaku also opined that if the company was serious about revenue generation, customers should be provided with pre-paid meters as directed by the federal government

through the electricity regulatory company.

"With meters, customers could be charged based on what they have consumed. It is unfortunate that only KEDCO that has not started implementing the meter asset provider policy which stipulates that each household must have its meter. All other electricity distribution companies have started implementing this policy except KEDCO.

"Even though the system collapse has since been restored in Kano, yet there is no adequate electricity supply. We are getting electricity based on load management. In my area, we are getting the supply between 3pm and 9pm and then 12am and 3am every day," he said.

Alhaji Habib Aliyu of Badawa quarters in Nassarawa local government, said they were getting electricity for only two hours daily, saying "if we are lucky, we get it in the night and if not, they will bring it in the day hours after we go to our places of work and at the end of the month, we will be approached with outrageous bill of N10,000 each house."

When contacted, the company's Acting Chief Revenue Assurance,

Mr Johnson Adedeji confirmed the commencement of the massive disconnection by the company, saying that 2,300 customers had been disconnected within two days.

Adedeji, who spoke through the company's spokesperson, Muhammad Kandi, said KEDCO had discovered that 350,000 customers had not been paying their electricity bills for the past six months.

He said out of the figures, the electricity company had identified 9,000 for disconnection as first phase of the exercise.

Adedeji explained that from the commencement of the exercise to date, many customers had started responding by settling their electricity bills.

He said the company embarked on the exercise to lift its revenue generation which had been declining due to customers inability to pay their electricity bills.

"KEDCO's debt to market operator is now about N139bn. This, is affecting the company's level of investment into its network especially provision of transformers, wires, poles and other facilities," he concluded.