



PRESS RELEASE

TEEN INVOLVEMENT IN CABLE THEFT AND VANDALISM ALARMS ZESCO

ZESCO Limited has expressed grave concern that teenagers as young as 16 years old are getting initiated into crime syndicates of stealing and vandalizing electricity infrastructure in the country.

Working with the Zambia Police, ZESCO has intensified public sensitization on the dangers of vandalism and sabotage in addition to increasing crime prevention surveillance as well as pursuit of criminal elements involved in sabotaging the company's power infrastructure.

In a recent operation at one of the hotspots on the Copperbelt, a combined team of ZESCO Security and Zambia Police intercepted and arrested three teenagers in possession of suspected stolen ZESCO copper cables.

Two of the three suspects are aged 16 while the other, who was driving the crime vehicle, a Toyota Runx registration number AFB 3886 is 19. Sabotaged cables valued at K 34,194 were found in the car which has since been impounded.

The trio, all residents of Butondo and Kankoyo townships in Mufulira, were arrested with the help of the members of the community who trailed them as they headed in the direction of Kalulushi from Kitwe.

The suspects were apprehended during a joint operation on February 20, 2023 around 09:20 hours at Sabina check point along Chingola- Kitwe road following a tip-off from an informer who reported seeing unknown persons attempting to sell peeled copper cables in Kitwe's Chimwemwe township.

In a related incident, eight suspects of Twapia compound (of Ndola) and Chambishi were arrested for being in possession of vandalised cables stolen from ZESCO electricity lines. Acting on intelligence information, the ZESCO and Zambia Police team surrounded the identified house in Twapia where they apprehended four male suspects and also recovered the vandalised cables.

After interrogations, the suspects led the officers to Chambishi where three more male suspects were apprehended while the eighth suspect was apprehended at a named hospital in Chingola where he had travelled to seek treatment for the flash burns he

sustained in the process of stealing the cables in Twapia compound. The suspect remains hospitalized under police watch.

The suspects are detained in different Police Stations of Ndola pending further investigations.

ZESCO Limited continues to call on members of the public to report any incidences of theft or vandalism of electricity infrastructure as this leads to frequent damage to its network such as transformers and substations, leading to prolonged outages to customers.

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