

Scores trapped in Lagos collapsed 4-storey building

IT stood there solid and sturdy like a rock, painted in cool ash colour – a four-storey 35-room edifice that dwarfed all the other buildings in the area.

That was before last night's house number 71, Ibadan Street (by Bola Street Junction), Ebute-Metta, Lagos collapsed like a pack

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of cards, trapping its occupants, many of whom had just returned from work. It was about 8p.m, an eyewitness said, adding that the building went down

By Felix Durumbah, Group News Editor

with a bang.

No fewer than 30 bodies had been brought out of the debris last night.

A neighbour said the casualty figure may be as high as 30.

All the hospitals around

the area were filled with survivors.

"It's horrible. People were being pulled out. It's a mighty building. At least 30 bodies were pulled out," a

witness said.

Rescuers were still busy at the scene last night. There were thousands of them, including the police, the Red Cross and members of the Lagos State Ambulance Service.

It was a moving scene. Cries of the trapped residents were being heard.

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Scores trapped in building

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They included a woman who was said to have moved in just last weekend with her two children. They were believed to have been trapped.

Neighbours told *The Comet* that the building belongs to a developer who built the structure in 2001.

The cause of the collapse was unknown as of press time.

A large crowd of

sympathizers gathered at the scene well into the late hours of the night.

Rescue workers at the scene used diggers and pick axes to remove bent iron rods and broken concrete blocks in a bid to free the trapped occupants of the building.

An electricity generating set supplied power which illuminated the scene as power outage had stultified initial efforts to identify and

rescue victims.

Lagos State Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Mr Fransisco Abosedo, who was on the scene, told *The Comet* that victims who were rescued were taken to the General Hospital, Gbagada.

A caterpillar arrived at the scene at about midnight to strengthen the rescue operations.