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Countryman



2 die, many trapped in Lagos building collapse

STAN OKENWA

IT was a day of wailing yesterday in Lagos, as two persons died and many trapped as a four-storey building on 35 Ojerinde Street, Idi-Araba, collapsed.

More than 15 persons including women and children have been rescued by volunteers as at 7.15 pm when our correspondent visited the scene of the incident.

Daily Champion observed that many sympathisers mostly youths, tried hard to search for more survivors.

The survivors were rushed to the nearby Lagos University Teaching Hospital, (LUTH) which shares a perimeter fence with the collapsed building.

Majority of the victims were women and children rescued from the fourth floor.

An eye-witness who pleaded anonymity said the building was developed about 10 years ago and was accommodating the highest number of people in the street.

He said majority of those trapped lived between the ground and third floors.

A rescue team comprising personnel from the Nigerian Red Cross, Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) and Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), were seen at the scene of the disaster.

Similarly, over a dozen policemen were on hand to safeguard the area.

A crane from Buildwell Construction firm arrived the scene about 7.25 pm to join the rescue team.

Contacted on the incident, Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Frank Mba, a Superintendent of Police (SP) confirmed the tragedy.

He said the building collapsed around 5.10 pm while policemen had been deployed to maintain law and order in the area.

An agency report quoting officials of the Red Cross, said two persons have been confirmed dead.

Meanwhile, "there are about 14 people so far rescued alive. It was a four-storey building, fully residential. There are still some people trapped inside," Red Cross spokeswoman Umo Okon said

Twenty-eight people were killed in 2006 when another four-storey building collapsed in Lagos. The death toll then was high because people were using a restaurant, bar and

shops on the ground floor at the time.

At least three people were killed last July when a four-storey shopping centre being built in the capital Abuja collapsed.

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