

Two killed as building collapses in Lagos

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

At least two people were killed in the early hours of yesterday when a two-storey building at Block M20, Church Street, Jakande Estate, Isolo collapsed.

The building, according to a witness, collapsed at about 12:30am when its occupants were sleeping. Six occupants were said to be in the building when it collapsed.

Findings revealed that the two persons proclaimed dead were sisters in their late twenties. Their names were given as Bukola and Tosin Coker, while their mother who was rescued from the rubbles with serious injury was rushed to a private hospital.

Speaking to newsmen at the site of the collapsed building, General Manager of the Lagos State Emergency Response Agency (LASEMA), Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu, confirmed that two persons were brought out of the rubbles dead, while one woman was rushed to a hospital.

He said the agency immediately alerted its local rescue team and moved into the scene to salvage the situation.

"We were able to rescue some people that were trapped in, one is also receiving treatment.

"We met with the stakeholders and decided that the other three flats be pulled down. We gave the occupants of those flats sometime to move out their luggage and then we pulled down the structure", he said.

He said the remaining parts of the building that did not collapse was pulled down to save lives and properties, while surrounding buildings are currently being tested to ascertain their structural integrity.

State Commissioner for Housing, Mr. Bosun Jeje, who also visited the site of the collapsed building, however, assured that government will assist the occupants in whatever way they can, just as he assured that the medical bill of those hospitalized will be taken care of by the government.

Jeje said investigation has commenced to determine the cause of the collapse as well as ensure structural defective buildings are pulled down to prevent further loss of lives.

Some of the residents in neighbouring houses in the zone however accused the government of neglecting the plight of buildings in the estate.

Mr Biodun Oki, the Managing Director of the Lagos State Property Development Corporation (LSDPC), managers of the estate, put the life span of each building in the estate at 18 years, saying "most of the buildings have been marked for testing while occupants have been served eviction notice".

"Some of the buildings have been marked before now, in most cases, four years back. If you marked the buildings, they wiped off the paint and painted the building again, we always appealed, but I know the situation of the country and what people are going through, they would always ask where they will go if they move out", he said.