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## Harvests of horror in Lagos, Kaduna

THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2013 00:00 BY TEMPLER OLAIYA, KAMAL TAYO  
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### •Eight feared dead, 10 injured as three-storey building collapses in Lagos, another in Kaduna

TRAGEDY struck in the early hours of Thursday as a three-storey building located at 29b, Oloto Street, Off Cemetery Road in Ebute-Metta area of Lagos State collapsed, killing at least eight persons.

Some residents who assisted in rescue operations said eight persons, including a couple, a baby and five others lost their lives in the unfortunate incident

But government officials dismissed the figures saying only four bodies have been recovered from the rubble.

General Manager of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu, who coordinated rescue operations confirmed the number of casualties adding that 10 persons have so far been rescued from the rubbles as at the time of filing this report.

Osanyintolu said: "The building at 29 Oloto Street, Ebute-Metta collapsed at about 2.30am this morning. We have rescued 10 people and four bodies recovered so far. Rescue operation is still on-going".

The LASEMA GM said the building had already been marked by the Lagos State Building Control Agency (LASBCA) for structural integrity test before the incident.

He added: "We are on top of our challenges, we have extended rescue efforts to the ground floor. Before the building collapsed, a lot of occupants had vacated the premises".

Also confirming the incidence, South-West zonal spokesperson of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Mr. Ibrahim Farinloye,

told journalists that the agency got information that the building started cracking at about 1:30am and finally collapsed at about 2:00am.

He confirmed that about 10 rescued victims who sustained several degrees of injuries have been taken to hospitals for treatment.

There were combined efforts by officials of the Nigeria Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Red Cross, NEMA, LASEMA, the state Fire Service, as well as youths in the area who made

frantic efforts to rescue some other persons believed to still be trapped under the rubbles.

A pregnant woman and an 18-month-old boy were among the dead, as armed police officers struggled to fight off hoodlums carting away properties. "The owner of the building is still on the run," witnesses said.



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According to Farinloye, an occupant defied a directive to evacuate the building as emergency agencies arrived. "The young man tried to rescue his father. Unfortunately, he lost his limbs as well as his father in the process.

"Most of these houses are not modern buildings; they are old houses family members inherited from original owners. The building that collapsed had previously been marked for refurbishment and renovation," he said.

One of the residents of the ill-fated building rescued from the rubbles, Balkiss Abdulamid said she was at the balcony of the second floor when the building came down.

Another survivor who was so confused and looked shattered said though she had been living in the vicinity for the past two years, she just packed into the house last Monday.

Also, a three-storey building also collapsed yesterday afternoon in Kaduna, northwest Nigeria. Witnesses said that no fewer than 10 persons were trapped in the aged building.

The unfortunate incident which occurred on Hadeija road, near the Kaduna Central Market, drew the attention of the Kaduna state Governor, Alhaji Mukthar Ramalan Yero and officials of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Nigerian Red Cross (NRC), Armed Soldiers, Police, Road Safety personnel and Nigerian Civil Defence Corps for rescue efforts.

A trader, Musa Sule, told NAN that the building located between Ibrahim Taiwo by Hadeja Road housed tenants who traded in tyres.

According to him, the building had shown signs of cracks, but no one thought it was going to collapse today. It did by 3.10p.m.

Rescuers were able to pull out two women who were quickly rushed to Saint Gerald's Catholic Hospital for medical attention.

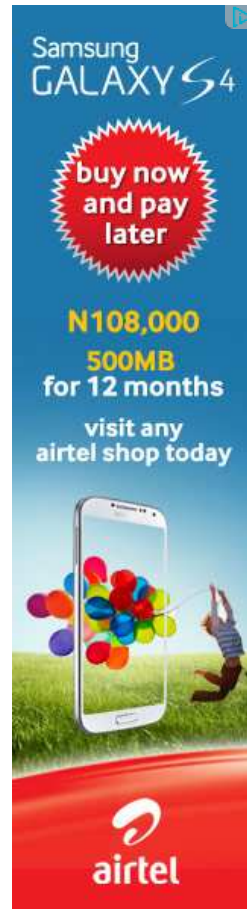
It would be recalled that no fewer than 10 buildings have collapsed in the state since January 2013, claiming at least 15 lives and properties worth millions of naira.

The trend of building collapse thus prompted the state governor, Mr. Babatunde Fashola, to set up a Tribunal of Enquiry in May 2013 to unravel its major cause.

The Tribunal is expected to submit its findings and recommendations to the governor next month.

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