

Two die, six rescued in Abuja building collapse

By Nkechi
Onyedika-
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The collapsed building

No fewer than two persons were confirmed dead yesterday after a two-storey building collapsed at Plot 444, Citec Villas area, within Naval Quarters in the Gwarinpa District of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja around 1:00a.m.

An unknown number of labourers were still trapped under the rubble, as at press time as rescue efforts were ongoing. The labourers were carrying out renovation on the building when it suddenly gave way. Rescue workers, comprising officials of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corp (NSCDC) were seen drilling through the rubble in search of survivors.

NEMA spokesman, Malam Yakubu Shuaibu, said eight persons were rescued alive. He said operatives were combing the debris with life locator to determine if other victims were still trapped. In an update, Shuaibu confirmed that two persons were dead in the building collapse. "NEMA and other stakeholders completed rescue operation at the site of collapsed building in Gwarinpa with retrieval of another dead body.

It would be recalled that in 2012, workers of a construction company were trapped as a three-story building collapsed in Gwarinpa. The incident also occurred within the Naval Quarters, Gwarinpa.

Also confirming the incident, the Director, Federal Capital Territory Emergency Management Agency, Idris Abbas, said: “A building under construction has collapsed in the early hours of Monday in the Gwarinpa District of Abuja.”

The acting Coordinator of the Abuja Metropolitan Management Council, Mrs. Safiyat Umar, explained that the building was standing on a flood plain, which caused the collapse. She blamed the Federal Housing Authority for giving approval for the construction of the building.

Meanwhile, the Minister of the FCT, Mr. Mohammed Bello, has ordered an investigation into the incident. This is the second building collapse in Abuja in less than a week. A building had on August 24 collapsed in Apo Mechanic Village of the same city.

The building, according to sources, was said to be an office that also served as a residential building for some workers, whose organizations could not be verified. It was gathered that a former governor of Osun State owns the collapsed building. An eyewitness in the area, who spoke under the condition of anonymity, hailed the efforts of the rescue agencies in rescuing the victims. According to him, they arrived on time. “They were very quick to respond and rescue operation began immediately they arrived the scene. It is commendable,” he said.