

Man who lost son, building to windstorm in Kano seeks lifeline

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3:23 am



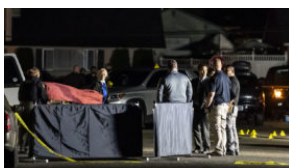
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The world of Umar Umar appeared to have crashed on Tuesday when his one-storey building that housed his family of nine at Kofar Kansakali quarters, along Northwest University road in Kano metropolis, came tumbling down leaving one dead and eight injured.

The tragedy had struck the Umars after a windstorm accompanied by almost three-hour downpour blew the roof, leaving the building to crumble with the entire family trapped inside. Since then, life has not been the same again.

When The Guardian visited the collapsed building, sympathizers were seen evacuating bags, cloths and few other belongings from the debris.

Narrating the ugly incident, Umar Umar told The Guardian that the downpour, which earlier started with windstorm, blew off the entire roof and while they were still contemplating what to do to protect some valuables from the rain, the entire building collapsed on them.

The 60-year-old businessman revealed that apart from the loss of one of his children, all of them sustained injuries. Umar, who is taking refuge with a relative, disclosed that the building, which he had occupied in the last five years, did not show any sign of defect or crack before the collapse. He therefore appealed to the state government and well-meaning citizens to help him pick the pieces of his life and assist the family return to normal life.

“I don’t even want to remember the incident which started with the windstorm that woke everyone up from sleep. The rain has rendered us homeless and helpless. We couldn’t salvage anything. Apart from the child I lost, some of those who survived have severe injuries like broken neck and back. None of us came out unscathed. But I still thank God for saving me, my wife and the remaining six children. I want government to assist us because, presently we don’t know where to start from or who to turn to with the situation of things in the country,” he said.

Reacting to the development, executive secretary, Kano State Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, Alhaji Salehi Aliyu Jili, said the agency was briefed about the devastating effect of the downpour that lasted almost four hours on Tuesday.

Jili, who sympathised with the affected family, pledged the government’s readiness to support the family to resume their normal life.

He, however, warned residents to desist from uncharitable habit of blocking drainages with refuse, which, he said, is a major factor resulting in flooding in the state. The

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executive secretary also cautioned property owners not to build on waterways and unapproved locations in the interest of public conveniences.