

# Pastor dies in Benue church collapse

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*Dunamis church, Makurdi*

The police in Benue State have confirmed the death of a pastor during the collapse of a Dunamis church located at Mission Ward North Bank area of Makurdi, the Benue State capital.

The Guardian learnt that the incident occurred yesterday morning when the resident pastor and three other members were observing prayers.

The three other pastors were said to have escaped unhurt while the pastor was trapped and killed by the wreckage.

When contacted, spokesperson for Benue State Police Command, Anene Sewuese Catherine, confirmed the incident.

“Only one person has been confirmed dead for now,” she said.

Police operatives from the C Division, North Bank, are already at the scene of the collapsed building.

When The Guardian visited the scene of the incident, the second pastor declined comments. He apologised that they were under instructions from the Dunamis headquarters not to issue any statement concerning the incident.

But an eyewitness, Abu Emmanuel, said the resident pastor, Rev Sunny Ameh, his personal assistant, the second pastor, and one other person held a prayer session in the church, and had rounded up and would have gone, but it was raining, so they tarried awhile.

It was while waiting that the church collapsed, killing the resident pastor, while others survived. A structural engineer, Peter Imbur, blamed the collapse on a structural error during the construction of the church.

Imbur said that the length of the church was about 25 metres long and 15 metres in width, while the entire building has no single pillar which was wrong and unacceptable.

The Guardian also learnt that the adjoining piece of land houses a church, the Holy Sabbath church. A closer look at the Holy Sabbath premises showed a water pathway caused by erosion that ran

through the length of the Dunamis church right into the Holy Sabbath premises.

An elder of the Holy Sabbath church, John Madubuchi Eze, said they advised the Dunamis church to divert the erosion, but their advice was not taken.

The collapsed church building wall fell along the erosion path.