

Body of collapsed Lagos building owner retrieved

•Death toll rises to 33 •Families register 19 missing persons

By Precious Ighonwelundu, Tajudeen ... On Nov 5, 2021



Femi Osibona

The recovery yesterday of the body of Mr. Femi Osibona, the investor in the collapsed 21-storey building in Ikoyi, Lagos has laid to rest questions over his whereabouts.

There has been controversy over whether he was trapped in the rubble. The building under construction collapsed on Monday.

The recovery of Osibona's body brings to 33 the death toll. Osibona, a businessman and Chief Executive of Fourscore Heights Limited, was 55.

Families have documented 19 names on the register of missing persons open at the site of the crisis by the Lagos State Government.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu announced a three-day mourning period beginning from today for the victims.

Flags at both public and private buildings are to fly at half mast.

Also yesterday, the governor inaugurated the panel of independent experts that will probe the incident.

During his visit to the site yesterday, the governor put the figure of bodies recovered as 32.

Osibona's body was recovered after the governor spoke.

The body was last night identified by officials of Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development.

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Families of trapped artisans were still on site yesterday, keeping the hope of seeing their loved ones alive.

So far, it has been established that more than 61 persons might have been trapped in the collapsed building.

There were also reports that some people escaped at the nick of time when the building was coming down.

Sanwo-Olu said structural integrity tests will begin on the two other structures from today.

There were three structures under construction.

Sanwo-Olu reiterated the need for rescue workers to be safe on site, saying the structural integrity of the other buildings must be ascertained.

The governor said he visited the six survivors on admission at the Lagos Island General Hospital. He said one of them was transferred to the Lagos State University Teaching (LASUTH) in Ikeja, for further treatment, "while the remaining five are in good spirits".

Sanwo-Olu added: “I have been to the Island General Hospital to encourage the living. I listened to their experiences on how God saved their lives. Life is something we all need to cherish because we can lose it at the shortest possible time.

“Six of them, but one was moved this morning to LASUTH for additional investigative treatment because of the specialist healthcare we have there.

“Yesterday, we opened the register for missing persons so that people who have missing loved ones whom they believe or imagine must have been in this location on Monday, and for whatever reason they haven’t contacted them, can provide their details. As I speak now, only 19 names have been provided, some with pictures and some without.

“This will help us to begin to design the possibilities of a manifest coming out from the responses we have so far.”