

## How 22 of my colleagues went down with Ikoyi building —Survivor Death toll rises to 43

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ONE of the bricklayers (masons) who narrowly escaped death while working on the 21-storey building that collapsed in Ikoyi, Lagos State, Mr Innocent Amos Denavide, has revealed exclusive details of how he escaped death.

In a chat with the *Nigerian Tribune* via LinkedIn, Mr Denavide, who got the bricklaying job through a construction company, said 22 other bricklayers who went to work on the building on the fateful day never made it out alive.

Denavide said: "I was in the building before it collapsed. 22 of my colleagues and 1 were plastering the 12th floor due for completion on Wednesdays so that we could get our pay.

"I went downstairs to order for more plaster sand to be bagged and taken up using the hoist. The key to the hoist is still with me at the moment.

"Going down the building to order for sand was what God used to bring me out. I was standing not far from the pillar when I heard the crack sound that prompted me to run."

Asked about the details of some other bricklayers who followed him to site for work, Denavide said: "First is Christian Dangija. He is the mason who trained me. I don't know how to communicate this to his family. He is the breadwinner who takes care of his mother and siblings. His wife is pregnant too. He is from

Agonlin in Benin Republic

"I know Joseph too, though I don't know his surname. We talked and had a plan on that Monday morning to be saving wages for Christmas and new year celebrations.

"Marcial was a good friend too. He was very young; still an apprentice. He started learning work not long ago."

Meanwhile, the Lagos State government on Sunday said an additional body had been recovered from under the rubble of the collapsed building.

According to the state government, a total of 43 bodies have so far been recovered.

The Commissioner for Information in the state, Gbenga Omotosho, confirmed the latest recovery in a statement he signed on Sunday.

The commissioner said: "One more body has been recovered from the site of the collapsed 21-storey building in Ikoyi, Lagos. The body, which was recovered on Saturday, has brought the number of bodies retrieved from the rubble to 43.

"There are 15 survivors and 49 people have reported that their loved ones are missing."

Omotosho also added that: "At the Infectious Disease Hospital (IDH), Yaba, the identification of bodies continues."

Also, the Association of Nigerian Chartered Architects (ANCA) on Sunday advocated three independent political, technical and judicial panels to unravel the root cause of the collapse.

This was contained in a statement jointly signed

by ANCA President, Mr Moyosore Omatsone and National Secretary, Mr Adekoyejo Jolaoso.

"We commend the governor of Lagos State for promptly setting up a probe panel to douse the spontaneous tension with a 30-day deadline.

"However, we are of the view that the magnitude and very wide implications of the incident demand and warrant that a three-legged probe should be envisaged," ANCA said.

The group said a political probe would help government make informed decisions after getting details on approvals, supervisions and regulations.

They said the 30-day deadline was adequate for government to complete its political probe to usher in the technical phase.

"A technical probe should be carefully set up with all technical personnel in the building, construction and property industries.

"This panel should be given enough to address a myriad of technical issues involved in such a complex development," it stated.

The statement stressed the need for a technical panel to study the original brief for the project and its design, as well as documented evidences to understand facilities included in the failed edifice.

It queried projected lifespan of the ill-fated building which would have been inhabited by occupants/owners whose presence would have increased the load on the tower.