

Six site workers die as building under construction collapses in Lagos

Dayo Ayeyemi | Lagos

IT was a bleak Thursday for residents of Arowojobe Estate in Maryland, Lagos, as a two-storey building collapsed, leaving six adult male dead.

The sixth person, who was among the five people rescued alive, died on the way to the hospital, according to an attached policeman.

Located on 13 Wilson Mba Street, the building collapsed on construction worker who slept overnight in the site.

According to the account of a nearby neighbour, who identified herself simply as Mrs Jumoke, the building caved in around 1am on Thursday.

"I just heard the sound like thunder and immediately my children ran out of their rooms to mine. Later, some trapped workers were heard shouting, requesting for light.

"We later called a neighbour, a doctor. He was the

first person to attend to the victims before the government's officials started coming in the morning," she said.

She said that those trapped were construction workers.

When the Nigerian Tribune got to the scene of the collapsed building, rescue operations were still ongoing by the officials of the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, National Emergency Management Agency and other responders.

It was also discovered that the collapsed building was located on swampy area.

Also, one of the officials of the Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority (LASPPPA), who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the building was without the necessary planning approvals, making it an unauthorised building.

He said the owner of the building had once been served notice.

Permanent Secretary,

LASEMA, Dr Olufemi Damilola Oke-Osanyintolu, while giving updates, said an additional male fatality was later recovered.

He said: "Total number of dead is now five adult males. Total number of rescued is five."

He said his agency responded to the incident and discovered that a set of three terraces under construction had collapsed.

"Search and rescue operations began immediately. Three adult males were initially recovered dead, two male adults were rescued alive, and one adult male trapped under the rubble was rescued alive by the LASEMA and the Lagos State Fire service.

"All six men were site workers. They are receiving pre hospital care on location while SEHMU has been contacted for the remains of the three fatalities," he said.

LASEMA's excavator was deployed to accelerate the

search and rescue operations.

Initially, it was gathered during search and rescue operation that the victims, who were rescued and stabilized, were transferred to the Gbagada General Hospital.

Meanwhile, some built environment experts have kicked against incessant building collapse in Lagos State.

They expressed their displeasure on the account that the recent such incidents are of structures still under construction and not existing buildings.

Former president of the Building Collapse Prevention Guild, Kunle Awobodu, who expressed his displeasure, queried the responsibility of the government's officials in charge of building control in the location.

Another expert, Mrs O. Yusuf, blamed the incident on poor workmanship and sub-standard materials.