

One killed, 17 escape death in Lagos building collapse

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collapsed building

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Barely two weeks after a building under construction collapsed in Lekki killing 35 people, tragedy struck again in the Mile 12 area of Lagos on Saturday when the balcony of a building on Alli Close came down on a 47-year-old woman.

The victim, Mrs. Mutiat Abdulganiyu, was said to be performing a domestic task around 8.30am under the balcony when it crumbled on her.

Officials of the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, the state fire service and policemen from the Alapere Division responded to the incident.

She died while she was being taken to a hospital in the area.

Seventeen other residents of the building were lucky to escape death and ran out of the house unhurt.

A resident, who identified himself as Tunde Afolabi, said he had observed that the house was weak before the balcony collapsed. He noted that the incident was avoidable, if the owner of the building had done the right thing.

He said, "I learnt the woman (Mutiat) was doing a domestic work when the balcony collapsed. It crumbled on her head and she died before she could be taken to the hospital.

"The building is weak and it ought to have been demolished completely. It is a family house and the man that acts as the landlord does not live there. About 18 persons live there."

A tenant, who did not want his name in print, said they had called the attention of the owners to the state of the building but they failed to act, adding that some tenants had packed out before the collapse.

He said, "I was in my room when I heard the sound caused by the impact of the collapse. The house is owned by a family and we have appealed to them to renovate it to no avail. We thank God that it did not collapse at a time when children usually play under the balcony. It would have been more tragic."

The husband of the deceased, Mr. Issa Abdulganiyu, was too distraught to speak with our correspondent on the incident.

Speaking with some sympathisers, he said he had accepted the wife's death as the wish of God, adding that she would be buried immediately in accordance with Islamic rites.

"I have accepted it in good faith. That is what God wished and I cannot question Him. She will be buried soon," he said.

The General Manager, LASEMA, Mr. Michael Akindele, said a preliminary investigation

carried out on the building showed that it was distressed. He said further investigation would be done by relevant agencies to formally ascertain the cause of the collapse.

He said, "The balcony of a story building partially collapsed at about 8.45am today (Saturday). According to investigations and assessment conducted by the agency's ERT, the building had shown signs of distress as some portions of the balcony were caving in.

"However full scale investigation as to the actual cause would be carried out by relevant government agencies. A 47-year-old woman sustained bodily injury and died on her way to the hospital, and no other casualty."

Akindele advised the public to report cases of impending collapse of buildings and other emergencies in the state for appropriate action, adding that the occupants of the 16-roomed building had been evacuated and the building condoned off for safety.

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