

# Ikoyi building: Death toll hits 44, responders near ground zero

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Scene of the incident

Seven days after a 21-storey building collapsed on Gerrard Road, in the Ikoyi area of Lagos State, recovery operation is still ongoing by rescue agencies.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that responders were already concluding their operation as the death toll hit 44 on Sunday.

Our correspondents had reported that the 21-storey building crumbled last Monday around 2pm.

The skyscraper, owned by Fourscore Heights Limited, trapped over 50 persons, including the firm's Managing Director, Femi Osibona; his friend, a United States of America-based Nigerian businessman, Wale Bob-Oseni; his personal assistant, Oyinye Enekwe, and clients.

Other deceased persons included a member of the National Youth Service Corps, identified only as Oyindamola; an aluminium fabricator, Kenneth Otu; an engineer and pastor with the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Living Water Parish, Ibafo, Ogun State, Ola Ogunfunwa, among others.

Since the incident happened, family members of victims and sympathisers had thronged the area daily, hoping to see their loved ones alive, while some lamented that they were not allowed to identify their loved ones.

The affected families were, however, granted access on Saturday to find their loved ones among the corpses recovered and deposited in the Lagos Mainland Hospital morgue.

The state Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, on Saturday around 6pm, said 42 bodies had been recovered so far from the rubble.

A source told our correspondent on Sunday that two more bodies were recovered from the rubble, which increased the death toll to 44.

The source said one of the bodies was recovered around 8pm on Saturday, while the other body was recovered around midnight.

“The recovery operation is still ongoing but should end by Monday morning. The work is about two per cent to completion,” the source added.

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Meanwhile, the Association of Nigerian Chartered Architects has called for three probe panels to investigate the circumstances that led to the building collapse.

The association said political, technical and judicial probe panels were needed to unravel the situation.

The ANCA, which lauded Sanwo-Olu for setting up a probe panel, advised the government to set up two other committees to get all the needed answers.

The association stated this on Sunday in a statement jointly signed by the group’s National President, Moyosore Omatsone, and National Secretary,

Adekovejo Jolaoso.

The ANCA stressed that the governor had only set up a political probe panel meant to investigate the political downplay in the construction and collapse of the building.

It suggested that there was the need for a technical panel which would involve all personnel in the building construction and property industries.

According to the association, the technical panel should be given enough time to address a myriad of technical issues involved in such a complex tragedy.