

Three killed as Abuja building

Abiodun Sanusi, Nathaniel Shaibu and Damilola Aina

NO fewer than three persons have been confirmed dead and 21 others rescued from a building that collapsed in the Gwarimpa area of Abuja on Wednesday.

The building, which was under construction along 7th Avenue in the Gwarimpa area of Abuja, collapsed around 11am on Thursday.

A construction worker, Samuel Keror, said the building was raised within six months.

Another eyewitness, John Edwin, who lives in the area, said workers on the site, especially labourers conveying blocks to the top, were over 40.

He claimed to have lived in the area for many years and had always known the place to be a reserved green area.

Edwin urged relevant authorities to question the Federal Housing Authority for



• Scenes of the incident

allegedly allocating green areas to commercial ventures.

The Director, Development Control, Federal Capital Territory Administration, Muktar Galadima, said rescue operation was ongoing.

PUNCH Metro gathered

that some of the survivors were rushed to the General Hospital, Kubwa, while others were rushed to the General Hospital, Lifecamp.

Galadima said many workers were still trapped under the rubbles.

The FCT Director of Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation, Attah Ikharo, said two persons had been confirmed dead.

He said, "As of 9pm on Thursday, 24 have been rescued alive and two dead."

collapses after extra floor

The Director-General of the FCT Federal Emergency Management Authority, Abass Idriss, told PUNCH Metro around past 9pm that three people were confirmed dead and 21 rescued.

"We are still at the site as rescue operation is ongoing," he added.

The Coordinator, Abuja Metropolitan Management Council, Umar Shuaibu, said investigation would reveal both the remote and immediate causes of the incident.

He said, "Presently, we are testing the integrity and strength of most of the buildings that are under construction around this area, and anyone that we find to be faulty, we will bring it down."

The Head, Public Affairs, Federal Housing Authority, Kenneth Chigelu, in a statement on Thursday, said the developer of the building flouted approval plans by erecting an extra floor.

The statement read, "The

structure is privately owned. As of the time of collapse, the building was a frame structure with columns, suspended slabs in place, and some block works.

"Preliminary findings revealed that an approval for two floors was granted to the developer, who decided to add an extra floor to the structure.

"Rescue efforts are currently going on to save lives, with responses from all relevant agencies.

"Investigations, which are ongoing, will reveal immediate and remote causes of the collapse."

Two of the survivors, who returned to the scene after they were taken to the General Hospital, Gwarimpa, alleged that they were not attended to by medical workers.

One of them said, "We are coming from the hospital. They did not even attend to us; there was another person that was taken there that his two legs were

condemned. They did not attend to him; they said they should carry him to another hospital."

Meanwhile, the FCT Commissioner of Police, Sadiq Abubakar, has vowed that all those still trapped in the building would be rescued.

The CP, who visited the scene, assured that the police would

provide necessary support to ensure the ease of the rescue operation. Describing the situation as unfortunate, Abubakar called on residents of the area to remain vigilant and report any suspicious movement to the police, as he prayed that the trapped victims would be rescued alive.

The police boss said 20 people had been rescued, and one confirmed dead.

NSCDC arrests 12 with petroleum products in Lagos



• The fuel Sodi Ojuroungbe

MEN of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps have arrested 12 suspects for allegedly dealing in petroleum products and hard drugs.

The suspects were paraded by the

• The suspects oil products as well as arrested five additional suspects in connection with two intercepted boats laden with 54 bags of cannabis sativa, also known as Indian hemp, in another operation and recovered exhibits.

The state Commandant, CC Usman Alifadara, in a bid to demonstrate his absolute resolve to