

Falling slabs trapped us while fleeing Abuja collapsed building – Victims

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By Nathaniel Shaibu

A two-storey building located at Lagos Crescent in the Garki 2 area of Abuja collapsed on Wednesday night, killing two and leaving 35 others injured

Scene of the Collapsed Building in Abuja

The collapse, according to eyewitnesses and victims' accounts, occurred at about 11pm, following a heavy downpour that began at about 10pm.

Recall that the Federal Emergency Agency said the 35 victims rescued alive had been taken to hospitals across the Federal Capital Territory, including the National Hospital, Abuja, and the Asokoro, Nyanya, and Garki District Hospitals, among others.

Our correspondent visited the Trauma Centre of the National Hospital to speak with some of the victims that were receiving treatment at the hospital.

One of the victims, Rabi Abubakar, who lives on the first floor of the building, said, "When the rain started, they (PHCN) took power, and I went to the bathroom to ease myself. When I came out, I saw the tiles cracking. I immediately alerted my other colleagues. Before we could run downstairs and out of the building, the whole thing had collapsed.

"It happened around 11pm; I was under the rubble for about fifteen minutes with a burglary pressing on me, I was able to move it, and get out. When I looked over at my brother, he was dead. And the boy there (points) is my son, we were together when it happened."

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Another victim, Micky Michael, a pedicurist who also lives on the first floor, said, "When I shouted in pain, somebody with a torch found me, and they used a hammer to break the slab and pull me out. But I had a fracture on my leg and arm."

Another victim at the Asokoro District Hospital, Modub Abdullahi, said he was also sleeping on the second floor of the building when the incident occurred, adding that as much as he recalls, he was under the rubble for nearly three hours before he was rescued with a fractured left foot.

A resident in the area, who declined to be named in this report, said the caretaker of the building had ignored residents' and visitors' complaints about the structure of the building, adding that the building was built on a dense swampy area with water

running behind.

The PUNCH had earlier reported that the FCT Minister, Nyesom Wike, during a visit to the building collapse site, had directed that the Permanent Secretary immediately sort out the hospital bills of the patients still receiving treatments at the hospitals while also ordering the immediate arrest of the developer of the building.

Meanwhile, the FCT Minister also urged the rescue operatives to carry on their operations until they were certain no other persons were trapped under the rubble of the collapsed building.