

Three die in fresh Niger mine collapse

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• A mining site. Source: File

By Chika Otuchikere

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Nearly two weeks after the mine in Shiroro mine in Niger State collapsed, killing three people and injuring one person.

The Niger State Ministry of Mineral Resources disclosed that efforts were still going on to rescue the miners trapped in the Shiroro mine, lamenting that they are yet to receive any assistance from multinational rescue firms.

The latest mine collapse occurred on Thursday at Bazakwoi of Adunu Community, Paikoro Local Government Area, where the mining pit was said to have collapsed at an illegal gold mining site, resulting in the deaths of the three miners.

The Director General of the Niger State Emergency Management Agency, Abdullahi Baba-Arah, confirmed the incident in a statement in which he disclosed that nobody was trapped and so there was no need for a rescue operation.



“NSEMA has received a report of a mining pit collapse at Bazakwoi of Adnun community in Paikoro LGA of Niger State.

The incident occurred earlier today, 13th June 2024. It involves local miners who are said to be illegally mining the gold deposit environment scavenging for the mineral.

“As of the time of filing this report, 3 persons are confirmed dead while one person was rescued alive with injuries. No one was trapped, and as such, there was no search and rescue operation,’ he stated.

The end has not been heard of the Ahiro mine collapse as
Mineral Resources to reassess the African Minerals and Log
where miners were trapped, came up with a report.



The report of the committee made available to the media by the Press Officer of the Ministry, Dibia Maureen on Thursday said there were no multinational rescue teams assisting in the rescue of the trapped miners.

‘It was unfortunate to note the absence of any multinational rescue teams at the site. The company management is left on their own with the support of the Niger State Ministry of Mineral Resources for supervision and monitoring of the rescue operation.

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‘Additionally, the committee recommended a call to the general public and miners with relevant expertise in this type of rescue mission to volunteer through the Ministry of Mineral Resources for engagement and further briefing,’ the committee report stated.

PUNCH, however, learnt that families of the trapped miners had conducted prayers for their relatives believing they were dead. A government official made this known under anonymity, saying, “Some families of the victims have held the Muslim seven-day Fidu (prayer) for their relatives.”

‘The Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals Development and the Niger State Ministry of Mineral Resources are using artisanal miners to dig the place. The rescue effort is being supported by the Niger State Ministry of Mineral Resources. The seven-day Fidu prayer on Monday for their relations. They are still praying for them,’ the official said.

The Lakpma Youth Forum in Niger State released a statement on Thursday, saying that its members Abdullahi Erena who stated that their members who were at the site of the collapsed mining pit had confirmed that no single soul had been rescued from there.

‘It is a pity that human beings will be allowed to stay under the earth for days with no meaningful effort to get them out. In fact, there are indications that bodies have started to decompose in the mining pit.

‘At the moment, we have more questions than answers. How can a licensed company operate a mine without any contingency plan in case of accidents? How can a company rely on labourers to dig out people trapped inside rocks with bare hands? Why will a company of the standing of African Minerals and Logistics Company rely on mini water pumps to drain water from the pit and use manual labourers to scratch the rock? How long will this last? Are we waiting to bring out skeletons?’

‘We also want to reiterate that this is a wakeup call to the government at all levels to take the insecurity situation in the Lakpma axis of Shiroro LGA seriously because illegal miners and unscrupulous elements are taking advantage of the situation to perpetuate a regime of impunity and slavery.’

Meanwhile, the immediate past chairman of Shiroro LGA, Suleiman Dauda Chukuba, while condoling with the families of the victims in Galadima-Kogo, called on the company as well as the state and federal governments to let families know the fate of their relations in the pit.

