

Lagos investigates engineer's death at construction site

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The Lagos State Safety Commission has launched an investigation into the death of a civil engineer, Olalekan Oloruntoba, who reportedly died while operating a crane at a construction site in the state, *PUNCH Metro* exclusively reports.

The safety commission, through its spokesperson, Adewunmi Okoh, announced on Saturday that an investigation was underway. This statement followed an inquiry from our correspondent regarding the commission's response to the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Several sources who witnessed the September 23 incident declined to reveal the construction site's location, fearing their identities might be exposed.

However, photos of Oloruntoba, affectionately known as Oloriebi, lying lifeless with his face and head covered in blood were shared with our correspondent.

A source close to the deceased, who was present at the construction site, informed our correspondent that the deceased had been attempting to support the crane with his hands while it was lifting materials following an alleged malfunction.

In the course of operating the machine, sources informed *PUNCH Metro* that the crane lost control and collapsed onto him.

“The crane collapsed onto him while manually controlling it after a minor malfunction. At one point, the crane became hooked, making it very difficult to control.

“When he realised the crane had become hooked, he attempted to escape, but his efforts failed as the machine collapsed onto him,” the source told our correspondent on Saturday.

PUNCH Metro findings revealed that the deceased was a graduate of Civil Engineering at both the Kwara State University and Kwara State Polytechnic.

Oloriebi, as he was fondly called by friends, had previously worked for the construction firm during his undergraduate years and was later hired as a contract staff member by the same company.

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One of the deceased’s associates, Adeyemi Adetoyese, announced Oloruntoba’s death on his Facebook page a day after the incident, describing him as a passionate and “vibrant professional.”

“It is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that we announce the passing of our dear brother and vibrant civil engineering professional.

“I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends. May we have the fortitude to bear your loss. Good night, Lekan Oloriebi. We love you, but Jesus loves you more.

“We had plans to carry out together, which formed the basis of our discussion on Sunday, but you departed from this world yesterday,” he wrote.

To another associate Temitope Abdulwasiu, Oloruntoba was “very humble and ready to give everything it takes, OLORIEBI, as we used to call you then in our school days. Rest on, bro.”

“I’m still reeling from the news of his passing. We had been regularly discussing his professional aspirations, including his plans to apply for a top-up programme. He was intensely passionate about professional growth,” Sani Abubakar lamented.

Regarding the incident on Saturday, Okoh stated that the commission would conduct a thorough investigation into Oloruntoba’s death and share its findings with our correspondent.

She said, “We will investigate and give you feedback on it; just be patient with us; you know this is the weekend, and we can only get the necessary information during the working hours of the week.”

PUNCH Metro reported a similar occupational hazard on August 8, 2024, when a contract worker died after jumping into an iron melting pot at his company at approximately 3:15 p.m. on August 3.

After investigating the incident, the commission described the personal protective equipment used by the factory’s workers as inadequate and noted that the incident was a case of suicide.