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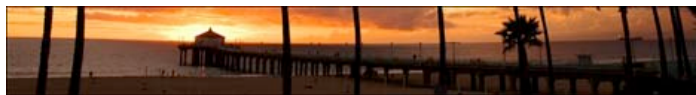
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VANGUARD

Nigeria: Collapsed Building Kills 4 in Lagos

Evelyn Usman

26 April 2010

Lagos — NO fewer than four persons died with several others injured, Monday, when a two-storey building collapsed at Oshodi.

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The building which was still undergoing construction, is located in the Kairo shopping mall area of the conurbation.

Reports said the building came down with a deafening sound at about 9.00a.m, and while some of the labourers were said to have escaped unhurt, others could not as they were trapped in the debris.

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An eye witness told Vanguard that two food vendors were among those affected.

Youths from the neighbourhood thronged the scene and were seen excavating the debris with bare hands and every available tool until the construction firms brought in heavy equipment.

Rescue workers of the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, LASEMA, Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, LASTMA, NEMA, policemen and Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps were all on ground to salvage the situation.

When Vanguard visited the scene, some of the victims were still trapped under the debris. Two of them identified simply as Musiliu and Fatai were calling for help, and indicating that they were running out of strength.

By 3.00p.m, however, their phones were no longer being received.

Head of the labourers, Baba Adisa Olowo, who explained how he escaped death, told journalists that seven of his men also escaped unhurt.

Narrating how it happened, Baba Olowo, 68, said: "When we were working this morning (yesterday), there was a cracking noise followed by shaking of the building. Quickly, I asked everyone to run out of the building and only those with me did. Immediately we came out, the building collapsed, trapping some of the workers under.

"We were about seven that ran out. The iron bender died immediately because he was hit by a heavy brick on the rib and head. The people I know that are still trapped under are Fatai and Baba Alaja who is the head of the carpenter.

"Friday was rescued but he only sustained injury. We have been working here for the past eight months until this incident happened."

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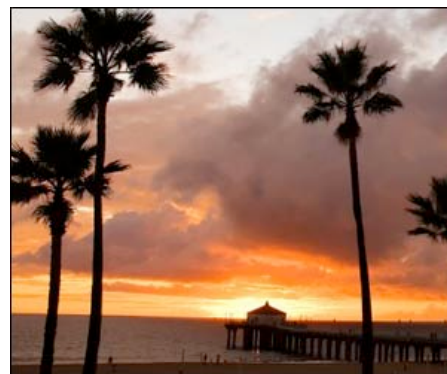
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LASEMA general manager who was at the scene, said that an electronic gadget known as DELSA, assisted the agency in locating the positions of the victims under the debris. He noted that nine persons were rescued, out of which four who sustained minor injuries had been discharged. He said that five others were receiving free treatment in an undisclosed government hospital.

The agency, he said, would carry out a soil and solid material test to ascertain the immediate cause of the collapse, adding that the state government was on top of the situation.

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Assistant Commissioner of Police in-charge of Area F, Mr. Adesoyin Noah who was also at the scene said his men were working assiduously with other rescue operators to ensure that the trapped victims were brought out.

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