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Two feared dead, five injured as building collapses in Awka

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BY VINCENT UJUMADU

AWKA-TWO persons were feared dead, while five others sustained injuries when a three-storey building under construction collapsed Thursday in Awka as the people of Anambra State were waiting for the arrival of body of the late Dim Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu from Enugu.

Twelve persons were said to be working on the second floor of the building when the structure fell to its foundation, exposing the low quality materials used in the construction. The five that survived went to eat when the building collapsed.

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who have their site close to the collapsed building, joined in the rescue operation with members of the Federal Road Safety Commission, FRSC, Anambra State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, fire service and general public. Those who sustained injuries have been taken to hospital for treatment, while the dead were taken to the mortuary.

When the information about the collapsed building filtered into the Ekwueme Square in Awka where the people were waiting for arrival of the body of Ojukwu, many of them trooped to the scene.

Special adviser to Governor Peter Obi on Housing and Urban Development, Chief Lawrence Chinwuba, said at the scene that he had been calling the owner of the building who switched off his telephone. This fuelled speculation that he was on the run.

Chinwuba said from all indication, the reason for the collapse was due to use of poor quality building materials and unqualified workers.

One of the people at the site who claimed to be an engineer, said he observed that the contractor used 12 mm rods on the ground floor, only to use 16 mm on the top floor, adding that it was unprofessional to do so. Some of the survivors said there had been signs of crack on the building necessitating the decision of the contractor to fortify the pillars.

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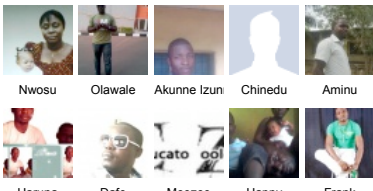
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