

Man lost 3 kids in Ebonyi building collapse

● *Blames incident on mysterious rain*

AFIKPO—A commercial motorcycle rider, Sunday Okereke, who lost three of his four children last weekend, at Akaezeukwu, Akaeze autonomous community in Ivo Local Government Area, Ebonyi State, has blamed a mysterious rain for the death.

The 43-year old man lost his two daughters, Nmesoma, 8 years and Chinyere, 6 years and his son, John when his two-bedroom mud-house collapsed with three of his children trapped inside the debris.

However, his wife, Elizabeth Okereke and Emmanuel Okereke, who were rescued by neighbours are lying critically injured in a private hospital in Akaeze.

Sunday, who was out to watch a football match when the incident happened, blamed a mysterious rain that lasted for less than an hour for his misfortune.

An eyewitness, who helped in the rescue operation, described the downpour as "mysterious", saying that the rain started immediately after the building had collapsed.

In an exclusive interview with Vanguard, Sunday lamented that he lost all he has laboured for in life to the ugly incident.

He said: "I came back to my house some minutes past 11 pm as a result of the heavy downpour that night after watching the match between Nigeria and Ecuador to the rude shock of my people crying all over the compound.

"Before I could ask questions, I saw people dragging out three of my kids from the debris of my house that collapsed."

Okereke, who insisted that there were no signs of noticeable cracks on the walls of the about five-year-old building, maintained that it was the handiwork of the devil.

According to him, "the house had no leakage whatsoever. The building started collapsing from the rooftop and went all inside.

"Since after the incident, I have been sleeping in my elder brother's house. I have nothing left in my life and I urge the government to come to my assistance.

"I am only an Okada rider. My wife, who is in the hospital won't have a roof over her head if she is

discharged. I plead with government at all levels to please come to my immediate assistance", he said.

He, however, appreciated the Chairman of Ivo Local Government Council, Hon. Ogbonnaya Chukwu Ude and a former Development Centre Coordinator in the area, Mr Joseph Obasi for their concerns to the family.

His uncle, Prince Eze Ogbajie also pleaded with public-spirited individuals to come to the aid of the bereaved family. "It is a huge sorrow for our family this period but we won't blame God. I deeply console the family over this tragic incident."

Day 2 of Bala Policeman, inferno during

● *Recovery operation*
Sanwo-Olu leads de

By Olasunkanmi Akoni

TRAGEDY struck late Tuesday evening when a yet to be identified policeman and another person, reportedly died in the inferno that engulfed the six-storey building in a section of the popular Balogun Market on Martins Street, Lagos Island.

The fire which started Tuesday morning spread to the adjoining building, yesterday morning which firefighters and other rescue team battled to curtail from causing further havoc.

Property and goods worth millions of naira were claimed to have been destroyed in the inferno.

The policeman was said to have lost his life when a section of the building collapsed on him late Tuesday evening, as fire-fighters continued with their efforts to put out the raging fire.

The death of the policeman was announced late Tuesday evening through the twitter handle of Rapid Response Squad, RRS, @rrslagos767 of the Lagos State Police Command.

The tweet reads: "We are still at (Tuesday evening) the scene of the fire incident. Though it has reduced to a reasonable extent, Efforts are still on to put it out completely. Partial building collapse occurred during the process which claimed the life of a policeman from a nearby division."

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