

School building collapse: Plateau Govt confirms 22 dead, 132 injured

Jos. A two-storey building of Saints Academy, a secondary and primary school located at Busa-Buji community of Jos North Local Area, had collapsed, claiming 22 lives with 132 others injured. The incident occurred at about 8:30 a.m. on Friday, when the students were writing their third term examination. Students, teachers and others were trapped in the collapsed building. The Plateau State Government confirmed the deaths and the injured.

Mr Musa Ashoms, the commissioner for Information, said six of the injured were in critical condition.

He said that those injured were receiving treatment in various tertiary health facilities in the state, while the bodies of the deceased had been deposited in the mortuaries.

Meanwhile, President Tinubu described the unfortunate incident as a huge loss to the nation, as well as a devastating development - too excruciating to imagine. The President in a statement issued by his spokesman, Chief Ajuri Ngelale, condoled with the bereaved families, families of all the victims, and the people and Government of Plateau State.

He commended emergency responders, the National Emergency Management Agency

(NEMA), State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), security agencies, and all citizens involved in the search, rescue, and resuscitation efforts. The President assured the people of Plateau State of his fervent support at this difficult time.

Also, Gov. Caleb Mutwang of Plateau, in a statement issued by Mr Gyang Bere, his Director of Press and Public Affairs, on Friday in Jos sympathised with the families of the affected victims, describing the incident as heart-wrenching and unfortunate.

"This is tragic, unfortunate, heart-wrenching and a gloomy situation. We appreciate the timely intervention of the search and rescue team, as well as members of the public, who rushed to the school premises to assist in evacuating some of the surviving students and staff.

"I have directed the relevant government agencies, including the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and Plateau State Emergency Management Agency, to provide necessary support to survivors. Words cannot fully comfort the griev-

ing families over their immense loss, so we pray that God will continue to console and uphold them during this difficult period," Mutwang said.

Highlighting the significance and broader purpose of Executive Order 003, recently signed into law, Mutwang clarified that its intent was to safeguard citizens from such disasters. "The rationale for the executive order 003 is to prevent Jos from deteriorating into a slum, and to ensure compliance with building regulations in line with the Greater Jos Master Plan," the governor said.

Police arrest, parade three suspected cultists, recovers ammunition in Edo

The Edo State Police Commissioner, Funsho Adegboye, has said the State is recording remarkable progress in the war against cultists and other criminal gangs in the State.

The Commissioner said this when the State's Police Command paraded three suspected cultists, in Benin City, the Edo State. The suspects were alleged to be members of the Maphite confraternity.

The suspects are Eyefia Godbless 'M' 30 years, Imuetiyan Ewemade 'M' 30 years, and Emeka Okpaja 'M'

22 years.

Adegboye said the cult members were sighted at Ubiyaza Community, Off Sapele Road in Benin City, engaging in clandestine activities to avenge the killing of one of their members, late Kokori 'M' who was allegedly killed by members of Aye confraternity, a rival cult group in June 2024.

The CP said one automatic pump action gun, 11 live cartridges, three green berets, and Maphite constitution were the exhibits recovered from the suspect as they made confessional statements affirming their

membership of the cult group.

He said, "We have the full backing of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kayode Egbetokun on the fight against cultism and we are not joking with it. We also have the backing of Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, and his executives who all believe that this war against cultism must be fought to a standstill until the State is void of cultism and criminality.

"It's difficult to separate cultism and heinous crimes like killings without fear or remorse. Look at their beret and constitution, the book that governs their illicit activities, killing, and counter-killings.