



By Daniel Abia and
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TWO persons have been killed in another building that collapsed in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on Monday.

The incident happened in Egbelu/Mgbaraja area of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of the state.

The building collapsed, Monday morning, according to a source privy to the development and left two people fatality wounded, although the council authority confirmed the death of one person and the other in critical condition.

This comes barely one week after the collapse of a three-storey building at the Iriebe axis of the same LGA, although no life was lost in that incident.

An eyewitness, Mr Jonathan Obey said the building at Ogbogoro caved-in on Monday about 2p.m., while the contractors were working on the 2nd floor, killing one of them while another narrowly escaped death with severe injuries.

He said a couple of deliberate infractions by the property developer may have caused the building to

2 dead, many injured in another building collapse in Rivers

• Govt declares developer wanted

collapse.

"It's a building collapse, as we speak one person is trapped right inside the rubble. When we first came, we tried to rescue the person but we couldn't, when we did our investigation, we found out that they used substandard materials to execute the project, we also found out that the foundation was 3ft for a two-storey building which is wrong.

"We also found out that some of the rods used by the builders were of low quality, the decking itself was not chained, there was no centre beam, it was supposed to have a centre beam and a pillar at the middle but it doesn't have them. They did not use enough cement in casting the first decking," the eyewitness stated.

Meanwhile, the Rivers State Government has sealed the

premises of the collapsed building and declared the property developer, Vincent Nwoye wanted over the tragic incident.

State Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Mr Evans Bipi during an on-the-spot inspection of the collapsed building accused the developer of gross negligence and default of the extant building laws and regulations of Rivers State.

He cited the failure of the property developer to obtain government-approved building plan and use of substandard materials as the cause of the building collapse and avoidable death.

Govt declares developer wanted

"We have repeatedly warned that

if you are caught building without government-approved building plan, you will certainly face the penalty.

"Government has sealed this property in question and declared the owner wanted because a life has been lost, we need to question him to know why he chose to use substandard materials to execute the project, on why he decided to use 12mm rod for a 2-storey building.

"It will interest the public to know that even the property does not have government approval, it is something the government will not take lightly, we will use this developer as a scapegoat for others to learn."

Bipi also described the incident as one-too-many while warning property developers to desist from cutting corners and endangering the lives of innocent contractors.

He said the Rivers State

Government sympathizes with the bereaved family and the people of Ogbogoro community over the unfortunate incident.

"Last week, we were at a site of a collapsed three-storey building at Iriebe, though no life was lost in that incident but in this case, a life was lost here in Ogbogoro. We truly sympathize with the family and Ogbogoro community where the victim resides. We are going to take him to the mortuary and notify the family, we are also going to disclose the mortuary, so that the family members can identify and recover his remains for burial.

"This should serve as a warning to those who build without building plan, and to those who build with substandard materials."

On his part, the Commissioner for Special Duties, Dr. Samuel Anya expressed sadness over the loss of life in the building collapse due to unethical and reckless practices of the property developer.