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ITOGON, Benguet — They did not know it, but last Thursday was the last day of school — and life — for three sixth-grade students of the Pacalso Elementary school in Bua, Itogon, Benguet.

Divina Ponce 13, June Andres 15 and Laconsay Balanang, age unknown, were buried alive in a cave-in where they were reportedly digging for lime stone reportedly at the direction of a school teacher.

The tragedy struck at 11:15 am shortly after students reportedly entered the tunnel to dig lime stone reportedly to be used for a school project. The tunnel, possibly weakened by rainfall, suddenly caved in burying five students.

Schoolmates were able to rescue two other students who were trapped near the mouth of the tunnel, using only their hands. The names of the save students were unknown as of press time.

The three other students who were dug out later were rush to the Montemayor Medical Center but were pronounced dead on arrival.