

# Rape: Ondo motorcyclist sentenced to death for minor's death

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Court gavel

By Peter Dada

An Ondo State High Court sitting in Akure, the state capital, on Thursday, sentenced a man, Dare Ojo, to death for killing a girl, Zainab Adeyemo, at Irun-Akoko in Akoko North-East Local Government Area of the state.

The convict was arrested by the men of the state police command in July 2020 for raping the 11-year-old girl to death and was thereafter charged in court for raping and killing the deceased.

Earlier during the proceedings, it was reported that the mother of the deceased had called Ojo, who was a commercial motorcyclist, to take the late Zainab from Ese-Akoko to the market at Irun-Akoko. But when the parents of the deceased didn't see her, they contacted her mother's friend at the market, only to be told that they didn't see her in the market.

They later contacted Ojo, who took her away on his motorcycle, but he told them that he dropped her off at the market. A search party was set up in the community and eventually found the dead body of Zainab naked in the bush.



After the arrest, the convict was said to have confessed to the commission of the crime and also led the police to the scene of the crime and confessed to the crime.

Speaking during the proceedings, the defence counsel, Kolawole Oluiwa, appealed to the court to be lenient with his client, and when given the opportunity to talk to the court, Ojo pleaded for mercy.

Delivering the judgement, Justice Yemi Fasanmi said that Ojo was guilty of the charges based on findings of the pathologist from the Federal Medical Centre, Owo, who carried out tests on the remains of the deceased.

The court also established that there was a struggle and the vaginal of the deceased was forcefully penetrated.

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The judge said though there was no eyewitness account, he invoked the Doctrine of Last Seen as Ojo was the last person who saw Zainab, and there was no other person who saw her after the convict took her away.

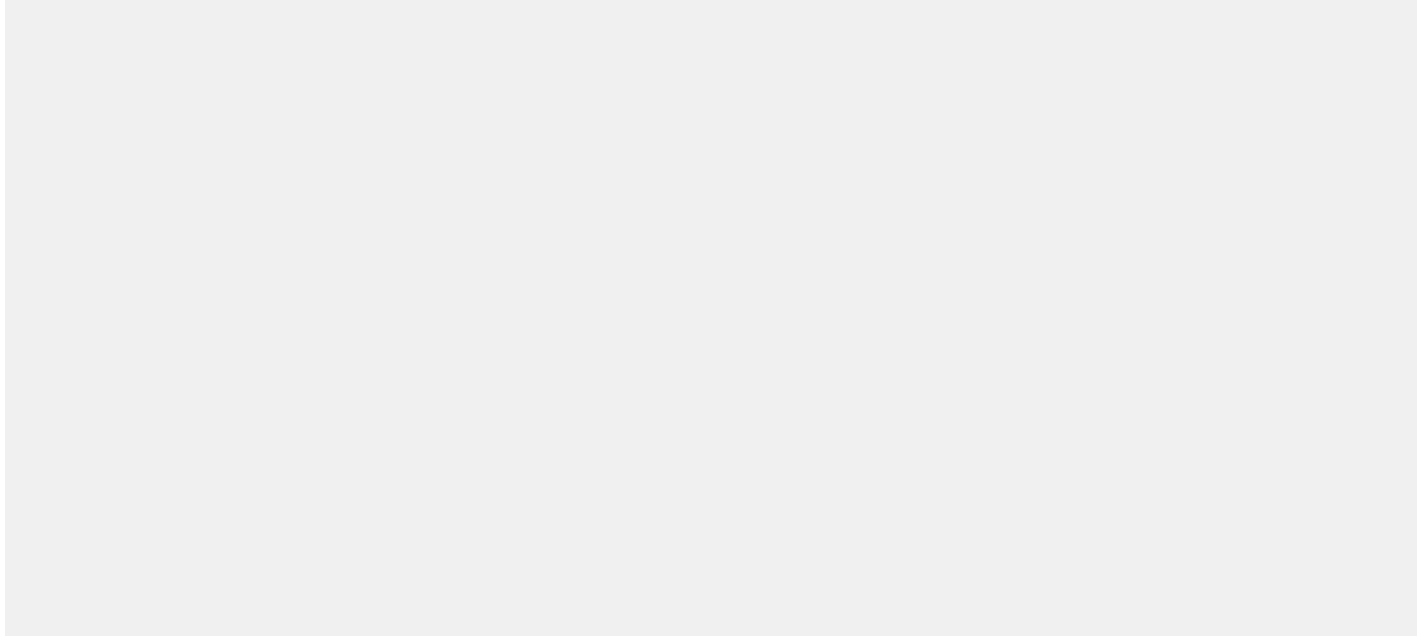
Justice Fasammi sentenced Ojo to life imprisonment, having found him guilty of the first charge, rape, punishable under Section 31(1), (2), and (3) of the Ondo State Child's Right Law, 2007.

The court also condemned him to death by hanging, having been found guilty of the murder punishable under Section 319(1) of the Criminal Code Cap 37, vol. 1, Laws of Ondo, 2006.

In a reaction, the prosecution counsel, Mrs Bolanle, who is a Director in the state Ministry of Justice and Administrative Secretary, Ondo State Agency Against Gender Based Violence, said all parties to the matter got justice.

“This is a case of murder and rape. The accused was charged for a case of having sexual intercourse with a child, which is contrary to Section 31, 1, subsection 1, subsection 2, and 3 of the Child's Right Law, 2007, as well as a murder, contrary to Section 316, and punishable under Section 319 of the Criminal Code, Chapter 27 of the State Law, 2006. The case was initially filed in 2020.

“Then, there was also an amendment later to the charges, and further amendments. So, the case was eventually opened in 2023 and continued until today, when the judgment was given by the court. The prosecution called six witnesses, while the defendants gave evidence without calling any witnesses.



“So, at the end of the day, he was found guilty of counts one and two. Count one is rape, and count two is murder. And the court sentenced him to life imprisonment for rape and to death for count two, which is murder. So, we thank God. It’s a great relief. We have seen the end of the case today,” Afolabi stated.

**| Peter Dada**