

Three sentenced to death for murder of Rivers pharmacist, one gets life for cultism



By Davies Iheamnachor

PORT HARCOURT — A Rivers State High Court sitting in Port Harcourt has sentenced three men to death by hanging over the murder of a pharmacist in Khana Local Government Area of the state.

The convicts — Confidence Kirinee, popularly known as General Illa, Precious Monia and Soniabari Sagha — were sentenced to death, while another defendant, Loveday Legah, was sentenced to life imprisonment for cultism.

The four were prosecuted for their roles in the killing of a pharmacist, Muenalo Sunday, in Zaakpo community, Khana Local Government Area, on March 5, 2019.

Delivering judgment on Friday, the trial judge, Justice Augusta Chukwu, found the defendants guilty of cult-related offences. She convicted Kirinee, Monia and Sagha on charges of conspiracy, cultism, kidnapping and murder, sentencing them to death by hanging.

Legah was convicted solely for cultism and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Justice Chukwu held that the prosecution had successfully proved the charges against the three principal convicts and established Legah's involvement in cult activities.

According to the court, confessional statements and other evidence presented showed that the convicts, who were members of the Iceland secret cult, conspired to kidnap and murder the victim.

The court heard that after killing the pharmacist, the assailants severed his head and other body parts, dumped the remains in a pit and reportedly took the head to a shrine located in a bush in a neighbouring community.

The judge ruled that Legah should spend the rest of his life in prison, while Kirinee, Monia and Sagha are to be hanged until they are confirmed dead.

Counsel to the convicts declined to comment on the judgment. However, the prosecution counsel, Precious Ordu, Chief State Counsel from the Rivers State Ministry of Justice, commended the court for what he described as a thorough job, adding that the judgment served justice to both the deceased and the society.