

In another development, a 24-year-old man, Sodiq Salaudeen, was yesterday sentenced to eight years imprisonment for killing his friend during a fight over a girlfriend at Ijanikin area of Lagos State.

The convict was sentenced by Justice Sedotan Ogunsanya of an Ikeja High Court, Lagos, after changing the initial charge of murder to manslaughter.

The judge observed that the three witnesses who testified before the court were not at the scene when the crime occurred. He said: "The court will be relying on the statement of the defendant, which showed that he had no intention to kill the deceased.

"The statement read and I quote, 'I used the iron from the Hausa man's shop to stab him on the left side of his chest. I only wanted to scare him because I was being overpowered by him and his friends; I did not intend to kill him.'"

Pronouncing the sentence, the judge, however, said that Salaudeen's eight-year sentence would start from the day he was first detained for the crime. "The defendant is hereby sentenced to eight years in prison with effect from April 19, 2012."

Salaudeen, who was dressed in a white attire, had an expression of relief on his face after the sentence was pronounced.

Prior to the sentence, counsel to the convict, Mr. K.O. Adebayo, had in his plea for leniency, told the court that the convict committed the offence out of youthful exuberance.

"Since the objective of punishment is to reform and not for retribution, I plea for a lighter sentence for the convict so that he can still be useful to the society."