



## News

## Woman sentenced to death for killing neighbour during fight

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*Gilbert Stella being taken away after her conviction for murder*



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For being guilty of stabbing her neighbour, namesake and fellow housewife, Mrs. Stella Godwin, to death during an argument, Justice Raliat Adebisi of a Lagos High Court sitting in Ikeja, yesterday sentenced Stella Gilbert, a 36-year-old housewife, to death.

The judge found her guilty of a one count charge of murder brought against her by the Lagos State government. Stella had stabbed Stella to death during an argument on June 22, 2013 at No. 59, Ojora Street, Ajegunle, Lagos. The offence contravened Section 221 of the Criminal Law of Lagos 2011.

While delivering the judgment yesterday, the judge held that the prosecution proved the murder case against the defendant with overwhelming evidence that during a fight with her neighbour, the defendant stabbed the deceased to death in the chest with a knife, adding that the defendant herself confessed that she only stabbed the deceased once. The knife was also tendered as exhibit.

Justice Adebisi further held that the defendant's testimony contradicted her confessional statement. "The defendant testimony was that she was attacked by the deceased, and it amounted to self-defence. She did not prove that she was in a free-for-


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“As an aside, it is worrying that the level of violence, unnecessary animosity and death which occurs among our citizens as a result of living together in close proximity without sufficient personal space and boundaries remain unabated. There is clearly a need to improve social housing and living conditions. The court hopes that this message will be conveyed to the necessary authorities through the prosecutors who have the responsibility to prosecute these cases.”

In his allocutus, the convict’s counsel pleaded that the court should temper justice with mercy and be given an opportunity of a second chance, since she has lost both parents and has gone through a lot in prison. But the prosecution counsel, Mrs. Opeyemi Olugasa, said the law gives mandatory sentence and punishment to offenders, urging the court to sentence her accordingly.

The judge therefore sentenced her to death. “The defendant must suffer the consequence of her action. Stella Gibert is found guilty of the one count charge of murder. You are hereby sentenced to death. May the giver of soul forgives you,” she proclaimed.

Meanwhile, a 49-year-old driver, Adenowo Adeyiga, yesterday appeared before an Ikeja Magistrates’ Court, and was charged with knocking down a four-year-old boy fatally while reversing his car. The defendant is facing a three-count charge of reckless driving, manslaughter and driving without license to which he pleaded not guilty.

The prosecutor, ASP Benson Emuerhi, told the court that the defendant committed the offences on May 4, at 12noon along Adura Gbemi Street, Casso Alagbado, Lagos. “Adeyiga drove a Toyota Camry car with registration number KTU 242 FC recklessly, causing the death of the boy,” he said.

According to the prosecutor, the defendant was reversing the vehicle and in the process, the deceased was hit. The victim died on the spot. The offences contravened Sections 7 (1), 20 (1), and 28 (1) of the Road Traffic Law of Lagos State, 2015.

Chief Magistrate Olufunke Sule-Amzat granted the defendant N500,000 bail with two sureties in like sum, one of whom must be gainfully employed with an evidence of tax payment to the Lagos State government. She adjourned the case until June 20 for mention.



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