

LASTMA official discharged over murder of motorcyclist

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A LAGOS State High Court sitting in Ikeja, presided over by Justice Lateef Lawal Akapo on Monday discharged and acquitted Ganiyu Raimi, an official of Lagos State Transport Management authority (LASTMA), who was accused of the murder of an Okada man.

Raimi who has been in prison custody since 2010, was standing trial on a one count murder charge, he was accused of killing an Okada rider, Clement Okoro at Oke Afa, Isolo.

According to the charge sheet, the late Okoro encountered Raimi who was a LASTMA official at the time of the incident which occurred on February 26,

2010.

Raimi was controlling traffic congestion at Lateef Jakande gate junction when the deceased who carried a passenger on his motorcycle tried to beat the traffic by meandering his way through stocked vehicles.

He was subsequently intercepted by Raimi who prevented him from going any further.

An argument reportedly ensued between Raimi and the deceased which led to an exchange of words after which Okoro sped off.

It was reported that after riding few kilometres from the scene of the incident the deceased started to feel sick and was rushed to the hospital where he reportedly died on the

same day.

During the course of the trial, the prosecution counsel called on four witnesses, two of which were Raimi's colleagues who testified that throughout the time which the argument lasted, the deceased never alighted from his bike and Raimi never touched him at any point.

The third witness Humphrey Odem, who was Okoro's passenger, however testified that the accused physically assaulted the deceased by hitting him with his hands and belt.

During the trial, the counsel to the accused, Mrs Oyefeso had earlier argued that no evidence implicated the accused, and that according to the medical report, there was no evidence linking her

client with the death of the late Okoro.

Delivering his judgement, Justice Akapo pointed out that the evidence of the third witness did not link the accused to the deceased.

He said, "The case as put by the prosecution is such that it does not require any iota of explanation from the accused.

"No essential ingredient on the offence of murder was established, the accused was not in any way linked with the deceased. I hereby hold that the case put together by the prosecution has failed to achieve its purpose.

"The case has been a total waste of judicial time and the accused is hereby discharged and acquitted".

unregistered products as alleged.

He asked for an order of the court to grant the accused lenient and favourable bail as he has submitted an 11-page affidavit.

In his ruling, Justice Bature, granted the accused bail on three conditions, namely, that the accused must produce two sureties, who must be civil servants, serving and working in Anambra State either with the Federal Government or Anambra State; and secondly, that the court would have to verify the residence of the accused in Onitsha and thirdly that the accused shall deposit his international passport and other travel documents with the court.

Further hearing of the case was adjourned to May 6, 2015.