

Soldier Gets Death By Firing Squad

The 7 Division General Court Martial sitting in Maiduguri has sentenced a trooper, Pte. Azunna Mmaduabuchi to death by firing squad for killing an officer, Lt. Babaka Ngorgi.

Delivering judgment on Tuesday, the President of the Court, Brig.-Gen. Arikpo Ekubi, said the prosecutor has proved his case beyond reasonable doubt that the accused intentionally shot and killed Ngorgi, who was the Adjutant of 212 Battalion, Bama.

"You intentionally opened fire and emptied your magazine of nine rounds of ammunition on the deceased officer, Lt. B.S Ngorgi, who was the Adjutant of 212 Battalion, Bama, which led to his instant death.

"You betrayed the trust and confidence reposed on you by the Nigerian army to ensure dignity and respect for human life.

"Your action is therefore viewed with displeasure and as affront to efforts of the

present leadership of Nigerian army which emphasised the protection of human rights and professionalism in the discharge of its constitutional roles.

"While condemning your action of unlawfully killing the deceased officer in a gruesome manner, this court considers the plea in mitigation punishment by your counsel. The General Court Martial takes cognisance of all your counsel has said and the fact that you are involved in the Theatre of Operation.

"However, the gravity of the crime that you have committed against the innocent officer which by application is a crime against humanity and an attempt to drag the good name of Nigerian army into mud must be sanctioned appropriately.

"The General Court Martial for the offence of murder as provided by section 106 of the Armed Forces Act is death. This sentence is to be carried out by firing squad," he said.

Ekubi also convicted four

soldiers for manslaughter for their involvement in torturing a civilian, one Peter Apogu, to death over a missing car battery.

Based on their nature of involvement in the act, Sgt. Sani Ishaya, who is the leader of the team was sentenced to four years in prison; Lance Cpl. Fabiyi Bidemi is to serve two years, while Pte. Adamu Abdulrashid and Pte. Musa Bala are to serve one year each.

The court also sentenced one Pte Mohammed Kuru to three years in prison for accidental discharge at a civilian wedding ceremony that killed a 12-year-old boy.

One Lance Cpl. Aja Emmanuel was demoted to Private for assaulting a civilian causing him "grievous bodily harm".

The court president, however, said that all the sentences are subjected to confirmation by the appropriate superior authority as provided under Section 151 sub-section 1b and section 152 sub-section 1b of the Armed Forces Act.