

Court sentences four persons to death for murder in Ebonyi



Four persons have been sentenced to death by hanging by the **Ebonyi State** High Court, Ohaukwu Judicial Division, after they were found guilty of conspiracy and murder of a 26-year-old man, Mr. Chinonso Elom.

The murder of Elom popularly known as Oscar by the convicted persons occurred on February 5, 2023 in Ngbo community in the local government.

It was gathered that both the deceased and the four convicts all hail from Ohaukwu Local Government Area.

The convicted persons who the Judge said should die by hanging were Anthony Elom a.k.a Tidy, Chibueze Onwe a.k.a Chief oo, Chukwuemeka Ugah a.k.a Parity and Uchenna Odonu, a relative of a top official in the council.

It was gathered that on the faithful day, the four convicted persons, in company with one ThankGod Onwe, who is now at large, drove a branded Sienna bus belonging to a known political party to Ndulo Umuogudu Akpu Road.

They were said to have stopped in front of the late Chinonso's business area, near Okwo Ngbo Main Market.

According to eyewitnesses, the five men, who were believed to be members of a secret cult, demanded that their victim, Chinonso Elom, also known as Oscar, must provide information on the whereabouts of his younger brother whom they reportedly had misunderstanding with.

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As Chinonso's could not provide such information, they attempted to drag him into the Sienna bus.

Upon his refusal to enter the bus, one of the hoodlums, Anthony Elom, also known as Tidy, shot him in the head with a shot gun and he died instantly.

The gruesome murder of the 26-year-old Elom caused a pandemonium, leading to a wild protest by Ngbo youths who demanded that the killers be arrested and justice served.

Four of the killers who could be recognised by some eyewitnesses were subsequently arrested by the police while the fifth suspect, ThankGod Onwe, remained at large.

They were later charged to court for the murder case preferred against them by the state.

Delivering judgment, Justice Esther Otah said that the evidence provided by the prosecuting counsel, including the eyewitness accounts, proved beyond reasonable doubts that the accused persons were responsible for the killing of the late Chinonso Elom.

She stressed that the defence of the defendants were not enough to exonerate them from the crime.

She added that a forensic check on the gun later recovered from the killers also indicated that it matched the bullet that killed Elom.

On why they were all served the death penalty instead of singling out Anthony Elom who shot the victim, Justice Otah said that the killers formed a common intention to prosecute the unlawful purpose.

The Judge noted that they were liable for the eventful outcome of the unlawful purpose they pursued and the fact that only one of them shot the victim was immaterial.

“Anthony Elom a.k.a Tidy, you will be hanged with rope until you die. May God save your soul.

“Chibueze Onwe a.k.a Chief oo, you will be hanged with rope until you die. May God save your soul.

“Chukwuemeka Ugah a.k.a Parity, you will be hanged with rope until you die. May God save your soul.

“Uchenna Odonu, you will be hanged with rope until you die. May God save your soul,” the Judge declared.

Reacting to the judgment, counsel to the defendants, Barrister Chinedu Uwa, said he was not satisfied with the judgment adding that he would appeal it.

The prosecuting counsel, Barrister Oluchi Ibiam of the Ebonyi State Ministry of Justice, and some lawyers from Ohaukwu Local Government Area who were in the Court, Barrister Chinedu Ugadu and Barrister Chinedu Ituma, expressed satisfaction with the judgment, noting that the verdict by the Judge was a true reflection of justice.

President of the Amalgamated Ngbojeogu Youth, Barrister Michael Odo, expressed mixed feelings at the judgment.

He insisted that whereas the gruesome murder of the late Chinonso Elom was an evidence of the level of decay in the society, the judgment should serve as a deterrent to youths who still indulge in cultism and other vices.

“Fellow Ngbojeogu youths, it is with mixed feelings of sadness but fulfillment of heart that I wish to address you this evening on the judgment of the High Court of Ebonyi State, Ohaukwu Judicial Division, delivered today 14/05/2025, in the case of State vs. Elom Anthony & 3 Others where the four defendants charged with the murder of Elom Chinonso a.k.a. Oscar were convicted and sentenced to death.”

“This judgment does not call for celebration. It is a sad reminder of a terrible decay in our society.

“Those who were sentenced to death today are made up of two persons from Ngbo and two persons from Ezzangbo who could have added value to the society but chose the wrong path of criminality and ended up as a reference point in infamy.

“On February 6, 2023, youths of Ngbojeogu staged a peaceful protest against the gruesome murder of our brother Mr. Elom Chinonso (aka Oscar) by well known individuals.

“The protest was brought to me as the President of Amalgamated Ngbojeogu Youth and I promised the youths of Ngbojeogu that we would follow up the matter and ensure that justice was done. Today, that promise was fulfilled through the judgment of the High Court in the matter.

“There is no need recounting the journey. However, I must thank in a special way the youths of Umuogudu Akpu community, Umuzeaka community, Umuogudu Oshia community, etc who rallied round to draw the attention of the entire Ngbo people to this dastardly murder.

“I thank the Ngbo leaders’ council for calling the solemn assembly at Obodo Akpu, Umuogudu Akpu Ngbo where decisions were taken to ensure that the suspects were produced and handed over to the police for investigation.

“Time is changing fast in Ngbo and cultism is becoming outdated and a nuisance. We call on all political leaders and youths in Ngbo to rise up and condemn cultism in all its ramifications and in the strongest terms.

“We pray that today’s judgment will teach the hard lesson it was intended to teach the youths of Ohaukwu Local Government Area.”