

Ebonyi Court sentences four to death by hanging for murder

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Ebonyi State High Court, Ohaukwu Judicial Division have sentenced Ohaukwu council boss's cousin, four others to death by hanging for the murder of a 26-year-old Chinonso Elom at his shop.

The convicted men, Anthony Elom a.k.a Tidy, Chibueze Onwe a.k.a Chief oo, Chukwuemeka Ugah a.k.a Parity and Uchenna Odonon, cousin to Ikechukwu Odonon and one at large, hail from Ohaukwu Local Government Area of the State.

Delivering the judgement, Justice Esther Otah of the Abakaliki High Court, Ohaukwu Division said that the evidence provided by the Prosecuting Counsel including the eye witnesses accounts proved beyond reasonable doubts that the accused were responsible for the killing of the said Chinonso Elom, stressing that the defense 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 was used last on the 5th of February, 2023.

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 and they are liable for the eventful outcome of the unlawful purpose they pursued and that one of them was first to shoot 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 Odonon, 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, Barr Chinedu Uwa said he was not satisfied with the Judgement and that he will appeal the judgment.

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

Responding to the judgment, the President of the Amalgamated Ngbojeogu Youth, Barr. Michael Odo applauded the judgment with mixed feelings, insisting that whereas the gruesome murder of the late Chinonso Elom was an evidence of the level of decay in our system, 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 fulfilment 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 (aka 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 society but chose the wrong path of criminality and ended up as a reference point in infamy."

Recall that Trouble started when in the evening hours of 5th February, 2023, the four convicted persons, including one ThankGod Onwe who is now at large drove a branded Sienna bus belonging to a known political party to Ndulo Umuogudu Akpu road, stopped at the front of the late Chinonso's business area, near Okwo Ngbo Main Market. According to eyewitnesses, the five killers 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 a misunderstanding with. Chinonso's inability to provide such information about his brother as demanded made them begin to drag him into the Sienna bus. Upon his refusal to enter the Sienna, one of the hoodlums, Anthony Elom also known as Tidy shot him on the head with a shotgun gun and he died instantly.

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

Four of the killers who could be recognised by some eyewitnesses were subsequently arrested by the Police while the fifth person, ThankGod Onwe remained at large. They were later charged to court for the case of murder case preferred on them by the State.

On 6/2/2023, youths of Ngboejeogu 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 Ngboejeogu Youth, and I promised the youths of Ngboejeogu that we would follow up on the matter and ensure that justice is done. Today, that promise was fulfilled through the judgment of the High Court in the matter."