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Security men mistakenly shoot employer to death

APRIL 10, 2014 BY SAMSON FOLARIN 1 COMMENT

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Ebute Meta Court | credits: File copy

Two security men- Omokunmi Adeniran (36), and Femi Israel (41), who were guarding Igando New Town, Lagos State, have been accused of killing one of the landlords who employed

The police said the men had caught a suspected robber around midnight and were dragging him along the street when some of the landlords came out to intervene.

The deceased, 37-year-old Jelili Olawoyin, was said to have appealed to Adeniran and Israel to release the suspect while the duo was hitting him with a cutlass.

In the heat of the moment, Adeniran was said to have

mistakenly pulled the trigger of his locally-made pistol, which hit Olawoyin.

He died on the spot.

The police arraigned the two men on Wednesday before an Ebute Meta Magistrate's court on two counts of

The police prosecutor, Inspector George Nwosu said the offence was punishable under sections 231 and 221 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, Nigeria, 2011.

Nwosu applied for the remand of the defendants in prison custody pending legal advice from the Directorate of Public Prosecution.

However, the defence counsel, Spurgeon Ataene, in his application against the remand, argued that the court had the power to conduct a preliminary enquiry into the incident.

"The court is empowered under Section 264(9) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Lagos State, 2011, to find out if the grounds of remand brought by the police are genuine and if there is a prima facie link connecting the death with the defendants," he said.

The magistrate, Tunbosun Abolarinwa, called the Investigating Police Officer, Sergeant Moses Godgift, to give the facts of the case to enable the court decide whether or not to remand the accused.

Godgift, who is attached to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Yaba, said, "This case was initially reported at the Igando Police station, before it was transferred to the Homicide Department of the SCID.

"Investigations revealed that the two defendants are security men within the Igando New Town area. On March 3, 2014, at about 4.30am, they arrested a suspect called Baba Akodo. They accosted him and in the process of interrogating him, the first defendant (Adeniran), who was holding a locally-made gun with his left hand, used his right hand to drag him.

"While the said Baba refused to follow them, the second defendant used a cutlass to beat him up. This created a noise and neighbours and landlords came out.



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"The landlords who employed them said they should stop beating the man, but they refused. The first defendant's locally-made gun exploded and the bullet hit the deceased."

However, a police prosecutor, DSP Etim Nkankuk, said the security men wanted to gun down the suspected robber, but mistakenly shot the late Olawoyin, who was holding him.

The magistrate, however, faulted Nkankuk's submission since he was not the one that investigated the case.

Abolarinwa said the case did not qualify for murder, but manslaughter, as the men couldn't have wanted to kill one of their employers.

In his ruling, he said, "Having heard from the IPO, it is difficult for this honourable court to believe that this case qualifies for murder. It is well put by the IPO that the gun exploded, meaning it was not their intention to kill anybody. It will therefore be wrong and not according to the law to charge them for murder. The facts that the court extracted from the statements of the police are not enough to sustain a murder charge. Rather, it can be seen as one of those incidents of accidental discharges which fall under Section 264(4) of the ACJL, 2011."

The magistrate admitted the defendants to bail in the sum of N500, 000 with two sureties in like sum.

The matter was adjourned till April 29, 2014 for the DPP's advice.

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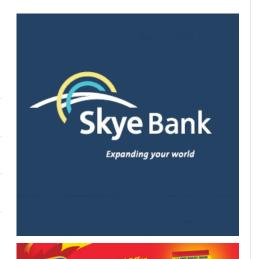






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