

Ex-Ebonyi SSG's wife arraigned over hubby's death, slumps

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Mrs Joy Mbam, the wife of a former secretary to the Ebonyi State Government, Chief Fidelis Mbam, on Friday slumped inside a Magistrate's court sitting in Abakaliki, the state capital.

The suspect, Mrs Joy Mbam, was arraigned by the police on Friday over her husband's death and for allegedly meddling with the deceased's properties.

Chief Fidelis Mbam died on April 23, 2018 and his second wife, Joy, was accused by children of her co-wife of being responsible for his death, aside forging documents to

claim the properties of the deceased.

It was gathered that the first wife of the late SSG was equally late.

Joy Mbam, on arraignment on Friday, fell and hit her head on the ground while trying to enter the dock, having stepped on a dilapidated section of the dock made of plywood.

The Chief Magistrate, Chinedu Agama, rose from his seat and ended the court proceedings abruptly while lawyers, policemen, community women and some other affected persons in court, carried the woman up.

Continuing the arraignment, the police prosecutor, Innocent Agoye, told the court that the suspect was arraigned on two counts of murder and forgery.

The offence, according to Agoye, was punishable under Section 316 of the Criminal Code Cap. 33, Vol. 1, Laws of Ebonyi State of Nigeria, 2009.

The defence counsel, Nwakpu Nwode, however, raised an objection on count one which bordered on murder.

According to him, Section 316, which she was charged with, provides for the definition of murder and did not proffer punishment.

“We are opposed to the strength of Section 316 to infer murder generally. The same Section 316 has no punishment section. We pray your Lordship to discountenance Section 316 and strike the charge out,” he said.

But the prosecution counsel disagreed, stressing that the section equally provided for punishment for the crime.

In his ruling, the Chief Magistrate, Chinedu Agama, aligned with the defence and accordingly struck out the first count.

Thereafter, the second count was read to the defendant after which she pleaded not guilty.

On the strength of this, the defence counsel applied to the court that his client be admitted to bail on lenient terms, which the prosecuting counsel did not oppose.

Agama granted the accused bail in the sum of N100,000.00, with one surety in like sum, who must be resident within the jurisdiction of the court and be a senior civil servant of Ebonyi State origin.

He adjourned the matter until February 18 for hearing.

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