

Kogi court sentences man to death for stabbing colleague

Gbenga Odogun, Lokoja

A division of the High Court of Justice of Kogi State sitting in Lokoja, has sentenced a man, Muritala Dare, to death by hanging for stabbing his colleague to death with a broken bottle.

Justice Josiah Majebi found the defendant guilty after considering his involvement in the incident, which occurred on August 16, 2021, around the NUJ area of the Lokoja metropolis.

The convict was charged with culpable homicide punishable with death under Section 221 (a) and (b) of the Kogi State Penal Code.

The charge stated that he "caused the death of one Lukman Karim by doing an act to wit, stabbing him in the neck and hand with a broken bottle with the intention of causing his death, thereby committing an offence."

The prosecutor called three witnesses and tendered seven exhibits, which included the defendant's confessional statement, a coroner's ordinance report and an autopsy report.

The principal witness, who is attached to the Quick Response Unit of the Kogi State Police Command, said the convict was apprehended from his hideout after committing the crime.

Upon examination of the evidence presented before the court and particularly relying on the confessional statement by the

defendant, Justice Majebi averred that "a confession is an admission at any time by a person charged with a crime stating or suggesting that he committed the crime."

"It is well settled that in a criminal trial (that) an issue may be proved by direct evidence (evidence of an eyewitness), confession or admission voluntarily made by the defendant and circumstantial evidence," he added.

While concluding that the entire case of the prosecution was built on the confessional statement of the defendant which he tried to deny during the trial, the judge noted that the statements he made during the investigation were adequate to rely upon in passing the judgment.

Justice Majebi found the defendant guilty of the charge of culpable homicide and convicted him accordingly.

"Premised on the above findings, I hold that the prosecution has proved all the ingredients of the charge against the defendant and thereby raising the presumption of guilt against him in respect of the charge.

"That, you, Dare Murtala, is hereby sentenced to death for the offence of culpable homicide for which you are convicted. The sentence of this court upon you is that you will be hanged by the neck until you be dead and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul," he added.