

How bizman was killed, set ablaze by associate who collected N42m from him

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•Court sentences culprit to death by hanging

By Godwin Tsa, Abuja

Nwaimo Ifeanyi received the sum of N42 million from his business associate to supply some roof tiles to him but he failed to deliver the materials. Rather, he lured the buyer to his house, killed him with a hammer and set his body ablaze in an attempt to conceal the crime.

That was how an Abuja-based businessman, Chief Remigins Nzekwe, was gruesomely murdered in his own house at No. 396, Close 36 Road, Gwarimpa Estate, Abuja, by his business associate, Nwaimo, the marketing manager of a roofing tiles company.

According to the findings of Justice Sunday Aladetoyinbo of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nwaimo collected the money from the deceased with the intention of not supplying the goods but to kill the deceased so as to have free money, that was the motive behind the murder.

In the case between Commissioner of Police Vs Nwaimo Ifeanyi and Ogbonna Ejike Godwill, the suspects were arraigned before the court on December 10, 2014, on six-counts.

Although they were charged on six counts, the court in its wisdom concerned itself with two counts of culpable homicide, punishable with death, and conspiracy to commit culpable homicide, punishable with death.

The charges read: "That you Nwaimo Ifeanyi (28 years) of Sunshine Estate, Gwarimpa, Abuja, and Ogbonna Ejike Godwill (35 years) of off Ademola Adetokunbo Wuse 2, Abuja, on or about June 22, 2014, at about 1040hrs at No. 396, Close 36 Road, Gwarimpa Estate, Abuja, within the Abuja judicial division, conspired together to commit felony to wit, culpable homicide, punishable with death; you thereby committed an offence contrary to section 97 of the Penal Code.

"That you Nwaimo Ifeanyi (28 years) of Sunshine Estate Gwarimpa, Abuja, and Ogbonna Ejike Godwill (35 years) of off Ademola Adetokunbo Wuse 2, Abuja, on or about June 22, 2014, at about 1040hrs at No. 396, Close 36 Road, Gwarimpa Estate, Abuja, within the Abuja judicial division, while acting in concert, caused the death of Remigins Nzekwe 'M' by hitting him on the head with a big hammer, which resulted in his death with knowledge that death would be the probable consequences of your act, you thereby committed an offence contrary to section 220 and punishable under section 221 of the Penal Code.

Prosecution opens case

Prosecution counsel, Magaji Labaran, opened his case against the accused persons by calling eight witnesses, including the wife of the deceased, Mrs. Tina Nzekwe.

The first witness (PW1), Stephen Margit Malwash, who lived at 396B Close, 36 Road, 3rd Avenue, Gwarimpa Estate, said he knew the accused persons. Block 396 had two compounds 396A and 396B, both owned by the deceased, and were demarcated by a wall. While the deceased lived in 396A, PW1 live in 396B, along with Nicodimus Ishaya.

He told the court that on June 22, 2014, while he was washing clothes outside the gate of Block 396B, he saw Nwaimo Ifeanyi (1st accused) and Ogbonna Godwill (2nd accused) coming out very fast from the house of the deceased around 11am and entered Block 396B.

The witness said he wanted to stop them but suddenly realised that he normally saw him with the deceased.

Malwash further testified that he was later sent on an errand by a tenant in Block 396B, one Engineer Gabriel, for his female guest. He added that he was given the money for the drinks in the presence of the 1st accused.

He further testified that he bought the drinks close to the house and, upon his return, he did not see anybody outside Block 396B. He went to Gabriel's room and gave him the drinks and returned to where he was washing clothes.

Soon after, he heard people shouting "fire! fire!" in Block 396A, where the deceased lived and the fire engulfed the house even as the door was locked.

The witness added that men of the Fire Service later came and put out the fire and discovered the lifeless body of the deceased inside the house.