



Rivers: 3 to die by hanging for murder

From **Tony John**, Port Harcourt

THREE persons have been sentenced to death by hanging by a High Court in Port Harcourt for kidnapping and killing former director of finance, Rivers State Ministry of Health, Mr. Charles Nwogu.

The convicts are Andy Clement, Godfrey Hanson and Chima Nwokoma. Two others, Obinna Okerefo and Ogechi Innocent were discharged and acquitted after 11 years of litigation.

Daily Sun gathered that the convicts were tried on a nine-count charge of conspiracy and murder.

Justice Adolphus Enebeli, who delivered judgement on the matter, yesterday, held that Clement, Hanson and Nwokoma kidnapped and murdered the victim, Nwogu, at his residence in Rumuokoro, Obio/Akoor Local Government Area of the State in 2012.

Justice Enebeli said the prosecution was able to judiciously prove the case of conspiracy, kidnapping and murder charges brought against the three convicts.

The trial judge, while

sentencing them after they were found guilty in counts one and two of the conspiracy charges and counts three, four, six and seven, said his hands were tight and must do what the law demanded in line with section 401 and 402 of the Rivers State Administration Justice Law.

He said the convicts contravened Section 1 sub (1) of the Rivers Anti-Kidnapping Law as well as 319 of Criminal Code, adding that the various laws stipulated hanging by death upon conviction.

According to the trial judge, the prosecution failed to provide substantial evidences in the information filed against the two defendants on conspiracy and kidnapping charges.

He said the prosecution relied on mere suspicion and not backed up with credible evidence that could prosecute them. He also struck out charges brought against the 4th defendants, late Rowland Azuka who reportedly died at the Correctional Centre during the trial of the matter.

Counsel for Nwokoma, one of the convicts, C.N. Nathaniel, told newsmen that he would appeal the judgment.