

Wife's Death: Court Sentences Man to 12 Years for Manslaughter



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The Lagos State High Court in Ikeja has sentenced Akinwale Akinlabi to 12 years in prison for the manslaughter of his wife, Cecilia Tope Akinlabi.

Justice Oyindamola Ogala delivered the verdict, citing overwhelming evidence that Akinlabi's actions directly caused his wife's death during a domestic altercation in 2020.

The case stemmed from a tragic event on February 2, 2020, at the couple's home on Adeogun Street, Ijaiye Ojokoro, Lagos.

According to the prosecution evidence, it was revealed that Cecilia Akinlabi sustained fatal injuries during a confrontation with her husband.

Witnesses and forensic reports confirmed she had vertical scars on her back, corroborating claims of physical abuse.

The police prosecution, led by Inspector Jumai Adonduwa, revealed that Cecilia had previously reported domestic violence incidents to the police.

Specifically on January 30, 2020, she alleged that Akinlabi beat her with a bunch of brooms after she refused to give him money for a recharge card.

Despite leaving home briefly for her safety, the abuse resumed upon her return.

The fatal altercation occurred when Cecilia attempted to lower the volume of a radio in their room.

Enraged, Akinlabi reportedly struck her, pushing her onto a glass shelf.

The impact caused severe injuries, leading to her collapse. Family accounts revealed that Cecilia was bleeding profusely before being rushed to the hospital, where she later died.

Inspector Adonduwa, in her testimony before Justice Ogala, stated that after Cecilia's death, Akinlabi attempted to conceal the incident by burying her in Ogun State without informing her family.

Even, testimonies from the couple's children supported claims of prolonged abuse, with one child recounting how he intervened during the fatal beating.

However, in defending himself, Akinlabi, who had been married to Cecilia for 21 years, denied prior instances of violence, claiming that his wife had pre-existing health issues, which he alleged contributed to her death.

However, the court dismissed his assertions, citing inconsistencies and the absence of medical evidence to substantiate his claims.

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Justice Ogala concluded that the prosecution had proven beyond a reasonable doubt that Akinlabi's unlawful actions led to his wife's death, meeting the legal threshold for manslaughter under Section 229 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State.

“After carefully reviewing the evidence presented to the court, I find that the prosecution has provided circumstantial evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the unlawful acts of the accused harmed the deceased and caused her death,” Justice Ogala stated.

While acknowledging the defence counsel’s plea for leniency, the judge imposed a 12-year prison sentence, noting the gravity of the crime.