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Murder: Police Constable to Die by Hanging

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Symbol of justice

By Christopher Isiguzo

A police constable, Justin Ezeozor was yesterday sentenced to death by hanging for the murder of a fellow police officer, Inspector Clement Onwuegbuta two years ago.

Justice L. O. Okereke while deciding a case of murder of Onwuegbuta, on Feb 17, 2012, ruled that the accused was guilty as charged.

Justice Okereke in his judgement noted that the plea by Constable Ekeozor that he shot the deceased in self defence was not tenable as he did not receive order from his senior officer on duty with him to shoot before doing so.

The judge further ruled that the accused could not establish the evidence of provocation that prompted the shooting, noting that he shot and killed the deceased in an unlawful presumption that he was an armed robber.

He insisted that the killing of the deceased was an unlawful act against the Criminal Code 231, Law of Enugu State.

Earlier the prosecution counsel, Mrs. Ngozi Avah, an Assistant Chief legal officer for the state, said the deceased was intentionally killed by the accused, arguing that there was no way a police officer would be asked to stop at that time of the hour, 9.45pm, by his colleagues and all he could do was to run away and pull a gun.

She maintained that even after he was shot, the gun he allegedly pulled out was still intact on his waist instead of being tossed on the ground.

She argued that the evidence given by the superior officer who was with the accused at the time of the incident showed he never gave order for the shooting. The prosecuting counsel said that even if the accused wanted to shoot at a criminal, he should have shot his leg instead of twice on the back of his neck.

Meanwhile, the defence counsel Mr. B. C. Nwobodo said the accused made use of his gun on self defence and stated that the judgement would be challenged in the Appeal Court.

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