

Man to die by hanging for shooting father to death over motorcycle

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A Plateau State High Court on Friday sentenced a 20-year-old man, Ponjul Yakubu, to death by hanging, for shooting his father to death.

Justice A.I. Ashoms gave the sentence after he found Yakubu guilty of a one-count charge of culpable homicide, punishable with death under section 221 of the Penal Code.

“Going by the findings of this court, you, Ponjul Yakubu, mercilessly took the life of your father, Mr. Domsing Yakubu, in cold blood.

“You have, however, shown remorse and appeared sober throughout your trial; however, this sentence is mandatory as the law states that any person convicted of murder shall be punished with death by hanging.

“The sentence of this court upon you is that you, Ponjul Yakubu, will be hanged until you are dead. May God have mercy on your soul,” he declared.

Yakubu was arraigned on July 8, 2015, to face a one-count charge of culpable homicide punishable with death, after allegedly committing the crime on May 5, 2015.

Yakubu was specifically accused of using his father's dane gun to kill him (father), while the old man was taking an afternoon nap under a tree in their home at Dorowa, in Vwang Gwong Village, Shendam Local Government, Plateau State.

When Yakubu appeared in court, however, he pleaded not guilty to the allegation of killing his father.

The Prosecution Counsel, Mr. Gideon Azi of the Plateau State Ministry of Justice, who investigated the matter, however, told the court that Yakubu had confessed to killing his father for refusing to buy a motorcycle for him.

"He (Yakubu) confessed that he returned home on the said date and found his father sleeping on a mat under a tree, went into his (father)'s room, took his loaded gun and shot him at close range," Azi told the court.

Azi submitted Yakubu's confessional statement to the court as evidence, and quoted the accused as saying that he committed the crime alone.

Yakubu promptly owned up to the statement that bore his thumb print.

Azi further quoted the accused as saying that his father, after harvesting about a thousand tubers of yam and several bags of maize and millet, promised to buy a motorcycle for him after selling them.

The accused was further quoted as saying that his father sold the farm produce without consulting him, and also refused to buy the motorcycle as promised, an action that provoked him into killing him.

After the judgement, Mr. Singa Zhatau, the Defense Counsel, said the judgement was right in view of the evidence presented in the court.

"Before taking any further step to appeal, I want to state that the reasoning in this judgement is valid.

"Justice is a three-way traffic – justice for the state, the accused and the victim.

"I believe that this judgement would further reassure the society that justice can be obtained in the courts.

“This confidence building will go a long way in addressing the rampant instances of jungle justice that are becoming common in the country,” he said.