



**Republic v Duale & another (Criminal Case E007 of 2022)
[2024] KEHC 14274 (KLR) (14 November 2024) (Ruling)**

Neutral citation: [2024] KEHC 14274 (KLR)

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
IN THE HIGH COURT AT GARISSA
CRIMINAL CASE E007 OF 2022
JN ONYIEGO, J
NOVEMBER 14, 2024**

BETWEEN

REPUBLIC PROSECUTOR

AND

ABDULLAHI HASSAN DUALE 1ST ACCUSED

RASHID IBRAHIM ABDI 2ND ACCUSED

RULING

1. The accused persons herein are charged of murder contrary to section 203 as read with section 204 of the Penal Code. The particulars of the offence are that on 1ST day of February 2022 at Bulla Towfiq area in Garissa Sub-county, within Garissa County with others not before court unlawfully murdered Abdi Yerrow Ibrahim.
2. Having been arraigned before court and upon the charges being read to them, they pleaded not guilty hence a plea of not guilty entered. The matter proceeded to full hearing with the prosecution calling a total of ten (10) witnesses in order to prove its case. At the close of the prosecution case, both counsel opted not to submit and instead urged the court to deliver its ruling based on the evidence tendered by the prosecution.
3. It is trite that in a criminal trial, once the prosecution closes its case, the court is call upon to make a finding whether the evidence tendered meets the threshold of a prima facie case to enable the court put accused on his defence. A prima facie case is established where the evidence tendered by the prosecution is sufficient on its own for a court of law to return a guilty verdict even if the accused opts to remain silent.



4. Section 306 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code does provide as follows:

“When the evidence of the witnesses for the Prosecution has been concluded, the court, if it considers that there is no evidence that the accused or any one of the several accused committed the offence shall, after hearing, if necessary any arguments which the advocate for the prosecution or the defence may desire to submit, record a finding of not guilty.”
5. Having considered the testimonies of the prosecution witnesses, the question that begs an answer is whether the evidence tendered establishes a prima facie case against the accused.
6. In Republic vs Abdi Ibrahim Owi [2013] eKLR, the court defined a prima facie case as follows:

“Prima facie’ is a latin word defined by Black’s Law Dictionary 8th Edition as, “sufficient to establish a fact or raise presumption unless disapproved or rebutted”. ‘Prima facie’ is defined by the same dictionary as “the establishment of a legally required rebuttable presumption.”

[Also see Ramanlal Trambaklal Bhatt vs R [1957] E.A 332].
7. Guided by the above case law, can this court on the basis of the evidence so far tendered by the prosecution properly directing itself to the law and evidence tendered convict, if the accused chooses not to give any evidence?
8. In the case of Ronald Nyaga Kiura vs Republic [2018] eKLR, the court held:

“It is important to note that at the close of the Prosecution, what is required in law at this stage is for the trial court to satisfy itself that a prima facie case has been made out against the accused person sufficient enough to put him on his defence pursuant to the provisions of Section 211 of the Criminal Procedure Code...”
9. The trial court is however cautious that at this stage, it should not make definitive findings should it conclude that the accused has a case to answer.
10. In Festo Wandera Mukando vs Republic [1980] KLR 103, the court held thus:

“...we draw attention to the inadvisability of giving reasons for holding that an accused has a case to answer. It can prove embarrassing to the court and, in an extreme case, may require an appellate court to set aside an otherwise sound judgment. Where a submission of “no case” to answer is rejected, the court should say no more than that it is. It is otherwise where the submission is upheld when reasons should be given; for then that is the end to the case or the count or counts concerned.”
11. Without delving into the depths of the witnesses’ testimonies, I am satisfied that the Prosecution more particularly through the available circumstantial evidence have established a prima facie case against the accused persons to warrant him being placed on his defence. I therefore find that the accused herein have a case to answer and therefore call upon to tender their defence.
12. Accordingly, section 211 of the CPC shall be complied with to the extent that; accused shall be at liberty to give sworn testimony in which case they will be subjected to cross examination by the prosecution; Alternatively, they can opt to give unsworn testimony to which they will not be subjected to cross examination. Third option, they can choose to keep quiet. In either option, they shall be at liberty to call witnesses.



DATED, SIGNED AND DELIVERED IN OPEN COURT THIS 14TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2024

J. N. ONYIEGO

JUDGE

