## Death Penalty Sought For Child Bride In Nigeria

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## By AP

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The father of a 14-year-old child bride accused of murdering her husband said Thursday he was appealing to a Nigerian court to spare his daughter the death sentence.

Wasilat Tasi'u is on trial for the murder of her 35-year-old husband, Umar Sani, who died after eating food that Tasi'u allegedly laced with rat poison.

"We are appealing to the judge to consider Wasilat's plea," her father, Isyaku Tasi'u, told The Associated Press on Thursday.

On Wednesday witnesses told the High Court in Gezawa, a town 60 miles outside Nigeria's second largest city of Kano, that Tasi'u killed her husband two weeks after their wedding in April. Three others allegedly died after eating the poisoned meal.

The prosecution, led by Lamido Soron-Dinki, senior state council from the Kano State Ministry of Justice, is seeking the death penalty.

The case calls into question the legality of trying a 14-year-old for murder under criminal law and the rights of child brides, who are common in the poverty-stricken, predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria region.

"She was married to a man that she didn't love. She protested but her parents forced her to marry him," Zubeida Nagee, a women's rights activist in Kano, told AP. Nagee and other activists have written a letter of protest to the Kano state deputy governor.

Nagee said Tasi'u was a victim of systematic abuse endured by millions of girls in the region. Activists say the blend of traditional customs, Islamic law and Nigeria's constitutional law poses a challenge when advocating for the rights of young girls in Nigeria.

Justice Mohammed Yahaya adjourned the court until December 22. Tasi'u is in state juvenile custody.