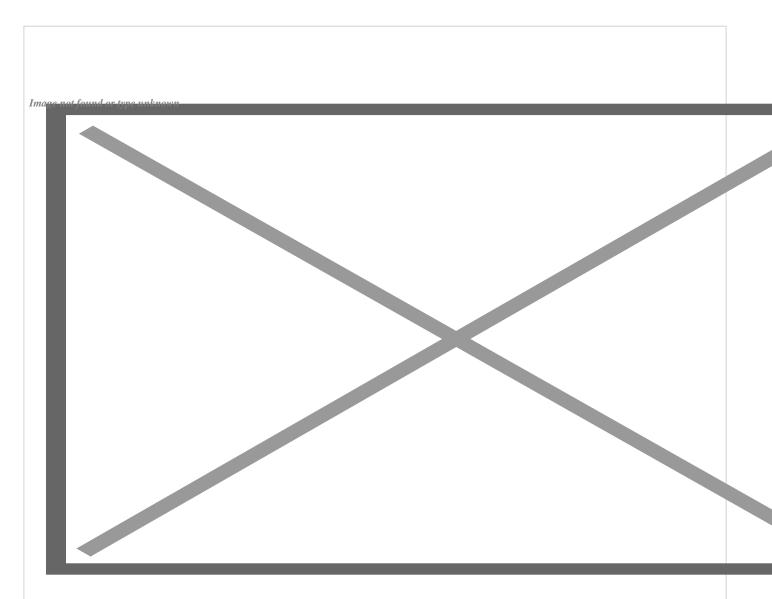
Oklahoma executes John Marion Grant as witnesses describe torturous, drawn-out killing



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Oklahoma City, October 29 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of Oklahoma, prison officials on Thursday strapped condemned 60-year-old prisoner John Marion Grant to a gurney and injected him with a lethal cocktail of three drugs: midazolam, vecuronium bromide and potassium chloride.

Associated Press reporter Sean Murphy witnessed the execution. "As the drugs began to flow, the first drug, midazolam, he exhaled deeply. He began convulsing about two dozen times, full body convulsions, and then began to vomit, which covered his face and began to run down his neck and the side of his face; continued to breathe for several minutes before two members of the medical team, or the execution team, came in and wiped his face. At that point, he was still breathing."

After more involuntary convulsions and more vomiting, Grant was finally pronounced dead at 4:21 p.m. local time.

It was Oklahoma's first execution in six years; a string of botched attempts forced Oklahoma to halt such killings. It came after the Supreme Court ruled 5-3 Thursday to lift a lower court's stay.

Lawyers for Grant and another prisoner, Julius Jones, had argued Oklahoma's three-drug cocktail of lethal injection drugs would subject them to excruciating pain. They also said an Oklahoma law forcing them to choose their method of execution violated their religious rights and amounted to suicide.

Oklahoma plans six more executions in the next several months.

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