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## Judge Finalizes Death Sentence in Slayings

A judge has affirmed the death sentence of the convicted ringleader in a deadly ninja-style attack on a Panhandle couple.

**Reporter:** Associated Press

Pensacola, FL (AP) - A judge has affirmed the death sentence of the convicted ringleader in a deadly ninja-style attack on a Panhandle couple.

In a hearing Thursday afternoon, Judge Nickolas Geeker said he agreed with a jury's October recommendation that Patrick Gonzalez Jr. should be executed for the 2009 slayings of Byrd and Melanie Billings in their west Escambia County home.

Gonzalez was convicted of leading a group of men dressed like ninjas to rob and kill the Florida couple. The couple's nine special-needs children slept or cowered nearby as their parents were killed.

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