

# Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:  
[media@npa.gov.za](mailto:media@npa.gov.za)

Victoria & Griffiths  
Mxenge Building  
123 Westlake Avenue  
Weavind Park  
Silverton  
Pretoria

[www.npa.gov.za](http://www.npa.gov.za)

**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 10 NOVEMBER 2015**

**RE: THEUNISSEN MAN ADMITS MURDERING AN ELDERLY WOMAN**

A 22 year-old man from Masilo Township in Theunissen has admitted in the Free State High Court in Bloemfontein that he robbed and murdered a 68 year-old woman before setting her house alight.

Judge President Mahube Molemela convicted Lekgotla James Matatiele on charges of murder, housebreaking with intent to rob and robbery with aggravating circumstances, arson, possession of firearm and possession of ammunition after Matatiele handed in a plea explanation in which he admitted murdering and robbing Martha Magrieta Bester on 6 January 2015. The judge sentenced Matatiele to life imprisonment for murder, fifteen years for housebreaking with intent to rob and robbery with aggravating circumstances, seven years for arson, six years for possession of a firearm and three years for possession of ammunition. Matatiele will effectively serve life in prison after the judge ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

In his plea explanation, Matatiele stated that on 6 January 2015 he went to the house of the deceased at Erfbloem farm just outside Theunissen with his co-accused, Jacob Mothibedi (22) with intent to rape her. Mothibedi was employed at the farm. The deceased fought back and the accused assaulted her severely and left her dead on the floor. They left with her bakkie, seven firearms and household items valued at R150 000. Bester was staying alone in the house.

Six days later, the accused went back to the house of the deceased and they found her lying dead in the house. They then decided to burn down the house. They were later found in possession of the stolen items.

In passing sentence, Judge Molemela said that Matatiele knew that the deceased was staying alone in the house and he took advantage of her vulnerability and he brutally murdered an elderly who was old enough to be his grandmother.

Matatiele pleaded guilty to all the charges and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

His co-accused Mothibedi was sent for mental evaluation and his case was postponed to March next year.

The NPA welcomes this sentence with the hope that it will serve as a deterrent to would-be murderers who prey on vulnerable people.

Kind Regards,

**Phaladi Shuping**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Free State**

**083 699 5900**