

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 30 OCTOBER 2015

RE: 7 LIFE PLUS 20 YEARS FOR FAMILY MURDERERS

Thulani Donatus Mncwabe (28) and Sibonelo Eric Mncwabe (26) were sentenced in the Pietermaritzburg High Court yesterday after pleading guilty to the murder of their eight family members.

In their plea, the brothers outlined how they committed the murders earlier this month. They said that at their elder brother's funeral in May this year, their uncle (the first victim) told them not to close the grave as there was going to be another death in the family.

When their younger sister died five months later, the accused were convinced that their uncle and his wife practised witchcraft and were responsible for the death of their sibling. They further feared that they would be the next victims and therefore planned to kill their uncle and aunt.

On 20 October, the accused armed themselves with bush knives and went to their uncle's house where everyone was asleep. They set the grass roof on fire and when their uncle opened the door to escape, they went in and struck him with a bush knife. He screams for help woke his granddaughters who saw the accused then ran to another house. The accused followed them and blindly chopped anyone that came in their way. Their uncle and aunt were 72 and 70 years-old respectively while another female relative was 36 years-old. The children that were killed were 15 years, 12 years, 3 years, 2 years and a 1 year-old.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate Mbongeni Mthembu told the court that the accused targeted defenceless and vulnerable people. The murder of the first victim was a planned and premeditated act and they killed the others to prevent them being potential witnesses to the crime. Adv Mthembu described the offences as barbaric

as the accused 'butchered' the victims without even sparing the lives of the young children.

The accused were sentenced to 7 terms of life imprisonment and 20 years imprisonment for the offences.

Speaking to the media outside the court, the Director of Public Prosecutions in KZN, Adv Moipone Noko welcomed the sentence. "We congratulate the prosecution as well as the various stakeholders for the speedy finalisation of this matter. This is a fine example of swift justice."

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

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