

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 24 June 2016

RE: POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Matome Malakalaka, a police officer (53) from Mahwelereng and his neighbours, Solly Sekgobela (39) and Hosia Ledwaba (36) were yesterday sentenced for the kidnapping, assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and murder case.

The deceased Albert Maletle (31) who was collecting cans for recycling purposes was killed on 31 July 2015 on suspicions of having stolen a bag from Malakalaka's motor vehicle which was parked at a local laundry. Nkhobela a 23 year-old male was at work cleaning the laundry on that fateful day when he was seen together with the deceased. Malakalaka noticed that his bag which allegedly had clothes and cash amounting to R15000, 00 was missing. He then returned to the laundry where he handcuffed Nkhobela who was told to take them to the deceased's house where the accused believed his bag was hidden. Both victims were handcuffed and taken to Malakalaka's house where they were beaten from 19h00 until midnight by the accused. Upon hearing the scream and hailing from the victims, accused 2 and 3 went to Malakalaka's house where they joined in to assault the victims.

The victims were assaulted and tortured with a pic handle, a sjambok and a broomstick. They were also covered with plastic on their faces and poured with water in an attempt to force them to produce the bag. The victims were only ordered to leave at midnight after being severely assaulted. Nkhobela managed to leave but unfortunately Maletle could not stand up. Two hours later, the deceased was found by an ambulance lying in the street far away from Malakalaka's house. He was severely injured, unconscious and wet. He later passed on before he could arrive at the hospital.

The state Prosecutor, advocate Tsibane Mabapa argued that this was an act of vigilantism. The state also submitted that the accused being a police officer of 23 years'

experience should have known better that taking the law into his own hands has consequences.

The state submitted that the only appropriate sentence on the murder charge should be life imprisonment. The court also found that the accused did not show remorse and they did not even apologise to the family of the deceased. The court found that accused 1 did not show any substantial and compelling circumstances and was sentenced to life imprisonment on murder and to ten years in respect of the two kidnapping and also ten years for the assault. The two co-accused were sentenced to 22 and 20 years imprisonment each for the count of murder plus ten years of assault and kidnapping.

The DPP, advocate Ivy Thenga congratulates advocate Mabapa for the successful prosecution and welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

Mashudu Malabi-Dzhang

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Limpopo

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