

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: 44 YEARS FOR ROBBERY AND HOUSEBREAKING

The Sterkspruit Regional Court sentenced a Lesotho national, Pule Jankie (35), to an effective 44 years imprisonment.

This is after he was convicted of housebreaking and robbery with aggravating circumstances, for offences he committed around the border town of Sterkspruit.

Jankie was sentenced to eight years imprisonment for each of two counts of housebreaking with intent to rob and 17 years imprisonment for each of two counts of robbery with aggravating circumstances. The court ordered that three years of each of the eight-year sentences run concurrently with each of the 17 year sentences. Jankie, therefore, will serve an effective 44 years in jail.

On the early hours of 8 April 2016, two men concealing their faces with pantyhose, broke and entered the house of a 57 year-old woman at Zwelitsha Location in Sterkspruit. They assaulted the victim with firearms and robbed her of R3600 in cash, as well as other various valuable items after ransacking the house, before fleeing. The police later lifted fingerprints found on a television set that assailants had touched. On 22 April 2016, the two masked men struck again at a home of a 51 year-old woman at Tienbank Top, also in the district of Sterkspruit. Using a hammer, they forced the house door open and assaulted the victim, inflicting visible injuries on her. They demanded money and made off with R2800 cash, bedding items the victim was selling and her cell phone. They tied victim's hands and legs and gagged her mouth using her church uniform ties. Jankie and his unknown accomplice took a tin of baked beans from the fridge and ate before leaving it at the scene. The police lifted fingerprints found on the empty tin of baked beans.

Jankie was only charged in 2017, when he was arrested for another offence and his fingerprints were linked to those lifted from the two robbery scenes.

During trial, Jankie pleaded not guilty, claiming to have been in Lesotho from January 2016 to July 2016. Prosecutor Loyiso Methuso presented evidence of the two victims and two fingerprint experts. During cross-examination, Jankie could not explain how his fingerprints could be found on two crime scenes when he was in Lesotho, as he claimed. The court rejected his alibi and found him guilty as charged on all counts.

The court found no substantial and compelling circumstances to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence of 15 years imprisonment for robbery with aggravating circumstances.

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