

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: BETHULIE KILLERS SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Motsamai Zenzo (23, Sakhile Nqumashe (21) and Tshepo Sebati (40) were today sentenced to life imprisonment for murder, 15 years for robbery with aggravating circumstances and five years for kidnapping by the Free State High Court sitting in Bethulie.

According to evidence presented in court, Sebati, a married man with seven children, was having an affair with Mjiba and he suspected that she was cheating on him. Sebati first approached Thembekani Dywili with a proposition to kill Mjiba for payment. Dywili refused.

Sebati then approached Zenzo and Nqumashe, both from Phase 6 in Bloemfontein, with the same proposition. He promised them R2000 upfront and R3000 after the completion of the mission. On 18 February 2019, Zenzo and Nqumashe drove from Bloemfontein to Bethulie with the intention of killing the deceased. They failed to carry out the mission and went back to Bloemfontein.

On 24 February 2019, Sebati drove from Bethulie to Bloemfontein with the sole purpose of picking up Zenzo and Nqumashe for them to kill Mjiba. Sebati accommodated Zenzo and Nqumashe at his sister's house as the plan was to be executed the following day. In the morning of 25 February 2019, Zenzo and Nqumashe went to the house of the deceased where they found the deceased with her grandmother. They tied both women before straggling and suffocating the deceased in front of her grandmother.

In court, state prosecutor, Advocate Lefalake Dansi Mpemvane, argued for life imprisonment for murder as per the Minimum Prescribed Sentence legislation because they failed to convince the court that substantial and compelling circumstances exist for imposition of a lesser sentence.

“The accused had ample time to reflect on their plan. They wanted to kill the deceased on 18 February, but for some reason they could not. Then Sebati drove from Bethulie to Bloemfontein, a distance of about 200km, to fetch the deceased. They slept over in Bethulie a day before the killing. They had enough time to reconsider their actions but they did not, which is a sign that they wanted the deceased dead”, said Mpemvane.

Judge Mpina Mathebula agreed with the state’s argument and he sentenced the accused to an effective life imprisonment after he ordered the sentences to run concurrently. They were also declared unfit to possess a firearm.

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