

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS SENTENCED FOR MURDER

Two students from Central University of Technology (CUT) in Bloemfontein were sentenced for murder of a student from the same university that took place on 18 July 2015 by the Free State High Court last week.

Judge Johan Daffue sentenced Douglas Okene (23) to 17 years imprisonment for murder of Michael Sejebor (25). Okene's co-accused Tebello Tsubella (24) was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment after he was only convicted of being an accessory to murder after the fact. Okene and Sejebor were friends from Nigeria who came to study in South Africa.

The court heard that on the night of Saturday, 18 July, Okene went to the flat of Sejebor in Parfitt Avenue to borrow a bag. A fight ensued in the flat and Okene assaulted Sejebor with golf sticks before stabbing him to death with a golf stick.

The altercation between the two was apparently because of the outstanding money that was owed to Okene by Sejebor for a billboard project in which they were involved. Okene was assisted by Tsubella to dispose of the body by burning it and later dumping it near the railway line in Uitsig.

The deceased's charred remains were discovered on Monday 20 July, by a passer-by who alerted the police. Sejebor was robbed of an undisclosed amount of cash, a plasma TV set, an iPhone and clothes. On 19 July Sejebor's Mercedes-Benz was seen being driven by Okene with Tsubella on the passenger seat. The vehicle was found abandoned next to the road in Gunn Street in Universitas on Wednesday 22 July.

Okene testified in court that he killed Sejebor in self-defence but the judge rejected this version as false and referred to Okene as a liar who contradicted himself and other witnesses on material aspects. He was convinced that there was evidence linking Okene to murder and convicted him as such. He referred to Tsubella as a manipulative liar who also change his version but could not find any evidence linking him to murder. He however, found that there was evidence that showed Tsubella assisted Okene to clean Sejebor's flat.

Arguing in aggravation of sentence, the State Prosecutor, Advocate Ena Liebenberg requested the court to impose harsh punishment of Okene because the deceased died a horrific death and he lied to the family of the deceased by informing his uncle that the deceased has gone to London to visit his mother whereas he knew that he is lying dead in the veld.

Judge Johan Daffue subsequently convicted Okene of murder and Tsubella of being an accessory to murder after the fact. He sentenced them to 17 years imprisonment and 5 years imprisonment respectively.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in the Free State, Advocate Xolisile Khanyile has welcomed the sentences and commended the good work that was done by the investigating officer and the prosecutor.

Kind Regards,

Phaladi Shuping

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Free State

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