

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 30 AUGUST 2017

RE: EXHUMATION OF TEN MEMBERS OF THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS (PAC)

On Thursday 31 August 2017, the TRC Unit in the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development together with the NPA's Missing Persons Task Team (MPTT) will conduct the exhumation of the remains of ten members of the Pan Africanist Congress's armed wing Poqo who were hanged in the period from 1963 to 1967.

These exhumations form part of the Gallows Exhumation Project launched by Minister Michael Masutha in 2016, aimed at recovering the remains of 130 political prisoners who were hanged on the Gallows prior to the suspension of the death penalty in 1990. The bodies of the hanged political prisoners remained the property of the state and were given pauper burials in municipal cemeteries around Pretoria. Families were denied the opportunity to bury them.

At least sixty PAC members were hanged in the 1960s. The ten PAC members to be exhumed this week arise out of the period of intense political protest in Paarl in 1962 when members of the PAC (Poqo) based in the single men's migrant worker hostels in Mbekweni township undertook a series of campaigns and attacks on suspected informers and white residents. The period of protest culminated in a mass night time march on the white town of Paarl in November 1962 in which two whites were killed. In all, nine persons were killed by the PAC protestors that year and five PAC protestors were shot dead by police. Mass arrests and trials ensued in the years that followed, and twenty PAC members were ultimately hanged for the events in Paarl. Scores of others were sentenced to terms of imprisonment.

The ten PAC members whose remains will be exhumed this week are as follows:

- 1. Vezile Jaxa, aged 26, hanged on 1 November 1963**
- 2. Lennox Mngambi Madikane, aged 25, hanged on 1 November 1963**

3. Mxolisi Damane, aged 26, hanged on 1 November 1963

The above three were the first people to be hanged for the crime of sabotage, for their leadership role in the November 1962 march, rather than any involvement in any deaths.

4. Gadavu Johannes Notyawwe, aged 40, hanged on 14 October 1963

He was hanged for the killing of two suspected informers, Klaas Hoza and George Tshisa

5. Gqibile Nicholas Hans, aged 26, hanged on 30 May 1967

6. Baden Koboka, aged 32, hanged on 30 May 1967

7. Jabavu Jonas Mzondi, aged 34, hanged on 30 May 1967

8. Livingstone Fatyela, aged 30, hanged on 30 May 1967

9. Bongezile Edward Sikundla, aged 32, hanged on 30 May 1967

10. Msimasi Wellington Tyobeka, aged 29, hanged on 30 May 1967

These six were among nine persons hanged for the killing of a shopkeeper Maurice Berger

The remains will be exhumed from Mamelodi West cemetery where they were buried in pauper graves on the same day that they were hanged. The exhumations will commence at 10h00 to 15h00. The other ten PAC members hanged for the events in Paarl will be exhumed in the coming months.

The TRC Unit in DoJ&CD will first take the families of the deceased to visit the Gallows at Kgosi Mampuru prison. They will then proceed to the Mamelodi West cemetery to witness the exhumations.

Kind Regards,

Luvuyo Mfaku

NPA Spokesperson

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