

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 20 SEPTEMBER 2019

RE: FOUR LIFE TERMS FOR MOTHER WHO KILLED HER FOUR CHILDREN

On Friday, 20 September 2019, the Mpumalanga High Court sitting in Middelburg sentenced Zinhle Leshmee Maditla to four terms of life imprisonment for the murder of her four biological children - two girls, aged four and eight, and two boys, aged seven years and eleven months in the Klarinet area in Witbank.

In her plea statement, Maditla told the court that in December 2018, she poisoned herself and her children with rat poison with an attempt to commit suicide. She further laced her breast to breastfeed the eleven months baby after she discovered that the father of two of her children was cheating on her.

Maditla handed herself to the police after the decomposed bodies of her children were found by the neighbours and relatives.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate, Ntsika Mpolweni presented to court that, Maditla had time to think about her actions. Instead she did nothing to seek help after the victims showed complications. Mpolweni said those complications were an indication that Maditla intended to kill them, therefore, a prescribed minimum sentence must be imposed.

The presiding officer, Judge Sheila Mphahlele remarked that the accused had been convicted of serious offences and found no reason for the court to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence.

She said the victims were killed by their own mother who had to nurture, care , protect and provide for them. She went on to say that the innocent children were victims of her battles with their father. "They trusted her like any child could have trusted the mother. When they were hungry they believed she would provide for them. She intentionally

gave them food that was contaminated with the intention to kill them,” said Judge Mphahlele.

She then sentenced Maditla to life imprisonment on each count of murder.

The NPA is satisfied with the sentence imposed hoping that it will serve as a deterrent to those who are planning to commit similar crimes.

Monica Nyuswa

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mpumalanga

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