

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: 4 x LIFE AND 5 YEARS FOR FAMILY KILLER

Wesley Neil Julyan was handed down four terms of life and 5 years imprisonment in the Mtunzini High Court yesterday for the December 2017 incident where he killed four of his relatives and burnt their bodies. This incident occurred in the Mtwalume area near Umzinto.

Prior to the offence, a state of enmity existed between the accused and his brother (referred to as Julyan) over items of property that were removed from their father's home. This home had since been sold to Marista Gerber who is the complainant in the arson charge.

On the day of the incident, Julyan arranged to return the items to the accused. Julyan was accompanied by his children as well as his father-in-law, Peter Eugene McKenna. At some point, the accused decided to kill them all. He killed his brother by assaulting him with a pick handle and further strangling him. He also strangled McKenna and the two children. The accused then used petrol to start a fire, which charred the bodies of the deceased and caused considerable damage to Gerber's house. The accused stayed on the property and messaged his girlfriend in America while the fire burned. His defense was that he had no idea who had started the fire or that his family members were dead.

In court, senior state advocate Dorian Paver lead the testimonies of witnesses who told the court that the accused made no attempt to help them put out the fire, in fact he hindered their attempts. Further, Adv Paver handed in victim impact statements facilitated by the Court Preparation Officer, Louann Shuttleworth and compiled by Julyan's widow where she talks about the devastation in her life since the loss of her husband, her father and two children.

The accused was sentenced to four terms of life imprisonment for the murders and five years' imprisonment for arson. He will effectively serve life imprisonment.

The Acting Director of Public Prosecutions in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Adv Zungu welcomes the sentence as it is indicative that justice has been done.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

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