

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: HUSBAND SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Rajiv Munsook Sewnarain of Montclair in Durban was sentenced to a term of life imprisonment in the Durban High Court this week for the December 2010 murder of his wife, Shanaz Sewnarain.

The accused and his wife were in a strained relationship. Early in 2010, the accused was suspected of having an extra-marital affair. His wife's suspicions put further strain to the marriage and the accused decided to have her killed by procuring the services of accomplices. They conspired to stage a hijacking. On the evening of the offence, while the accused drove with his wife, they were accosted by the accomplices.

The deceased was shot several times and abandoned in the accused's vehicle. His accomplices, in keeping with the staged hijacking, shot the accused in the shoulder and abandoned him in the Folweni area. On being taken to hospital, the accused told his family members as well as the members of the South African Police Service that he and the deceased were hijacked.

The accused pleaded in terms of Section 112(2) of Act 51 of 1977 and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Durban Regional Court. Shortly thereafter, he lodged an application to review and set aside his conviction and sentence saying that he was forced to plead guilty and that he was not in a sober sense of mind when he did so.

On review, the accused's sentence and conviction was confirmed. The accused then took the matter on appeal. The matter was set aside on the basis that the assessors were not explained to the accused in the Regional Court.

The state represented by Senior State Advocate, Sheryl Naidu then pursued the matter and the accused was convicted after a trial.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu Natal, Advocate Moipone Noko welcomes the conviction and sentence and commends the prosecutor for a job well done.

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara
Regional Communications Manager
DPP KwaZulu Natal