

Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:
media@npa.gov.za

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Silverton
Pretoria

www.npa.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: KILLER ROBBERS GET HEFTY SENTENCES

Thirteen men were on Thursday sentenced to lengthy jail terms by the Free State High court sitting in Kroonstad for being involved in a cash-in-transit heist that took place on 22 August 2014 between Virginia and Ventersburg.

Judge Martha Mbhele sentenced Lucky Nhlangulela (39) from Welkom, Seun Ntatazazi (38), Edwin Mofokeng (39), Nhlanhla Mahlangu (36), Xolani Maliwa (37), Desmond Thato (37), Thabang Mokhohlane (30), Nthetelelo Myando (37), Zolile Magwa (38), Chesley Mnisi (37), Moeketsi Molefe (33), Teboho Molefe (36) and Mduduzi Mhlambi (32) all from Johannesburg to a total of 48 life sentences and 1208 years imprisonment.

Twelve of the accused were sentenced to four life sentences each and eight years for each of the 18 counts of attempted murder they were convicted on. They were each sentenced to a further 15 years for one count of robbery with aggravating circumstances and another eight years for attempted robbery with aggravating circumstances.

Mnisi got a different sentence from his co-accused as he was sentenced to 20 years for each of the four counts of murder. His total sentence is 164 years but he will effectively serve 32 years in prison after the judge ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

The court heard that the police received a tip off that the accused were planning to rob a Coin Security van between Virginia and Ventersburg.

The robbers were driving three cars when one of those cars collided with the cash van. A gun battle ensued between the police and the robbers. Some civilians were also caught in the cross fire. Three of the robbers were shot dead at the scene and the fourth one died when a car he was driving rolled over him as he was trying to drive off in a high speed. Police seized a large number of firearms that include R5, AK 47 and 9mm pistol.

State Prosecutor, Advocate Jacques Harrington charged the accused for murder of their fellow gang members who were shot dead by the police during the gun battle.

Harrington also charged the thirteen accused of 18 counts of attempted murder for firing at the police. The judge agreed with him and convicted the accused of four counts of murder and 18 counts of attempted murder.

Twelve of the accused will effectively spend life behind bars after the judge ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

Kind Regards,

Phaladi Shuping

Regional Spokesperson: Free State

083 699 5900