

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 05 OCTOBER 2017**

**RE: KILLERS IN BEHEADING CASE SENTENCED**

Thuso Thelejane, Mlungisi Ndlovu, Mbali Magwala and Sibonakaliso Mbili were all sentenced in the Durban High Court yesterday for their role in the murder of a Chatsworth woman, Desiree Murugan, in August 2014.

Accused 4, a professed traditional healer from Mfume in the KZN south coast had at some point prior to the murder, requested a Falakhe Khumalo to procure the head of an Indian, White or Coloured female and offered to pay up to two million rand for it. Khumalo then discussed this proposition with accused 1 and 2 and they agreed to assist him. Accused 3 had also joined them and together they strategised on getting the human head.

They eventually decided that a prostitute would make an ideal victim and identified the deceased as their target. On 17 August 2014, Khumalo and accused 1 and 2 armed themselves with a knife and bushknife before approaching the deceased to procure her services. She was lured to the Shallcross sports field and had sexual intercourse with Khumalo while accused 2 stood guard. Accused 1 (who was hiding himself) then attacked the victim, stabbing her. She was stabbed about 195 times before being decapitated.

They then went to their friend's home where accused 3 washed the head of the deceased. Khumalo and one of his co-accused then delivered the head to accused 4 who advised them to return a few days later for their payment. They were arrested soon after. Accused 1, 2 and 3 were minors at the time of the commission of this offence.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate Sheryl Naidu led the testimony of the deceased's sister. She described the deceased as a good and kind person who did not deserve to die in such a horrific and barbaric fashion.

The accused were sentenced accordingly: accused 1 and 2 were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment each, accused 3 was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment and accused 4 was sentenced to a term of life imprisonment.

Khumalo had pleaded guilty to murder in September 2014 and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu Natal, Advocate Moipone Noko had this to say, "The sentence is indeed welcomed under the circumstances. Hopefully the scourge of muthi killings in the province will be positively impacted by sentences of this nature. Congratulations to the prosecutor on a job well done."

Kind Regards,

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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