

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

DATE: 25 FEBRUARY 2021

RE: LIFE IN JAIL FOR KILLERS OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The High Court of South Africa: Eastern Cape Division, Mthatha sentenced three men to multiple life imprisonment for the murder and robbery of two clergymen in separate incidents that took place three years ago.

Mfundo Mafa (24) and Babini Mangala (27) were sentenced to life imprisonment for each of the two counts of murder, 12 years for attempted murder, 15 years for each of two counts for robbery with aggravating circumstances, eight years for possession of firearms with intent to commit an offence and 14 years for unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition. The court ordered the latter sentences to run concurrently.

The duo's accomplice, Bezile Nokwabuza (34) was sentenced to life imprisonment on one count of murder, 15 years for robbery with aggravating circumstances, eight years for possession of firearms with intent to commit an offence and 14 years for unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

On the evening of 20 July 2017, the Reformed Presbyterian church steward, Zolisa Kolwane and a prostitute, Zimkhitha Makhabeni were seated in Kolwane's car on a secluded spot of Southernwood in Mthatha. Mafa and Mangala emerged and fired shots at them before demanding money. They took a sum of R50, cell phones and Kolwane's firearm. Kolwane later died in hospital and Makhabeni recovered.

On the evening of 01 August 2017, the Methodist Church Bishop for the Clarkebury District, Thembinkosi Fandaleki was inside his motor vehicle with another prostitute, Andiswa Majavu at a Railway Station on the outskirts of Mthatha town.

Mafa, Mangala and Nokwabuza, emerged and fired shots at Fandaleki. They demanded money and took his wallet containing bankcards, his firearm, a Samsung Tablet, a cell phone, a blanket and an amount of R50.

The assailants instructed Majavu to run away. Fandaleki was found dead in his motor vehicle in the Mthatha CBD with a gunshot wound on the chest.

During trial, Senior State Advocate Ndoyisile Lamla led the evidence of more than 20 witnesses including that of Makhabeni and Majavu. Judge Richard Brooks found that the state had proved its case beyond reasonable doubt and made a special mention of the evidence of the two sex workers. "Their willingness and bravery to come forward to give their testimonies in court has to be lauded", said Judge Brooks.

Advocate Lamla pleaded with the court to impose the prescribed minimum sentence on the counts of murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances. He said murder and robbery were prevalent in the area of Mthatha and perpetrators of such crimes needed to be duly punished by the courts.

The NPA welcomed the sentences.

Luxolo Tyali

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha

0735559292