

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 29 MARCH 2017

RE: LIFE SENTENCE FOR BEHEADING MURDERS

Thandowakhe Duma (22) and Elias Sihle Mchunu (42) were sentenced in the Pietermaritzburg High Court today for the murders, robberies and kidnapping they committed in October 2015.

The accused in this matter wanted human body parts for medicine and therefore conspired to kill people in order to attain their goal. Armed with a bushknife, the accused accosted the first deceased, Bawinile Albertina Gambushe in the Chandinagar area near Umzinto. She was taken to a bushy area where she was assaulted with the bushknife and died on the scene as a result of her injuries. The accused stole her cellphone and left only to return a few days later to sever her head and remove parts of her body.

The next complainant, Dane Ramparthab, lived in the Chandinagar area. He was picking mangoes off a tree when the accused attacked him. They dragged him off the tree and struck him with the bushknife. They tied his hands behind his back and led him to a secluded area where he was assaulted further. He was forced to stay with them, but eventually managed to escape.

The last complainant, Nawaaz Khan lived in the same area and was known to the accused. He went with the accused to a bushy area on the Isonto Farm. Once there, the accused turned on him, assaulting him with the bushknife. He died on the scene as a result of a sharp force wound on the neck. The accused then severed his head from his body and removed some body parts for medicine. They also stole two cellphones that the deceased had in his possession.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate, Dorian Paver told the court that the crimes committed by the accused were callous and devious causing great pain to the

family of the deceased and trauma to Ramparthab. He said both accused had a blatant disregard for the lives of their victims.

Further, Advocate Paver handed in victim impact statements facilitated by Court Preparation Officer, Thobekile Chuene and compiled by the complainant as well as the families of the deceased. In the statements, all the writers spoke of the trauma and devastation they felt as a result of the actions of the accused.

Accused 1 was sentenced to 1 term of life imprisonment and an additional 30 years.

Accused 2 was sentenced to 2 terms of life imprisonment and an additional 45 years.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu Natal, Advocate Noko, 'we welcome the sentence as it is indicative that justice has been done. It is unfortunate that innocent lives were snatched away in such a brutal manner.'

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

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