

PRESS RELEASE



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: MEN RECEIVE LIFE SENTENCES FOR MURDER AND RAPE

The Bhisho High Court sentenced Lukhanyiso Hlazo (23) and Masonwabe Maneli (22) to life imprisonment for the September 2017 murder of Nomaphelo Mdaka (44) in Whittlesea. Maneli was further sentenced to life imprisonment for rapping her.

During the evening of 4 September 2017, Mdaka was on her way home and accompanied by her sister and brother-in-law, Ngabathini Speelman, when they were approached by Hlazo, Maneli, Songezo Botya (21) and two other unknown men. The men then grabbed Speelman and searched him for money. When they did not find money they then assaulted him. At this point, the two sisters fled, however, while Mdaka's sister managed to escape the five men caught Mdaka and dragged her to a secluded mountainous area. Maneli and the other two unknown men then took turns in raping her. Hlazo then joined the three in stoning Mdaka to death. Whittlesea police arrested Hlazo and Maneli the following day while Botya was arrested two days later.

Hlazo was further sentenced to five-years imprisonment for assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm and two years for kidnapping. The two sentences will run concurrently with the sentence of life imprisonment for murder. Maneli also received five-years imprisonment for assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm and two years for kidnapping. These two sentences and the life sentence for rape will all run concurrently with the life sentence for murder. Botya on the other hand was sentenced to five-years imprisonment for assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

The prosecutor for the case, Advocate Nocwaka Tokota said that team work secured this hefty sentence, "I worked with a dedicated team of Whittlesea detectives, which was led by Captain Kene. Our Court Preparation Officer, Pelisa Matinise, assisted the sister of the deceased to compile a convincing Victim Impact Statement. Thanks to them I managed to convince the court to impose these sentences."

Anelisa Ngcakani

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