

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 29 OCTOBER 2018**

**RE: PMB BUSINESSMAN SENTENCED FOR DOCTOR'S MURDER**

Rajivee Soni (37) was sentenced to an effective 30 years imprisonment in the Pietermaritzburg High Court last week after being convicted of several charges leading up to the murder of a 33 year-old Pietermaritzburg medical doctor, Bhavish Sewram.

The accused shared a close friendship with the deceased up until January 2012 when he suspected that his wife and the deceased were involved in a romantic relationship. He became angry and decided to take revenge on the deceased.

He influenced females on two separate occasions to lay false charges of sexual assault against the deceased. The matters were withdrawn in court. He then went to the Mountain Rise Police Station and laid a false claim, alleging that the deceased had slapped him. A docket was opened but the case was withdrawn. The accused then hired people to shoot at the deceased with a high-powered paintball gun he had purchased. The deceased sustained injuries due to the attack.

Eventually, the accused decided to kill the deceased and approached a certain Brian Treasurer with an offer of R100 000 to carry out the deed. Treasurer accepted and then enlisted the services of Mfaniseni Nxumalo and Sabelo Dlamini, promising to pay them if they assisted him.

On 13 May 2013, Treasurer, Nxumalo and Dlamini drove to the doctor's surgery. Treasurer waited in the vehicle, while Dlamini went out and shot the deceased who died at the scene.

In aggravation of sentence, Senior State Advocate Johan Du Toit handed in a victim impact statement facilitated by Court Preparation Officer, Louann Shuttleworth and compiled by the father of the deceased. In the statement, the father mentions how the

family relied on the deceased for emotional as well as financial support. He went on to describe him as a kind-hearted person who contributed to the healthcare of the community.

The accused was sentenced 25 years imprisonment for murder, 5 years for defeating the course of justice, 18 months for assault and 5 years for conspiracy to commit murder. The sentences for the defeating and assault charges will run concurrently with the other two sentences thus resulting in the 30 years imprisonment.

The accused's application for leave to appeal was granted and set down for 21 November at the Durban High Court.

The accused's co-conspirators namely Treasurer, Dlamini and Nxumalo were sentenced as follows:

Sabelo Dlamini pleaded guilty to the murder and received a 25-year sentence while Mfaniseni Nxumalo and Brian Treasurer were sentenced to life imprisonment in September 2015. Treasurer died earlier this year while serving his sentence.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu Natal, Advocate Moipone Noko said, "I welcome the sentence and conviction in this matter. I hope this sentence will assist in curbing the scourge of violence and killings that is currently reigning our province. Congratulations to the prosecutor on a job well done."

Kind Regards,

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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