

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: THREE MEN SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT PLUS 15 YEARS

The Limpopo High Court sentenced Hlakodisho Pleasure Kekana (27), Thakgatso Cleopus Mphafudi (24) and Paballelo Clement Makgoale (25) to life imprisonment and further 15 years for murder and aggravated robbery last week.

The court heard that on 24 March 2017 all three accused went into the shop of Sahel Rana, a Bangladeshi national at Mamaolo village near Lebowakgomo. Upon their arrival, they pretended as if they were buying a bag of mealie-meal. Instead of collecting the bag, they produced knives and demanded money. They proceeded to assault the deceased and his co-worker with various weapons including pangas, scissors, knives and bottles. Rana died at the scene while the co-worker who is now the complainant was transported to the nearest hospital for treatment. The accused then took R5000 in cash and groceries.

All three men pleaded not guilty. They raised an alibi that two of them were at work whilst one of them was at home during commission of the offence. The state called the complainant and the witness who testified that they saw the accused committing the offence. Two other witnesses also testified that they saw the men with bloodied clothes and they were also carrying groceries on the day of the incident. The court rejected their version and found them guilty as charged.

During sentencing, the Victim Impact Report was handed in by the prosecutor, Advocate Calvin Chauke in aggravation of the sentence. He emphasised that the complainants were attacked in a brutal manner and the owner lost his life. The Union of Bangladeshi national assisted by donating R50 000 for repatriation. He said the deceased was married and maintained his two kids and parents. He also mentioned that there is prevalence of

business robberies in and around Limpopo. He therefore asked for no exceptional circumstances justifying imposition of a lesser sentence than life imprisonment.

The Judge President, Ephraim Makgoba agreed with the state and sentenced all accused to life and 15 years imprisonment. The court ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

The NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

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