



community safety &
liaison

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MEDIA RELEASE

TO : ALL MEDIA
DATE : 13 December 2013
ATTENTION : NEWS EDITORS/REPORTERS AND PR WIRE

**MEC MCHUNU WELCOMES THE SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION OF ESTCOURT
HIT MEN**

KWAZULU-NATAL MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Willies Mchunu, has applauded the life imprisonment sentence imposed on two "hit men" who brutally murdered ANC councillor, Mr Jimmy Lembede, in Estcourt last year.

The two murderers were sentenced today (13 December 2013) by the eMadadeni Magistrate, in Newcastle, northern KZN.

Kithi Mlele (26) and Sihle Ndimande (25) were found guilty on all four counts – one of murder and three of attempted murder.

On the murder count, the Court imposed a heavy sentence of life imprisonment to each and ten years to each on the counts of attempted murder.

The sentence in all cases will run concurrently.

Last year in 17 August, Mr Lembede was murdered in his home and his wife and two children sustained serious injuries.

This was viewed as a politically- motivated murder to force a by-election as there was no political party with an outright majority in uMtshezi Municipality.

UMtshezi is known as a political hot spot with numerous pending cases of intimidation and the killing of political party leaders still being investigated.

MEC Mchunu, who recently hosted a debate on political tolerance in eMtshezi, said this historic ruling would send a clear message to all perpetrators of political violence that time was now up for them in their nefarious deeds.

"This is one of the important judgments in the Estcourt/Wembezi conflict and we believe justice has been served."

"We commend the police for working tirelessly in thoroughly investigating this case. We hope the Lembede family will now find closure knowing that the people responsible for murdering their family members will now rot in jail."

"This sentence will send a clear message to all those who are behind politically-motivated murders that, indeed, the long arms of law will always catch up with them."

"It is high time that the people of uMtshezi understand the important values entrenched in our Constitution that people have a right to freedom of political association and affiliation."

"As the Government we will be keeping a close eye on all the outstanding and pending politically-motivated cases in the area," said MEC Mchunu.

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