

Councillor's house torched

Child dies in fire as residents react to woman's death after cash-for-jobs double shooting

By MALIBONGWE DAYIMANI and LULAMILE FENI

A PHYSICALLY disabled child was trapped and killed when angry Dice residents set alight Buffalo City Metro ward 13 ANC councillor Nokulunga Mawane's home yesterday.

Two cars belonging to the councillor and her husband, Mabuto Mawane, who is accused of killing Bulewa Mpitipiti and Nombiso Twana on Tuesday, were also gutted.

The residents went on a rampage after Twana succumbed to bullet wounds and died in Frere Hospital on Wednesday night.

She had been shot twice in the stomach and once in the arm and left for dead, while Mpitipiti died instantly from two bullets to the head.

East London police spokeswoman Warrant Officer Hazel Mgala said the physically challenged teen, believed to be aged between 15 and 17, died after she became trapped inside the flaming house.

"The police have opened an inquest docket following the incident. No one has been arrested. The girl was physically challenged," Mgala said.

Twana, 54, died hours after telling police she and Mpitipiti had been shot by Mabuto Mawane. She told them she believed Mawane shot her after she failed to pay a monthly kickback to his wife for a job.

The entire Mawane family were in

the East London Magistrate's Court yesterday, where Mabuto made his first appearance in connection with the deaths of the two women, shortly before the house was torched.

Witnesses told the Daily Dispatch that an angry group of more than 100 stormed the house at dusk yesterday and petrol-bombed it.

Two employees fled and watched the house going up in flames.

Panelbeaters Velem Dalamayiphi and Msimpana Duma said they were busy fixing the body of the couple's Ford Escort when the angry residents stormed the house.

"They came running from the corner singing songs and started throwing stones, so we fled to safety," Dalamayiphi said.

When the Dispatch arrived at scene the house was engulfed in flames while more than 30 public order police officers were battling with the crowd, who were pelting them with stones.

A BCM fire engine's windscreen was cracked amid the stoning.

Eastern Cape roads and public works spokesman Mplumzi Zuzile confirmed that Twana had been an extended public works programme (EPWP) supervisor since February.

He said a team had been set up to investigate Twana's cash-for-job allegations.

● Two children who witnessed the horror of two elderly women being shot dead near Tsomo on Monday have appealed to President Jacob Zuma to make sure the killers are caught as they feared for their own lives.

The two killers, posing as police officers, fired at least 14 bullets in a slaying which lacks any explicable motive at this stage.

The horrific murders took place at Mdeni village near Tsomo.

The victims were local teacher Nodolozeli, 65, and emerging farmer Nomziwehlu Ntuzini, 67.

Yesterday the two cousins, aged 10 and 15, who are not being identified as they are minors, were visibly traumatised when they spoke to the Daily Dispatch.

One of the children, a Grade 4 pupil, asked the Dispatch to tell the President and Police Minister Phele-Mphahle: "We are scared for our lives. We appeal to the president and police minister to ensure police arrest the killers of our granny and my aunt."

"Please, arrest them before they kill us."

Her cousin, who is in Grade 7, made a similar appeal.

The village community, reeling with shock and fear, said the two women were both highly respected.

Mgolozeli had been a Grade 5 teacher at Gqogqorsha Senior Primary

School for 37 years since 1980, and was to retire at the end of this year. She was also a senior congregant of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Ntuzini served on the school governing board of Philemon Nkwenkwezi Primary School, was a parish leader of the Anglican Church of Africa, and an executive member of the Mthashe Diocesan Mothers' Union.

Provincial police spokeswoman Brigadier Marinda Mills said the women were at home when two men, posing as Pretoria-based police officers, arrived at Mgolozeli's home and asked her to accompany them to Ntuzini's house to speak about a certain matter.

She told her grandchildren, aged 9

and 12, she would be back as soon as she had taken the visitors to Ntuzini's home nearby.

Ntuzini's husband, Mongezi, who

was at home with the children, said one of them had told him that a "big man came out of the car with aunt Nodolozeli and one other man was left inside in the driver's seat".

One of the children said: "The man tried to persuade us to come inside but we refused. In fact, I tried to come inside the house but I was stopped by [my cousin]".

"A moment later we heard a banging noise like crickets, and I heard my granny asking 'what was that?' Then there were a lot of banging noises, one after another one."

"The fat man ran out of the house holding a gun and went straight to the car and it sped off."

"We went inside the house and found our granny sleeping in a pool of blood from her head."

"When we called her name, she did not move. Aunt Nodolozeli was sitting in the chair and not talking."

"We were afraid when the man wanted us to come inside the house he wanted to kill us all. We are now afraid he will come back and finish us all if he is not arrested soon."

One of the children ran to a neighbour, where their grandfather was taking a bath, and raised the alarm.

"I told him that granny has been killed, but he could not believe me. It was only after [my cousin] came that he believed that I was serious."

No arrests have yet been made and a task team is investigating.

Mgolozeli will be buried tomorrow and Ntuzini on Sunday. — malibongwe@dispatch.co.za, lulamile@dispatch.co.za



COMMUNITY ANGER: The home of BCM ward 13 ANC councillor Nokulunga Mawane and her husband Mabuto, accused of a double murder, and two cars were set alight last night by angry Dice residents. Picture: SNO MAJANGAZA

They came running from the corner singing songs and started throwing stones