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Full horror of Bay mass murder emerges

Report reveals sheer terror victims must have felt as they tried to escape cold-blooded killers

Yolanda Palezweni and Kathryn Kimberley
palezweni@theherald.co.za

When police arrived at the scene of a mass shooting in KwaZakhele, 11 bullet-riddled bodies were scattered around the property, evincing the sheer terror the men and women felt as they tried to escape the gunman.

Six projectiles and 29 spent cartridges were found.

The perpetrators, carrying semi-automatic firearms, had one goal — to kill.

Seven of the victims died at the scene and an eighth died later in hospital.

Only three survived.

Though the motive is unknown, with national police deployed to assist, an internal report seen by The Herald paints a picture of the horror that unfolded when a birthday braai on a sunny Sunday afternoon turned into a bloodbath.

Yesterday, two days after the deadly attack, mourning family members said they were tired of officials visiting them and just wanted the police to catch the cold-blooded murderers.

Andile Shishuba, 52, who arrived in Gqeberha from East London just 30 minutes earlier to celebrate his brother's 50th birthday, was the first to die.

Terrified partygoers then scurried for cover, desperate to save themselves as the deafen-



WORDS OF COMFORT: Premier Oscar Mabuyane, centre, comforts some of the family members who lost their loved ones in the mass shooting in KwaZakhele on Sunday. Picture: FREDLIN ADRIAAN

ing gunshots rang out.

While Vusumzi Shishuba celebrated over a fire with friends and family at his Maqanda Street home, Andile was next door at his own house.

"Two males entered

[Andile's] house. Andile asked what they wanted," the report says.

"It's alleged the two males did not answer and started to shoot Andile before jumping the wall."

The incident happened at

about 5.30pm. While rumours about the motive circulate, the first incident report alludes to a celebration subsequent to a successful tender, along with the birthday party.

Though the Shishuba family declined further interviews,

friend Khulile Nzo said he had known the brothers for about 40 years.

He said they were involved in the construction business, and he was their mentor.

"The whole incident is traumatic as it could have been any



SHELL-SHOCKED: Nontsikelelo Masuku, 65, and Nandipha Gqomo, 57, try to make sense of the terrible events that unfolded on Sunday. Picture: FREDLIN ADRIAAN



PLACE OF DEATH: The house in KwaZakhele where assassins opened fire while a birthday party was in progress. Picture: FREDLIN ADRIAAN

of us," he said, describing it as barbaric and inhumane.

He did not believe the shooting was random.

Hardworking businesspeople and parents were among the victims.

Nelson Mandela Bay EMS received the frantic call shortly after 6pm from a withheld number.

"Victims were located everywhere, namely the kitchen, lounge, bedroom and outside," the preliminary report says.

"Seven ambulances and two medical response vehicles were mobilised."

It was later established, according to a second report, that when the gunmen entered Vusumzi's property, a group of women guests had been sitting in the back garden while most of the men were at the front of the house.

"[People] started running into the house while the suspects shot at them," the report says.

"Inside were five bodies on the floor. Outside were four males."

"One was lying next to the gate, one next to the house and

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SHOT MULTIPLE TIMES: Vusumzi Shishuba, who was celebrating his 50th birthday, was among the victims



FAMILY TRAGEDY: Andile Shishuba



BUSINESSWOMAN: Nomathamsanqa Mandla



HARD WORKER: Nandipha Koliti



MUCH LOVED: Kholekile France



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one at the back of the house.
"Homeowner Vusumzi was lying at the back under the window of the kitchen.

"All had been shot multiple times."

And though all sustained multiple gunshot wounds, it was Vusumzi who took most of the bullets — shot twice in the buttocks, once on the left flank, once in the stomach, once in the chest and once under his right arm.

He was declared dead at the scene.

Nomathamsanqa Mandla, 58, Kholekile France, 54, Mbuyiseli Mboya, 64, Liyema Poro, 20, and Nandipha Koliti, 42, were also already dead.

Mandla was found in the kitchen.

She was lying on her stomach and had one gunshot wound above the right eye.

France was lying on his

stomach next to the gate of the property.

He had taken two bullets to the back and one to his left shoulder.

Mboya, who was shot twice in the back and once in the left side of his head, was next to the house.

Poro, lying on her back inside the lounge, was shot once in the left cheek and once in the back of the neck.

Koliti had one gunshot wound above the left eye and one on the right side of her head.

Her body was in the lounge. Four others were rushed to hospital.

One person was discharged on Monday, while another succumbed to his injuries, bringing the death toll to eight.

The name of the eighth victim has not yet been released.

Mandla, well-known in the catering industry, leaves behind four children.

Her son, Refiole, said the family was still in disbelief.

He described his mother as a leader who kept the family together to fulfil their legacy.

She had started off selling eggs and then grew her catering business.

She had recently expanded into construction.

"My mother was a hard worker and provided for her whole family, she was the one who made sure everyone contributed to the growth of the business," he said.

Mandla's frustrated niece, Pumza, said: "Visits [by politicians and senior officials] don't make a difference.

"The police must focus on providing more information, additional resources and manpower."

They said Mandla had been excited about Sunday's party because many of her friends were attending.

But just hours after she left

home, they received the devastating news.

France's family, meanwhile, described him as their hero.

His aunt, Pinky Ngxulelo, 63, said he grew up in a family of entrepreneurs and was building his own brand.

"Kholekile was humble and always cracked jokes," she said.

"Something must be done, we can't be shocked for a week, then act as if nothing happened.

"We grew up here, this is not what Gqeberha used to be."

France leaves behind two sons and a daughter.

His daughter, Lutho, said her father was her friend.

"I lived with my mother after they separated but even then he would show up randomly and we would talk for hours," she said.

His son, Sima, said it was difficult to accept his father was now part of the growing

statistics of gun violence.

Koliti's family battled to describe their pain.

Her devastated mother, Nontsikelelo Masuku, said her daughter worked for the municipality's Expanded Public Works Programme and was recently promoted to supervisor.

She was an active member of the community and formed part of the New Brighton neighbourhood watch.

"My daughter was kind, she stood up for humanity."

Koliti was a single mother of three.

"She had a vision. I don't know how we will continue with life after this," Masuku said.

"We lost our sole breadwinner and I'm left wondering who will take care of her children because with my pension alone I won't be able to.

"My daughter was a lady who worked hard to put food

on the table and no-one loved her children more than her."

Premier Oscar Mabuyane visited the grieving families yesterday.

Police minister Bheki Cele was in Gqeberha on Monday, vowing to deploy all necessary resources to trace the culprits.

Mabuyane said his visit was to establish the facts and to find out how the government could support the families.

"No-one should be scared to live in their own houses, not after what we went through to attain democracy," he said.

He said it was unacceptable to live in a country ruled by criminals.

However, he was comforted by the -action plan implemented to bring the criminals to book.

Mabuyane said he had been told people in Kwazakhele and New Brighton refused to talk about the incident.