

Amadiba Crisis Committee - Statement 2015-05-05

Four members of the Amadiba Crisis Committee will appear in the Bizana Court [today Wednesday 6 May](#). The charges are related to Wednesday 29 April, when hundreds of community members blocked the mining company MRC/TEM and its consultant Piet Badenhorst, first at Mpindweni and then at Xolobeni villages. The charges are: BLOCKING THE ROAD, STOPPING CARS and ASKING CARS WHERE THEY ARE GOING.

*In the overall mining matter as well as in the specific matter of the four now charged, the Tribal Authority, Amadiba Administrative Area, Section 24 (coastal) and the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) are represented by **Sarah Sephton at LRC** in Grahamstown and **Richard Spoor's office** in Johannesburg.*

On **Thursday 7 May**, an Imbizo will be held at Umgungundlovu, starting at about 10.00. A delegation from the Royal Court of the Queen of AmaMpondo will participate. The Mzamba and Mpisi police were invited in writing by our Head Woman Cynthia Baleni already on Saturday as decided by the TA Section 24 Thursday.

The Great Place is located in Xolobeni village. For directions: See contact details below.

Xolobeni community on the attacks Sunday night, 4 May

Monday 10.00 in the morning the police had called the community to a meeting. The police did not come, but about two hundred residents did.

All assaults in Xolobeni took place at the blockade, including the serious hack in the arm of a woman (65) with a bush knife. The community says the perpetrator was "Bashin" Qunya. This was about 8.30 p.m. and after 4 cars failed to break the blockade at Mtentu village in the south. Also there, two known XOLCO people were identified as firing shots at Mtentu. When the 4 cars came back, Mr Zamile Qunya, Director of MRC/TEM partner "Blue Bantry 255", led the attack in Xolobeni. When the ten cars were stopped, all the attackers came out, started to shoot and to beat people with the butts of their handguns. The community gave the names of 13 armed people, several of them Directors of XOLCO and Blue Bantry. One of them has a security firm in PE. Two persons received gunshot wounds. The Bizana ambulance arrived by 11 p.m. The woman was bleeding heavily, but people were scared to leave with her before. The attackers were still in the area.

Chief Lunga Baleni was in the assault party and carried a fire arm. Since January he is a Director of XOLCO.

Comments to *The Mercury*, today 5 May

There was no meeting in Xolobeni by 3 p.m. on Sunday, as stated by Mr Zamile Qunya. There was a short meeting by 8.00 a.m. on Saturday. Mr Qunya did not come "escorted by police" for protection. He brought police, trying to convince Mpisi Station Commander Mr Ntangula to make arrests. He and 12 identified others took out their fire arms when the police had left. Mr Z Qunya did indeed damage the mirror of his vehicle. As only vehicle that drove over the blockade, he landed on the other side against a rock wall, came out firing his weapon, hitting people, screaming: "Who is blocking me in my land?!" He was promoting "development".

From the history book

"Remember!", said the Minister of mining, "This is your land. It doesn't matter what kind of paper we come with. You have the final decision." This was 12 September 2008 at Umgungundlovu. The honourable Minister was Buyelwa Patience Sonjica. She had come to apologise for granting a mining licence to MRC and to listen. She suspended the license. She was removed from this ministry six months later and from Government in November 2009. No politician has ever come

since then to ask us, the affected communities, about these destructive plans. Since then everything has been intrigues, forgeries of our names and a flood of bribes. Is it now the time of blood and violence?

Last night late, an unknown car dropped off 4 armed men in Xolobeni. The community saw pistols and sounded the alarm, concluding they were hit men. The Mpsi police was contacted before midnight and came to control what was going on.

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