

Amadiba Crisis Committee 2016-07-24: Two members of ACC arrested and released today for "assault 29 December"

**Today, Sunday morning at about 7.00, two double bakkies without police-branding, entered Mdatya village. Mdatya is one of the five coastal Amadiba villages that oppose the "Xolobeni Mining Project".**

In the bakkies sat four police officers in plain clothes. They came to arrest Boyboy Dimane (20), Skebhe Dlamini (22) and a third Mdatya resident.

**Mr Mdlele S. Bhele sat in one bakkie with the police. He is one of four arrested after the so called Christmas shootings in Mdatya 21-30 December. Mr Bhele is out on bail. The trial is currently pending in the Flagstaff regional court.**

Together with three others, Mr Bhele faces charges for a bush knife and knobkerrie attack the 29 December. Three residents were injured in the evening when walking from a big community meeting. This occurred after 7 days of intimidation, including the firing of a R5 rifle 30 December. The group of four are suspected to be the culprits.

**We are deeply concerned that today's event is part of a plot to weaken the Christmas shooting case. We are equally concerned if forces in Mzamba police participate in such a plot.**

The new charges against three ACC members appear 7 months after 29 December. The officers claimed that this case was opened "long ago".

The police hand-cuffed Boyboy Dimane, saying he was charged for "beating a girl". When Boyboy's sisters asked who that girl is, the officers did not answer. They then went to the homestead of Skebhe Dlamini, but only Skebhe's mother and cousin were in the house. The police also wanted to arrest the brother of the resident who broke his leg in attack, but the brother is working outside Amadiba.

**When the bakkies left Mdatya they were first stopped and questioned by the community. There was no way for people to tell if they were police or gangsters. The officers had to come out and explain themselves. Now the story was that Boyboy was arrested for attacking Mdlele Bhele, 29 December.**

**Boyboy was in the group that was attacked 29/12, but managed to run away. He should be a key witness at the upcoming trial against Bhele and others.**

When the bakkies with Boyboy arrived back at the Mzamba station, leaders of ACC were waiting. About an hour later, Skebhe Dlamini arrived. He had walked for two hours from Mdatya when he heard the Police was looking for him.

**Skebhe, for his part, came to the site of the attack 29 December after the event. He was among them who helped the three injured. Also he should be a witness in the trial of Mdlele Bhele, Thembile Ndovela, Mto Bhele and Xolile Dimane.**

The Mzamba police first attempted to keep Boyboy and Skebhe in jail before they appear in **Mbizana Magistrates Court on Thursday 28 July**. The officers argued Skebhe had tried to escape. They finally decided to release the two on a free bail.

**Nonhle Mbuthuma: "Just before the 19 July visit of the Deputy Minister of Police, Ms Soty, the police hurried to form a Community Police Forum (CPF), saying they would work with us. Today, there was no contact with the CPF. The police came as usual."**

"The police complained the community made their task difficult. I asked them what to expect if they come in plain clothes and in unbranded bakkies. Our chair person has been shot. This community is still in shock after the killing of Bazooka by hitmen pretending to be police."

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