

DAILY NEWS - OCT. 20, 87

Township violence

NIGHTFALL in the townships outside Pietermaritzburg is a time of fear and danger as hostility between political factions has flared into open violence. Officially more than 40 people have been killed in the last month and unconfirmed reports put the figure much higher. The root cause stems from political differences but the unions, Inkatha and the United Demo-

cratic Front all deny that they are responsible for the deaths; the situation is further muddled by young hoodlums taking advantage of the unrest.

The police have stepped up their presence and are making arrests. But anger in the townships is running high and it will take much persuasion and negotiation before the violence diminishes.

Justice for all

IT is not surprising that many less-privileged people see the law as an instrument of oppression, as Mr Nick Theunissen, newly-elected president of the Natal Law Society, pointed out this week. Nobody, he said, should be denied the right to enforce or defend his legal

rights because of lack of money, and detention without trial is a denial of an individual's common law rights. Despite the widespread erosion of civil rights, it is worth underlining that justice belongs to everyone.

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NEWS

Four in court over a series of bomb blasts in Natal

Pietermaritzburg Bureau

FOUR men facing charges of terrorism in connection with bomb blasts in Northern Natal and Durban from 1985 — in which numerous people were injured and widespread damage was caused — appeared in the College Road Supreme Court here yesterday.

The four men — Thuso Tshika, 22, of Lamontville; Mtunzi Sithole, 24, Themnkosi Nkosi, 19, and Abraham Mathe, 33, all of Newcastle — pleaded not guilty to the charges against them before Mr Justice Broome and two assessors.

All four are alleged to have formed a conspiracy with the ANC and its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, which aimed to violently overthrow the South African Government.

Mr Tshika, Mr Sithole and Mr Nkosi face charges relating to an attack on the Osizweni Police Station, in which a policeman was injured in October last year; explosions at the Glencoe Railway Station and the Newcastle Magistrate's Court, in which 23 people were injured; the Game Arcade in Newcastle;

and bombs planted at the Mobeni Post Office, Game and OK Bazaars, as well as a car bomb explosion in Pine Street in Durban.

Mr Mathe faces charges relating to the recruitment and harbouring of terrorists.

The accused are alleged to have established various arms caches. They are also charged with the unlawful possession of machineguns, ammunition, grenades, bombs and illegal publications.

In evidence yesterday the Court was told of the Durban bomb blasts at OK Bazaars, Game, Pine Street and at the Mobeni Post Office.

Shoe store

The Court heard R127 000 damage was caused to the Mobeni Post Office, R11 000 to Game in West Street, and R10 792 to OK Bazaars, following explosions there during September and December, 1985.

A kombi destroyed by fire in the Pine Street explosion in December, 1985, was valued at R28 000, and personal belongings in the vehicle, worth R3 000, were also destroyed. A shoe store near the scene of the explosion suf-

fered R52 000 damage.

Mrs Dawn Loots and Constable Anthony van Heerden, told the Court how, moments after they left the Mobeni Post Office where they inspected a suspicious looking parcel, a bomb exploded. It blew them through the window of their police van causing each slight injuries.

Const van Heerden said he had recognised the object in the parcel as an S26 demolition charge and had gone to the van, parked about 15 m away outside the building, to radio for help when the bomb detonated.

Post Office security guard Johannes Heath, who discovered the bomb and called the police, said he was walking back to his office, about 50 m from the scene, when the blast knocked him off his feet.

Mrs Francina de Jongh told the Court she and her two daughters were sitting in their kombi in Pine street on December 21, 1985, when they felt a bump.

She saw a young Indian man walk away, then turn to look back at them. About five to seven minutes later the vehicle was rocked by an explosion and caught alight.

The hearing continues.

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Indaba project to appear on British TV

Political Reporter

THE KwaZulu/Natal Indaba "Go to the People" campaign is to receive massive international publicity with a prime-time documentary being made by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The BBC TV crew is currently travelling with Indaba officials in remote rural districts and filming discussions with audiences ranging from largely illiterate tribesmen to wealthy white farmers.

It is scheduled to be shown in Britain next month on BBC Newline — a prime-time slot after the 8pm news with a viewership of several million. It is to be scripted by the Johannesburg-based BBC correspondent Graham Leach, who is also the author of a best-selling book on South Africa.

This is the first time the Indaba proposals for multiracial power-sharing in Natal will be screened to a mass international audience and it's likely to have widespread repercussions. Interviews with anti-Indaba people such as the chairman of the United Democratic Front, Mr Archie Gumede, have also been included.

"It seems as though the foreign Press have suddenly realised that the Indaba is the only show in town at the moment," said Mr Peter Badcock of the Indaba's public relations division.

The Daily News accompanied the BBC camera team on an Indaba "Operation Outreach" country tour where officials gave talks in venues ranging from leaking, dung-floor cowsheds to plush Natal Midland homes.

Of particular interest among farm labourers gathering in sheds and fields was a video shown on a small portable television where the basics of the Indaba proposals are spelled out in simple terminology. For most, it was the first time they had even heard of the Indaba.

"Indaba awareness ranges from area to area, but most of these country folk have never heard of it," said Mr Perfect Malinela, director of Operation Outreach. "This is grassroots communication in its most basic form."

Mrs Eve Jewitt, responsible for much of the logistics of Operation Outreach, agrees. "After we have given an address, a surprising number of people have come up to me and said they never knew whites were prepared to share with blacks. The amount of goodwill among country people is incredible — but it won't be there for ever. We have to work on that right now.

"What whites tend to forget is that the basic things they want — security, education for their children, a roof over their heads — are the same things blacks want."

Huge KwaZulu classroom backlog

Daily News Reporter

ABOUT R850 million will have to be spent in the next three years if KwaZulu's backlog of 12 000 classrooms for black children is to be eradicated.

This was said by Mr Alan Wilson, managing director of Masonite (Africa), at the opening of a new R250 000 farm school near Greytown — built by the company as part of their "Adopt-a-School" project.

In the past four years Masonite (Africa) has invested more than R400 000 in "Adopt-a-School" activities.

The new school, which will accommodate 200 pupils, will be managed and maintained by the company but teachers will be provided by the Department of Education and Training.

It has been named after its first principal, Miss Elsie Mtshali, in recognition of 16 years of devoted service at the old Hofmeyer School, which was housed in dilapidated wattle and daub buildings nearby.

Many of the school's pupils are the children of Masonite employees working on plantations in the area, and the rest come from neighbouring farms.