

# MEC Dhlomo mourns the murder of Gamalakhe CHC nurse (lifeless body found by birdwatching tourist at Oribi Gorge)

11 September 2018

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has expressed his deepest condolences to the family of a 31 year-old pregnant nurse whose lifeless body was discovered by a birdwatching tourist, after being thrown halfway down a cliff at Oribi Gorge, near Port Shepstone, on the south coast of the province.

Nelisa Cele, who was six months pregnant, had been an enrolled nurse at Gamalakhe Community Healthcare Centre since 2011. On Wednesday, she left home and was due to finalise a car deal and take delivery of a new vehicle. Then she went missing.

On Friday, a Johannesburg tourist who had been following birds and taking photographs made a grim discovery. It is alleged that after capturing an image of a bird and then taking a closer look at it, he noticed what looked like a human figure. Upon further investigation, the tourist confirmed that it was indeed human remains, covered in a cloth. He then alerted the SAPS.

It is believed that Ms Cele's murder(s) had tried to throw the body down the cliff in the hope that it would never be found. But the body got stuck on tree branches.

Police spokesperson Captain Nqobile Gwala said the body was discovered on Friday morning, around 10am, and showed signs of severe assault. Initially, the body had been removed and registered at the mortuary as that of an unknown person. Following a frantic search of the nurse by her family at various hospitals in Ugu District since her disappearance, they ended up at SAPS Paddock, where they received confirmation that an unknown body had been found and taken to a local mortuary. They then went to the mortuary, where their worst fears were confirmed.



*Nelisa Cele*

A case of murder has been opened with SAPS Paddock. According to Capt Gwala, there have been no arrests at this stage.

MEC Dhlomo has expressed his shock and sadness at yet another callous murder of a defenceless woman and healthcare worker.

"The murder of a healthcare workers is always a sad day for us, because these are people who are tasked to do the Lord's work, which is to save lives and bring healing to those who are ailing. These incidents are therefore extremely concerning. There is just no place for brutal incidents such as this one in our society. It is unacceptable, and we call on law enforcement authorities to do everything in their power to bring the responsible person(s) to book. We send our deepest condolences to the family at this difficult time, and would also like to urge anyone who might have information regarding this murder to come forward and alert law enforcement authorities."

Neither the contact details of the family nor the Johannesburg tourists are available at this stage. The memorial service for Ms Cele will be held at the Methodist Church next to Gamalakhe CHC on Thursday at 13h00. She will be buried on Saturday.