

# Murdered nurse: MEC Dhlomo urges police to find the killer(s) - [She was expecting a baby girl, would have turned 32 on Monday]

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Neliswa "Mu" Cele ought to be preparing for her 32nd birthday on Monday; and to become a mother to a baby girl in December, just three months from now. Instead, this coming Saturday the "bubbly, friendly and compassionate" enrolled nurse will be laid to rest at her place of birth, Gamalakhe township, near Port Shepstone.

Mourners at her memorial service yesterday gasped in shock as details of her post-mortem emerged, including that she was struck with a blunt object on the head and sustained extensive internal bleeding. They also heard that she had been expecting a baby girl.

No-one has been arrested yet for the murder, which is shrouded in mystery, including questions whether it is linked to a large sum of money that she had saved up to buy a brand new car last Wednesday, the day of her disappearance.

Her lifeless body was discovered by a birdwatching Johannesburg tourist at Oribi Gorge last Friday, where it had been thrown halfway down a cliff. 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 a human body, and then alerted the SAPS.

During her disappearance, her family had embarked on a frantic search of hospitals, mortuaries, and police stations, which eventually led them to SAPS Paddock on Saturday. Here, they were told of a decomposed body that had been found on the day before. They were sent to the government forensic mortuary at Port Shepstone, where a tattoo on her back confirmed their worst fears. KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, who was among the mourners, gave words of comfort to the Cele family, and urged police to continue working hard towards solving the murder. He expressed his dismay and concern at the rampant acts of violence against women.

"When the post mortem was done, they found a baby girl who was lifeless. You then have even more anger and pain... Why would a person kill another, who already has a soul to save? We are affected [by these murders] as the Department of Health, because a large number of our staff members are females. We want to give our condolence to Gamalakhe CHC, and to the Cele family. We would like to thank the police for the work that they've done, and wish to urge them to find the perpetrator(s) of this callous act," the MEC said.

His sentiments were echoed by Cllr Mosley Lubanyana, of the South African Local Government Association's Women's Commission, who said: "We will not rest as Ray Nkonyeni Municipality, as Ugu District, until the doer of this evil deed is found. We are tired of the murder of young, innocent children such as 'Mu'. She cared deeply for this community. She was born here. She studied here and worked here. As the leadership, that tells us that she loved the community of Gamalakhe. The nursing profession is not an easy one, due to the many situations that nurses get exposed to. But because she was passionate about her community, that is why she chose this career."

Nelisa's older sister Zandile Cele said the family is traumatized and devastated, as Nelisa was a breadwinner.

Her stepmother, Mrs Babongile Cele, thanked the police as well as the mortuary for their professionalism in assisting the family during this bereavement. Nelisa Cele is survived by a 13

year-old son, four siblings and her parents. She will be buried in Gamalakhe township on Saturday.