

# 'Tears as families go to Marikana site

## Sister of cop killed breaks down during visit

### POLOKO TAU

**I**T WAS a work-related site visit for the Farlam Commission of Inquiry and it reopened wounds for families who lost loved ones during the violent Marikana wage dispute last year. Elizabeth Maubane wept uncontrollably as she approached a short stick sent in the ground with a bright orange cone marked "1" placed over it.

She had taken time to place flowers on the spot, which is where her brother, Warrant Officer Hendrick Tsietsi Monene, lay dead on August 13 after he was attacked, allegedly by striking miners.

Monene and Warrant Officer Sello Lepaku were killed with sharp objects in a confrontation with striking miners they had been escorting.

Three miners were also killed and their bodies were left lying nearby.

The commission visited the scene near the Karee mine stores in a bid to get a clear understanding of

the incident by retracing the steps of the strikers and the police from their first interaction to the spots where lives ended.

Police and mineworkers' witnesses agreed on some of the versions and differed on others as they took the commission through the vast scene.

This was where a group of armed miners, walking along a railway line from the direction of the Karee 3 shaft towards the Nkaneng informal settlement and the koppie – the striking miners' meeting point – were met by North West deputy police commissioner General William Mpembe and a group of officers who blocked their way.

The commission had seen video footage of Mpembe urging the strikers to lay down their weapons and disperse. The group refused to comply with his demands and through their leader, who became known after his death as "the man in the green blanket", Mgcineni "Mambush" Noki, they said they wanted to join others on the koppie.

Noki was among 34 miners who died when police opened fire three days later near the koppie.

He was seen in the video, obstinately telling Mpembe that they were not fighting anyone, and urging the police to escort them to the koppie.

A while later, two policemen were hacked to death. The commission heard that two miners were shot dead by the police during the bloody confrontation. The commission had heard before that another body, with stab wounds, was found near a shack.

Mpembe, who is to testify at the commission, assisted by other officers, referred to the routes followed by the Nyalas escorting the group, and to the spots where the shooting started. He said some officers, some of whom later died, had alighted from the Nyalas and were on foot when attacked.

Mpembe said police used tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades in trying to disperse strikers.

Meanwhile, strikers' witness Xolani Nzuzza said the miners had been walking in a group when the police suddenly began shooting at them.

More details of the incident are expected to be heard when testimony continues before the commission.

For Maubane, who is a public order police officer, being at the spot where her brother lost his life in the

line of duty was too painful to bear and she wept. She continued to weep as the chairman of the commission, retired Judge Ian Farlam, listened as witnesses related how her brother ended lying there with his body covered in wounds.

Now on her knees, Maubane screamed as tears rolled down her face: "Why? Why?"

Judge Farlam later approached the weeping Maubane, put an arm

around her in a comforting gesture and told her: "Your brother would have been proud of you."

The commission hearings resume on Monday with national police commissioner General Riah Phiyega back in the hot seat for cross-examination by legal teams.

These will include lawyers representing miners killed by the police on August 16.

# Marikana visit sparks family grief

## Commission looked at places where police and miners died

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**A** SITE visit by the Farlam Commission of Inquiry opened old wounds for the families of those whose loved ones were killed in the violent Marikana wage dispute.

Elizabeth Maubane wept uncontrollably as she approached a stick in the ground with a bright orange cone marked "1" placed over it.

She placed flowers on spot 1, where the body of her brother, Warrant Officer Hendrick Tsietsi Monene, lay on August 13, 2012 after he was killed by striking miners.

Monene and his colleague, Warrant Officer Sello Lepaku, were allegedly killed with sharp objects in a confronta-

tion with striking miners they were escorting.

Three miners were also killed and their bodies were also left lying in the open.

The commission visited the scene near Karee mine stores in a bid to get a clear understanding of the incident by retracing the steps of the strikers and the police from their first interaction, ending at the spots where lives were lost.

Police and mineworkers' witnesses agreed on some versions and differed on others as they took the commission through the vast scene where a group of armed miners walking along a railway line from the direction of the Karee 3 shaft towards the Nkaneng informal settlement and the koppie – the meeting point for

striking miners – met North West deputy police commissioner General William Mpembe and a group of officers who blocked their way.

The commission had seen video footage of Mpembe urging the strikers to lay down their weapons – an assortment of sharp weapons and sticks – and disperse.

The group refused to give in to his demands, and through their leader, who became known after his death as "the man in the green blanket", Mgcineni "Mambush" Noki, said they wanted to join others on the koppie.

Noki was among 34 miners shot dead by the police three days later near the koppie.

He was seen in the video obstinately telling Mpembe

they were not fighting anyone, and urging the police to escort them to the koppie. A while later, two policemen were hacked and killed.

“  
**Your brother  
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”

The commission has heard that two miners were shot dead by the police during the bloody confrontation. Another body was found near a shack with stab wounds, the commission had previously been told.

Mpembe, who is due to

testify at the commission assisted by other officers, pointed to spots where police Nyala vehicles were moving while escorting the group, and where the shooting had started.

He said some officers, including the dead men, had alighted from the Nyalas and ~~were on foot when attacked~~ Mpembe said police had used teargas, rubber bullets and stun grenades in a bid to disperse the strikers.

Meanwhile, strikers' witness Xolani Nzuza said they had been walking in a group when the police suddenly started shooting at them.

More details on the incident are expected to be heard when witnesses testify at the commission after it has familiarised itself with the scene of

the massacre.

For Maubane, a public order police officer herself, being at the spot where her brother lost his life in the line of duty was too much to handle.

She continued to weep as Judge Ian Farlam listened to witnesses' short accounts of ~~her brother ended up lying there with his body covered in wounds.~~

On her knees, she screamed as tears rolled down her face: "Why... Why?"

Judge Farlam later approached Maubane, put a hand around her in a comforting gesture and said: "Your brother would have been very proud of you."

While most of the attention has been on the August 16, 2012 killing of 34 miners, the com-

mission will also look into other deaths, including those of the police officers, two Lonmin security officials, a National Union of Mineworkers shop steward, as well as two other men who were killed in the early days of the strike.

The commission will re- ~~pounce on Monday with veteran~~ Riah Phiyega being cross-examined by legal teams, including those representing victims killed by the police.

Two groups – the Democratic Left Front and the Marikana Support Group – were to hold community meetings in Marikana today to endorse a drive calling for Phiyega's dismissal "over her direct responsibility in failing to prevent the Marikana massacre".

# Tears flow at Marikana horror visit

## PHIYEGA CALLS FOR IMPROVED TRAINING FOR COPS

DUDU DUBE AND SIYABONGA  
MKHWANAZI

AS POLICE Commissioner Riah Phiyega faced Parliament's portfolio committee in Cape Town yesterday, families of two police officers retraced their steps leading to the spots in Marikana in the North West where their loved ones were hacked by a mob of Lonmin mineworkers last year.

Phiyega told Parliament's committee on security and constitutional development that the training of officers was important.

She said recent events including at Marikana where ~~two~~ <sup>many</sup> miners were shot by police during the strike in which the two policemen were killed, had shown that officers would have to receive training with one of the focus areas being that of discipline.

Phiyega said she had a meeting recently with 1500 senior managers in the police around this issue.

Earlier, committee chairperson Thetja Mofokeng, an ANC MP, said they were closely following proceedings at the Marikana Commission of Inquiry.

Meanwhile, the commission for

the first time shifted focus to the two murdered policemen.

The commission and the families of the murdered police officers visited the K3-Shaft site of their killing. The families of the miners responsible for the deaths also accompanied them and shared their pain.

The inspection included the area where North West deputy police commissioner William Mpembe had tried to disarm about 200 striking mineworkers armed with traditional weapons who are believed to have overpowered the police and killed two of them.

Six orange cones marked spots where the policemen and four other people had lain dead.

Next to one of the cones lay a bunch of dried flowers. It was where the body of WO Tsietsi Monene was lying and his sister knelt and cried when it was pointed out.

As the head of the commission, Judge Ian Farlam, tried to console the sister, she cried in anguish: "He is my brother, my brother."

Mpembe, who is expected to testify before the commission

after national commissioner Phiyega - who testified on Monday and Tuesday - completes her cross-examination, relived the events of August 16 during the site visit.

Monene was based in the Mpumalanga public policing unit and was one of the many officers who were bused from other provinces to deal with the 3 000-strong mine strike.

"I also want to point out that WO Sello Lepaaku was stabbed and hacked in that spot, right next to that cone. He was still alive and we picked him up, put him in the car and drove to hospital. He died

The commission will resume on Monday when Phiyega's cross-examination continues.

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**IN MOURNING:** The sister of Tsietsi Manano, the policeman who was killed during the strike at Marikana, cries as the commission goes through the scene where he was killed. *FILED BY THE NEW AGE*