

SOUTH AFRICA

Man who lied about Gabisile Shabane killing sent to jail

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Gabisile Shabane and her 15-month-old nephew were taken from their home in Witbank at gunpoint.

Image: SAPS

A man who lied about having information on the Witbank girl who was kidnapped and killed for her body parts earlier this year has been sentenced to five years behind bars, Mpumalanga police said on Sunday.

Sabelo Kubheka, 29, was found guilty of extortion after he tried to get money from the family in return for the safe return of 13-year-old Gabisile Shabane and her one-year-old nephew, Nkosikhona Ngwenya.

Shabane lived with albinism, while her nephew Ngwenya was believed to have been mistaken for another child in the house, also living with albinism.

The pair were taken at gunpoint from their home in Vosman in Witbank on January 28.

"The sentencing was imposed by the Witbank Regional Court on Thursday," said Brigadier Leonard Hlathi.

"During the time when the investigation was on its early stage with no clue who abducted the children, Kubheka featured himself in the midst of the investigation by claiming that he knew about the whereabouts of the children, eventually called the family and demanded a ransom under the guise that he will help them find the victims," Hlathi said.

"The matter was brought to the attention of the investigating team of the case who immediately instituted a probe. It was during the probe when a search for him was launched, traced and arrested at Vosloorus in Gauteng, on 7 February 2018. Kubheka has since been kept in custody since his arrest."

Meanwhile, four people have been arrested in connection with Shabane and Ngwenya's death.

"The four suspects who are linked with the kidnapping and the murder of the children, Thokozani Msibi, aged 32, Thulani Thobela, aged 26, Donie Cavin Boshielo, aged 22 and Mthobisi Brilliant Mkhize, aged 26, are expected to stand trial at the Circuit of the Pretoria High Court sitting in Delmas from August 19 2019," said Hlathi.

Shabane's headless body had been found buried in a shallow grave in Cullinan, east of Pretoria. It was understood that some of her other parts were found in premises belonging to one of the accused in the matter, while Ngwenya had been thrown into a swamp.

It was believed that the teenage girl had been killed for her body parts.

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