



Strydom ordering hits on witnesses from behind bars

Mooi-nooi/ Rustenburg – The community is abuzz as startling details of the Mooi-nooi murders come to light. An interview aired on Carte Blanche on Sunday evening, 9 September, revealed how murder accused Koos Strydom ordered hits on state witnesses from prison. It has been more than nine months since Strydom was arrested in connection with a case where a couple was kidnapped, raped and killed, their bodies soaked in acid and burned beyond recognition with petrol. The murdered couple, Joey van Niekerk, 32, and Anisha van Niekerk, 30, went missing on 10 December 2017 after leaving their home in Mooi-nooi to make arrangements for Joey's father's funeral. Video footage recorded the unsuspecting Strydom from inside the visiting area of the jail, discussing a hit on one of the witnesses with a man, an "associate" of the well-known assassin 'Big Man'. Strydom then made a deal with the "associate" where they agreed on R25 000 per hit. The deal involved eight people that needed to be taken out at a cost of R200 000 in total. Strydom is recorded telling the man: "My wife will pay. Contact her, she is in Rustenburg. She

will pay you in cash."

Initially, eight people were arrested in connection with the case but three have since turned state witnesses. There is now concern for the safety of the three state witnesses; Maroecka, Moses and Vincent.

The eight accused were: Aaron Sithole, 23, Jack Sithole, 18, Koos Strydom, 53, Alex Modau, 36, Moses Rakubu, 33, Vincent Strydom, 29, Maroecka Opperman, 18, and Mercia Strydom, 21. When Carte Blanche's journalist, the "associate" approached Mercia Strydom, Koos' wife, she said that she had to confirm with Koos first, but later denied it altogether. In their first appearance before the Brits Magistrates' Court, the accused hardly showed any remorse for the murders. The case was transferred to the High Court in Pretoria. The pain and trauma left by Strydom's alleged murder spree is taking its toll on the family members of the deceased. The brother of Anisha, Wynand van Niekerk, speaking about the gruesome murders said: "Not a day goes by that we don't think of my sister and Joey, and the terror they had to go through."



Joey and Anisha van Niekerk.

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GRENSWAG HIGH SCHOOL: ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN

Rustenburg – Observing the much-talked about stretch of the R510 road next to Grenswag High School, with speeding taxis, busses, private cars and the screams of learners crossing the busy road, is very unsettling. Parents are understandably very worried about the situation. The R510 road presents a real threat to the learners who cross the road daily. There are no speed humps, stop signs, zebra crossings or any other safety measures in place to ensure that children can cross the road safely. Teachers told *Platinum Weekly* that they are at their wits' end. "We've drawn up a petition and approached local government; but despite the fact that two learners have been hit in less than four weeks, our concerns seem to fall on deaf ears." The chairperson of the school's governing body, Moiloa Tiro told *Platinum Weekly* that the school is hard at work to highlight the seriousness of the matter to the authorities. "We have issued two letters in which we raised our concerns about the safety of our learners with the municipality," said Moiloa. "The Rustenburg Local Municipality has been sending us from pillar to post. If they build speed-humps along the R510, it will be a great start to ensure the safety of our learners." It seems as if no one at local government wants to take responsibility for the dilemma. If nothing is done, sooner or later someone would have to take the blame.

Two learners from Grenswag High School crossing the R510 road, cautious of vehicles approaching at high speeds from behind the blind rise.

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