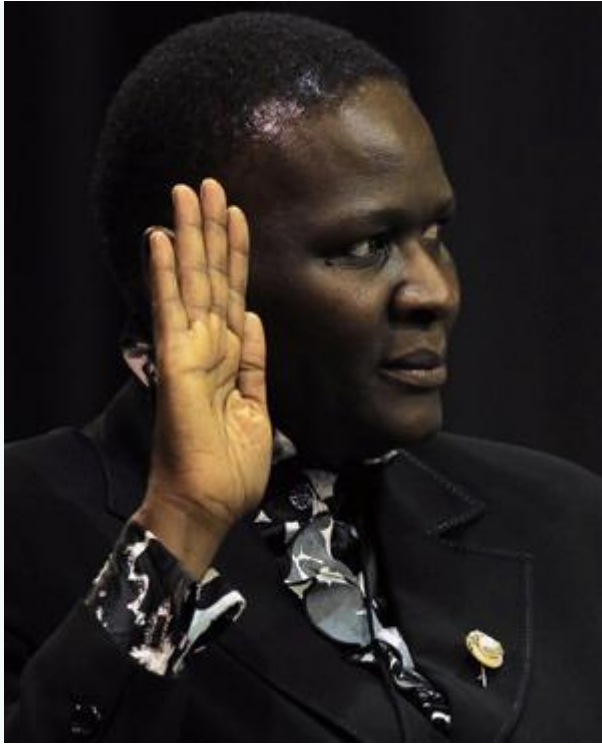


Marikana contradictions haunt Phiyega

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Rustenburg - National Police Chief **Riah Phiyega** was questioned by the evidence leading team at the Farlam Commission regarding the statement she issued to the media a day after 34 mineworkers were shot and killed by police in Marikana, North West.

On Monday, advocate Mbuyiseli Madlanga of the evidence leading team said there was a contradiction between Phiyega's statement issued on 17 August and the opening statement submitted to the commission by the SA Police Service (SAPS).

"Why would you not be surprised if it [the SAPS statement] says something different to your media statement, which you said you continue to stand by?" Madlanga asked.

He said there was a "material difference" between Phiyega's statement and that of the police.

On 17 August, Phiyega was quoted as saying that police officers had had no choice but to "employ force to protect themselves" from the group of miners.

She said: "The militant group stormed towards the police firing shots and wielding dangerous weapons, and the police retreated and were forced to utilise maximum force to defend themselves.

"Police retreated systematically and were forced to utilise maximum force to defend themselves."

On Monday, Madlanga asked Phiyega to explain why her version of events was different from that of the police regarding the miners' action at a site referred to at the commission as "Scene 2".

"I am going to demonstrate to you that the SAPS opening statement does not suggest that any of the protesters stormed at the police firing shots at them. Do you accept that that's a material difference to what you said in your statement?" he asked.

Phiyega disagreed.

After reading an extract of the SAPS statement, Madlanga went on: "Do you see that in this part of the [SAPS] statement there is no reference of the protesters who were firing and also charging at the police?"

"Show me, national commissioner, where that paragraph [of the police statement] refers to protesters that stormed at the police and fired shots at them. Show me where that paragraph said so," said Madlanga.

Phiyega said in her statement she had focused on highlighting that the protesters, wielding dangerous weapons, had charged at police officers.

Sangoma gunned down

Earlier, the commission heard that the sangoma believed to have performed rituals on protesting Lonmin mineworkers in August last year had been gunned down.

As the public hearings resumed in the Rustenburg Civic Centre, advocate Ishmael Semanya, for the police, told retired judge **Ian Farlam** that the man was shot on Sunday.

"It was with a deep sense of shock to learn about the assassination of the sangoma [implicated] in the Marikana muti rituals. He was gunned down in the early hours of yesterday morning," said Semanya.

He said police had been making efforts to bring the sangoma to testify as a witness before the commission.

No further details were given but Farlam said the murder was "obviously a serious matter".

Information on social networks indicated that the sangoma was killed at his home in Bizana, Eastern Cape.

In October last year, Daluvuyo Bongo, a branch secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), was killed before he testified before the commission.

On 16 August last year, 34 striking mineworkers were shot dead and 78 were injured when the police opened fire near Lonmin's platinum mine in Marikana.

Ten people, including two police officers and two security guards, were killed near the mine in the preceding week.