

“Violence at hostels initially saw the Xhosa residents driven out of the hostels. The violence then spread to surrounding locations. This was called “indiscriminate violence”; but police were involved, they were not protecting the community.”

- Francina Mthimkulu

Scars of the violence remain today in Katorus – in burnt out houses dotting the physical landscape of the communities, in the physical and psychological impact on victims, survivors and perpetrators, in people with HIV from rape.... Often these realities remain buried under the surface of contemporary day-to-day survival – unspoken, unaddressed, unresolved.

“Even in the TRC, in research, sexual violence has not been seen as part of our oppression, where women struggled with their bodies. Many of those women that were raped by 32 Battalion have HIV. We have no proof that that is how they got HIV. There is no reparation for this at all.”

what happened here

The workshop participants see themselves as members of a stable community who faced unprovoked attack intent on destroying their unity and cohesion as a community. They talked of the wave of violence that began with the “ethnic cleansing” of the hostels, attacking and expelling anyone seen as opposed to Inkhata (often simplified to anyone seen as Xhosa). After this period, in mid-1990, Inkatha groups from the “cleansed” hostels attacked surrounding neighbourhoods. Workshop participants saw the police as fully complicit in these attacks – directly involved in assaults, or indirectly, escorting the attackers into the community, teargassing residents trying to defend their homes and families, turning off electricity to give darkness to hide the attacks. Some participants spoke of a ‘3rd Force’ – pro-apartheid forces that used violence to destabilise black communities, undermine the liberation movement, and prevent a negotiated settlement.

Death and injury were only a part of the violence. Workshop participants spoke of widespread looting, of attackers taking ‘the spoils of war’. Looted goods were kept in hostels, taken back to KZN or sold in pawn shops. Looting paid for food and drink, and also weapons and ammunition. Yet looting has been ignored by most studies of violence in the East Rand; no-one received compensation for looted goods.

In areas where residents fled from the violence, their houses were occupied by the opposing side. Refugees – from places like Mandela squatter camp, and Crossroads – did not dare to return to their homes to collect their goods. And refugees would not pay rent for the house from which they had fled; bonds and rentals lapsed, until the houses were no longer even registered as theirs. In 1993, the Katlehong town records building burnt down, destroying all records of ownership. By 1994, over 1000 families in Katlehong alone had lost their homes (according to the Town Clerk).

rape and gender violence as political act

Participants argued that our historical records have ignored or suppressed the use of rape as an act of war during the East Rand.

The written record mentions a few accusations of rape, but few rape charges were laid; even fewer came to court. The Thokoza ANC collected evidence of rape by members of the 32 Battalion. Several men from the hostels were killed by crowds who claimed they had raped women residents. The police and military denied vehemently that rape occurred.

During the violence, survivors of rape were told to lay criminal charges at police stations. One press story tells of a woman who gave an affidavit that she had been abducted and gang-raped at Tokoza hostel, where two ISU policemen joined the rape. Police said she must lay rape charges at the police station next to the hostel, and go with police into the hostel to identify perpetrators. She did not show up to do this, and the case collapsed.

The TRC refused to define either rape or looting as “political” acts; therefore perpetrators could not apply for amnesty for these acts. As a result, of some 32000 incidents investigated by the TRC, only 6 dealt with rape. In the 1990s, government paid out sums of money to women who claimed they had been raped during the violence – many residents saw this as “compensation” and tacit acknowledgement of the rape. However, government claimed that pay-outs were made with the explicit understanding that they did not recognise that the women been raped.

After that workshop discussion, two women in the group privately commented that they had been raped as part of the violence. That rape was their personal story.



What I show here (drawn in the strip across the bottom of the sheet) is what I saw during the violence between the taxi organisations. These taxis were killing everyone – going to schools, killing the students, even in the community. We in Katlehong ran to the police station looking for safety. Then we ran out of the Katlehong police station, we ran to Tembisa.

In Tembisa we found the taxi owners were sitting, having their meeting... I was running with my younger child, he was a boy. The taxi owners asked my child why we were running. The child said the Zulu taxi drivers were killing us at school. I was shivering, the child did not know these were the owners of the people who were killing us. I was shivering. The same group asked the boy, "who are you, what tribe are you belonging to?" He said: "I am a Zulu". They were laughing – they could see he did not know anything.

That was only the breakfast: that day I went to sleep facing a big violence, where everyone was involved.

On this day (top of picture) we saw a group of people coming along Zone 1 Street with red headbands.

They were just singing. But after that I saw, people were killed, houses were burned, the bodies were burned. Even in the streets people were dying.

The worst day, I won't forget that, even today. One day with my sister we saw dead bodies. People lying across the street. There were hippos, helicopters, men with rifles looking for people to shoot. Dead bodies were here (covered bodies laid out in strip, in picture). We didn't know how to hide ourselves.

Those bodies, we found old men, young people, all dead. What transpired, those hippos were shooting, they killed the people. During those days shootings were our daily bread.

In 1993, November, my sister was shot. While people were watching outside, my sister saw one person killed. She helped cover the body. She was not killed that day, but they came back the next day. They caught her and raped her, then shot her four times with an AK, in the head. Her body was scratched and cut on the back, especially on the buttocks.

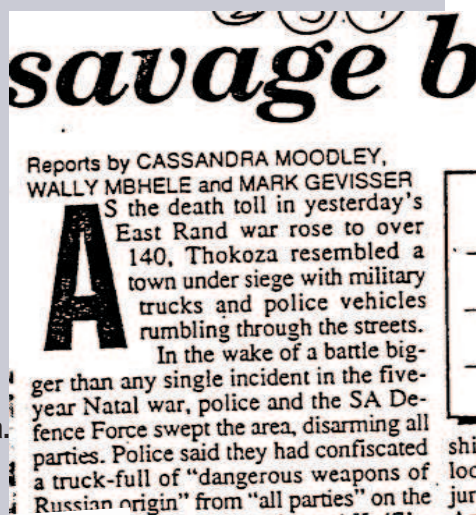
**We need to tell our stories, here in Katlehong.
We need people to remember our pain, to know
that we have paid for our democracy.**



15/9/90:
13 killed 55 injured
in fighting “between Inkatha supporters, non-Zulu hostel dwellers and Phola Park residents” – hundreds flee Phola Park

Troops move into Thokoza, then Katlehong and Vosloorus; estimated 55 dead. Attacks by groups of hostel dwellers on Crossroad squatter camp (Katlehong) – 60 dead; residents says attackers escorted by police.

Violence spreads: by August 20, police say 261 dead in East Rand, including KwaThema, Duduza, Wattville and Thokoza.



Razed ... the

By CASSANDRA MOODLEY and WALLY MBHELE
 THE deserted Khalanyoni hostel in Thokoza was set ablaze yesterday after a night of renewed fighting in the East Rand township which left 28 dead and one seriously injured.

The latest outburst of internecine clashes on the East Rand at the weekend pushed the death toll for the area to 203 since last Monday.

Yesterday a cloud of black smoke shrouded the Khalanyoni hostel, where fighting first erupted on the East Rand last Monday.

The hostel was set aflame at 8am and as the rooms blazed, angry youth hammered the walls, beat the corrugated metal roof and set fire to the

a participant's words

(from detailed interview with Michael Phama, p.24.)

“The political violence in the East Rand started as follows – which was caused by the apartheid regime:”

Sunday 12/8/90: IFP members fled from Vereeniging hostels to Khalanyoni hostel, behind there was Dunusa squatter camp; which had stood there since 1987 with different nations living in unity.

13/8/90 Monday: On Monday night (in the Khalanyoni hostel) Xhosa-speaking people were killed by IFP members after a meeting held by the IFP members. Survivors fled to Dunusa and some to other nearby locations.

14/8/90 Tuesday: Nobody managed to go to work; a meeting was quickly called to assess the situation. Still in confusion stage we made a firm resolution to unite ourselves and monitor the situation, and to stay in groups.

14/8/90 Tuesday 8 am: A crowd of white police came out of Khalanyoni hostel, and dispersed us. They promised to monitor the situation and to stop the attacks.

14/8/90: Four men were killed by bullets from block 3 in Khalanyoni hostel while walking unaware along Dunusa streets. Nothing was done by police.

Again a meeting was called and a decision to protect, patrol and monitor and to check the motive behind the attacks was taken.

15/8/90: Attackers (IFP) from Khalanyoni hostel shot guns at people in Dunusa. It was the first day of our defence: many people were killed, some injured, and shacks full of property were burnt to ashes. We managed to chase them out of Khalanyoni hostel. That same day, Khalanyoni hostel was destroyed.

The community called Khalanyoni the “forest of enemies”. But then violence spread to other areas in the East Rand.

16/8/90 & 17/8/90: At night, we heard news of attacks at Crossroads and killings of Xhosa-speaking people -- the ANC people that the IFP called “Congolose” (meaning people of the African National Congress). ANC people were chased out of Crossroads; there were accusations that they were shot by Stability

Unit soldiers. People fleeing attacks at Crossroads then formed Mandela and Holomisa squatter camps.

We also heard that Linela hostel in Katlehong had been attacked and destroyed by residents.

18/8/90: Violence spread to taxis, trains, and all over the East Rand. People were kidnapped and taken to hostels and killed. The Internal Stability Unit were informed but they ignored the complaints, as they were also involved.

18/8/90- 2:30 pm. As the Community Self-Defence Unit, we went to Thokoza Hostel (Mtshayazafe) to rescue our people. When we were behind Basotho School near Mtshayanzafe Hostel soldiers shot at us, killing and injuring many people. The survivors managed to retreat back to Dunusa Park.

18/8/90 – 5:30: Kwesine Hostel Dwellers (IFP) attacked us and we fought back, although they came with hippos and soldiers from the Stability Unit helped them.

21/8/90 – 7:40 pm: We were awakened by gunshots from Angus Station, and a big flash of light. Again we fought back and forced them out.

22/8/90 – 7:40 pm – 2pm, 23/8/90: The flashing light was again the signal to fire; again it was a long night where they managed to kill many people. The hostel dwellers were helped again by soldiers. They called now and then for Peter and Rasta --these were white soldiers. We fought them for seven hours non-stop.

23/8/90 – 8 am: Four hippos came early in the morning with a white lady looking for her husband Peter; the lady and the SADF soldiers informed us that Peter had been forced to give up his leave to come and kill Dunusa ANC members. But the corpses had already been taken away; they could not find him there.

23/8/90- 4 pm. Same day at 4 pm a police hippo came and shot at us from Vereeniging Road, killing people.

From this time for three months (September, October, and November), at night SADF soldiers would come to “monitor the situation”.

23 August police report:
42 burned and mutilated bodies in Vosloorus; 17 in Daveyton, 43 in Tembisa. 300 shacks burned in Tokoza. Crossroads “in ruins”. Reef death toll stated at 510.

Killings in East Rand over this month also involve:
men in minibus firing AKs at pedestrians and cars; hostel dwellers kidnapping and killing residents in hostels; individual shooting; ongoing clashes between hostel dwellers and residents; police do not intervene as they claim they are attacked.

12/9 89 reported killed
when groups of Zulus armed with AKs attack residents in Vosloorus; 400 shacks burnt in Phola Park overnight;

13/9 6000 refugees from
Tokoza, Vosloorus and Katlehong seek refuge in Natalspruit hospital; Phola Park in flames, 1000 shacks looted and burnt overnight; reports

of “police and mysterious balaclava-clad white men” helping Inkatha attackers; one white man wearing SAP badge killed (police deny this).

14/9: 27 killed in Denver train massacre, over 230 injured.
Police put Reef death toll “since outbreak of violence” at 757.

Negotiations threatened — Mandela

Townships under siege as battles rage

EAST Rand townships were in a state of siege last night as battles raged through the night.

Heavily armed ANC supporters sealed off entrances to Katlehong, Vosloorus and Thokoza with boulders and tree trunks.

Gunfire could be heard and fires could be seen from the outskirts. Armed residents manned all intersections. Vosloorus was totally inaccessible.

Large numbers of police congregated at Thokoza and Katlehong police stations. Some said they were “too scared” to go into the townships as they did not have protective vehicles. A “few” Casspirs were patrolling the areas, they said.

A police spokesman confirmed violence in the three townships, but could give no details of deaths or injuries.

The latest fighting followed a warning by ANC deputy president Nelson Mandela that negotiations would be jeopardised unless the full powers of state were used to stamp out the violence, which had claimed the lives of more than 600 people in the last month.

Curfew: Streets are deserted

by Sapa, Sandy Baer
and Tony Stirling

THE streets of East Rand townships under curfew were almost totally deserted last night with only the occasional patrolling police vehicle or taxi to be seen.

A 9 pm to 4 am curfew was imposed by police in Tokoza, Vosloorus, Katlehong and Soweto with effect from last night.

The occasional pedestrian was able to produce papers authorising his presence beyond curfew time.

Zonk'izizwe - where terror and death stalk at night ^{Sow 23/11/90}

THE latest carnage on the Reef seems to have ended, leaving more than 45 people dead and many of its residents refugees in neighbouring townships.

The Zonk'izizwe squatter camp, near Vosloorus, became the latest tribal war ground. Allegations there are that hostel inmates who fled Katlehong during the fighting in September, attacked other community members.

The peaceful lives of more than 11 000 families became a nightmare overnight as men camped outside the area in the veld and fought by night. Every morning the body count rose.

A day-to-day account of the fighting was this week given by Mr Eric Ntshiqela, a resident and the chairman of a shack dwellers association called Vulindlela United Communities of South Africa (Vucosa).

"It was a sad situation," he said.

"The name of our camp means 'For all nations' and here we were killing each other on tribal a basis."

Like in all violent incidents, Ntshiqela's account of events included terrifying tales alleging the involvement of police in the battle.

He claimed they openly armed and supported the ex-hostel faction.

Disarmed by police

"Two police vehicles registered BXF370B and BDZ401B patrolled the area through out. Policemen used to disarm us and take our weapons while we were watching them arm the other faction," Ntshiqela, who had been sleeping in the veld for the past week said.

14/9: Police in Casspirs cut electricity to over 22 000 houses in Katlehong for non-payment of bills; attacked by residents with petrol bombs. Katlehong already dealing with refugees from Phola Park attacks the night before.

26/9 Curfew imposed in Thokoza, Vosloorus, Katlehong and Soweto from 9 pm to 4 am

23/11 45 dead as hostel dwellers attack Zonki'Zizwe squatter camp near Vosloorus; witnesses claim police assisted hostel dwellers to attack residents; that police helped IFP group to kill 14 residents. Monday morning 19 bodies found in veld.

28/11 150 armed men attack Mandela View squatter camp, Katlehong, killing 11 residents at meeting near the camp (called following attack on Crossroads the night before). Survivors say police in yellow casspir removed bodies of attackers who were killed; police collected the 11 dead residents the next morning. ANC video from ZonkiZiswe shows police escorting Inkatha group to attack residents.

Residents flee Zonki'zizwe and Mandela squatter camps; Inkatha supporters occupy their houses, to make them IFP strongholds.

3/12: State imposes curfew 9 pm to 4 pm for: Thokoza, Katlehong, Sebokeng, Bekkersdaal, Vosloorus and

Peace rally panic in Tokoza ^{Sow 26/11/90}

RESIDENTS of Tokoza on the East Rand scattered in panic when Inkatha Freedom Party supporters fired a barrage of shots in the air minutes after a peace rally yesterday.

Gunfire was heard as more than 3 000 armed supporters made their way from the Tokoza stadium to the local hostels. No-one was injured in the incident.

No policemen were present during the "peace rally".

Leaders of the Inkatha

to disband.

Inkatha Youth Brigade secretary Mr Themba Msomi said the "ANC-aligned TCA" was not representative of all community organisations.

He said the TCA had imposed its decisions on the community by calling for consumer boycotts and stayaways which were dividing organisations.

Calling for "unity of

By MATSHUBE MFOLOE

fighting would be solved if people learned to respect each other.

He said it would be "useless for Mr Nelson Mandela and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to shake hands" while the

people on the ground continued killing each other.

"The solution to the problem is with us and not with individuals," he said.

Mduba said stayaways and consumer boycotts divided the community because "they are imposed on the people".

"Inkatha only hears of a boycott; we are never consulted," he said.

Mduba said organisations calling for protest actions should "force only their members to participate in these actions and leave Inkatha alone".

Tokoza has been the scene of clashes between Inkatha and ANC which have claimed the lives of more more than 800 since August.

A CAMERAMAN STANDS HIS GROUND IN THE MIDDLE OF A THOKOZA BATTLE TO SHOOT THIS EXTRAORDINARY SEQUENCE

Did police take sides? Judge for

Weekly Mail 14/12/90



1 Police arrive in a Casspir and inspect a man injured in a clash a few minutes earlier



2 A police medic climbs out and examines the injured man



3 Police find and inspect a second man, also seriously injured



4 Police leave, abandoning the two men. Eyewitnesses say police discovered the men were not Zulu



5 Coming down the road, towards the two injured men, is a hostel dwellers' "impi"



6 The impi comes across the two men, wounded and helpless, and beats and stabs them to death

Tembisa after 71 people killed in 3 days (52 in Thokoza, 8 in Tembisa, 6 in Katlehong.) Survivors in Thokoza say police in casspirs shot them.

12/12 52 people killed overnight in clashes in Phola Park and Thokoza (over 100 dead in week). Phola Park residents say 3000 Zulus attacked them; IFP says ANC attacked hostels in Thokoza. SADF deployed to area; surround Phola Park by razor wire; 32 Battalion stationed at the entrance in razor wire enclosure. Journalists barred from area.

14/12 Police say 124 dead in Thokoza in previous two weeks. SAIRR says police only report on 1/3 of actual deaths.

"10/12/90: SADF went to 'solve the situation' after the community of Thokoza were forced to join the IFP; and we also fought back."

- Phola Park Self-Defense Unit member Michael Phama