



PRESS RELEASE

3rd Degree: A community under siege
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Since 2004, fourteen children have disappeared in the small community of **Modimolle in Limpopo**. Eight of their tiny decomposing bodies were found in the surrounding mountains.

Three survivors were raped, strangled and left for dead and the other three are still missing. The police believe that a serial killer is on the loose and on 31 January this year they arrested a suspect, 33-year-old Patric Mulaudzi.

At the time of his arrest the police said that they had circumstantial evidence that linked Mulaudzi to most of the killings.

However, about a month later Mulaudzi was released after the state withdrew nine charges of rape and 10 of murder against him. DNA samples taken from the crime scenes did not match his.

Then on 7 April 2008, just two weeks after his release, another victim was found murdered, raped and buried in a shallow grave. Five-year-old Maria Mafora became the eighth child to be found murdered in Modimolle.

Some have lamented the fact that no progress has been made in solving the case. They say that when victims are poor, few resources are thrown at an investigation.

They say that in cases where the victim is a child of high profile or wealthy parents, no effort is spared to track down the killer. The media has also been criticised for not giving this story the publicity it deserves.