

SOUTH AFRICA

# Former security cop in Ahmed Timol case to face murder charge

BY PENWELL DLAMINI - 29 July 2018 - 15:24



Former apartheid security branch officer Sergeant Joao "Jan" Rodrigues will appear in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court on Monday on a charge of murder in connection with the death of activist Ahmed Timol nearly 47 years ago.

This was confirmed on Sunday by the National Prosecuting Authority.

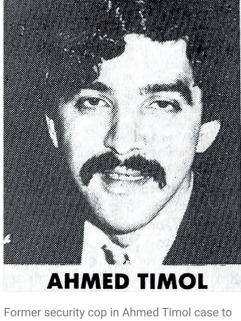
"He will appear in Johannesburg Magistrate's Court tomorrow, charged with murder and defeating the ends of justice," said NPA Gauteng spokesperson Phindi Louw.

Eighty-year-old Rodrigues gave evidence in last year's reopened inquest into Timol's death in the Pretoria High Court which replaced the 1972 court's suicide finding with one of murder.

He was a member of the security branch who pushed paperwork and administration and is the last known person to have seen Timol alive before the 29-year-old activist allegedly fell to his death from a 10th floor window at John Vorster Square (now known as Johannesburg central police station) in 1971.

Rodrigues told the inquest that he had "never touched" Timol and he had declined to write the statement his seniors had allegedly wanted.

What he presented to the court was a repetition of the statement he had made at the first inquest into Timol's death in 1972. In his statement at that inquest, the former cop said that Timol had jumped to his death after he had asked Rodrigues to accompany him to the bathroom.



**AHMED TIMOL**

Former security cop in Ahmed Timol case to face murder charge.

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At the time Rodrigues entered the office where Timol was held, two policemen, Captain JZ van Niekerk and Captain JH Gloy, were inside with him. They had interrogated him.

After receiving word that more people had been detained, Van Niekerk and Gloy had left Rodrigues alone with Timol to guard him.

It was then that Timol had requested to go to the bathroom and had moved swiftly to jump out of the window after Rodrigues accepted had his request, Rodrigues said in his testimony.

According to Rodrigues, Timol allegedly went to the window while Rodrigues was moving a chair that was blocking the path.

"I saw a movement from the corner of my right eye. I quickly looked up and I saw Timol moving," he testified.

"I tried my best. I moved as fast as possible, but I could not reach him."

During the reopened inquest, Judge Billy Motlue warned Rodrigues that if at the end of the inquest he was found to be implicated in Timol's death, he could face prosecution.

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Rodrigues did not appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and therefore does not have amnesty for any crimes he committed or was an accessory to during apartheid.

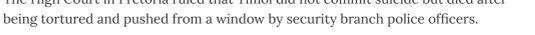
Timol died on October 27 1971 while in police detention at John Vorster Square.

An inquest held in 1972 found that he had committed suicide.

However, Timol's family asked for the inquest to be reopened because new information had come to light.

The High Court in Pretoria ruled that Timol did not commit suicide but died after being tortured and pushed from a window by security branch police officers.

The court overturned a 40-year-old inquest finding that endorsed the police's version that Timol had jumped to his death.



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**VHO-VENDALIOUS MPESU** · 22 days ago  
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If he did it then he deserves punishment I dont care about his age.  
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**Solly Mothabela** · 23 days ago  
Waste of tie this old geezer will not eve survive the trial. As long as we now know the truth.  
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**Kupe** → Solly Mothabela · 22 days ago  
Zuma is only 5 younger than him, yet you want him to face the full might of the law. His crime - corruption. This man's crime - murder and serious human rights abuses.  
Hypocrisy much?  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Pieter Vorster** → Kupe · 22 days ago  
Really, you were there and saw him murder Timol?  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Kupe** → Pieter Vorster · 22 days ago  
You mean the same way you were there when Zuma did all that he's accused of and you saw him?  
Courts determine if people are guilty or not, in case you didn't know, Mr eyewitness.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Pieter Vorster** → Kupe · 22 days ago  
There is evidence that Zuma committed crimes, there is none that this man killed Timol or was in any way connected to his death, he was not even part of the duo who were responsible for interrogation.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Resurrection** → Pieter Vorster · 22 days ago  
Mr Vorster, there is evidence that he pushed him out of the window at "John Vorster". You should be knowing better.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Kupe** → Pieter Vorster · 22 days ago  
So we must all take your word for it and forget about a court case with trained judges. You say so and that's the end?  
If he's as innocent as you say, the court and judges will see that.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Pieter Vorster** → Kupe · 22 days ago  
So far not one a shred of evidence has been produced, everyone knows they are looking for a scapegoat  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Resurrection** → Pieter Vorster · 22 days ago  
Don't be so defensive. Sit down man. Let the law take its course.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**RSA.MommaCyndi** · 22 days ago  
GOOD! It is past time.  
Well done to the Timol family for not giving up and forcing the issue. I just wish the other TRC recommendations would also be followed up on.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Eisenherz Eisenherz** · 22 days ago  
i hope he gets prosecuted and convicted, but furthermore i hope he finally tells what exactly happened. I am pretty sure he did not tell the truth. In my mind Gloy and van Niekerk were the main culprits (unfortunately the are not alive to be prosecuted). I believe the Timol was pushed off the roof of the building (and not out of the window from the office) - that is after a period of some days of torture. Rodrigues himself might not have been present, and was used as a cover to tell a different story. So at minimum he is guilty of perjury (lying under oath)  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Sindelity** · 22 days ago  
50 years after the event. May truth and justice prevail...  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Kinky** → Sindelity · 22 days ago  
If he did it then he deserves punishment  
1 ^ | v · Reply · Share

**Sindelity** → Kinky · 22 days ago  
Yes dear. Thats implied afterall...  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Kupe** · 22 days ago  
I'm just here to see whether the people who always call for justice are consistent.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Simple Man** · 23 days ago  
He must be prosecuted.  
World Wat II ended in 1945, and yet Nazi War Criminals are still being arrested and prosecuted - with some in their late 90's and on wheelchairs. No one has ever said these prosecutions from crimes committed between 1939 - 45 must stop, and yet those crimes committed until as recent as 1994 must stop...!  
Let him face the law.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**2step\_MaDhamin** · 23 days ago  
So MANY "committed suicide"  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Lucy Afarensis** · 23 days ago  
Aaaargh!!!  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Expatonic** · 23 days ago  
We all know the value of a Martyr. Timol was not an illogical nor uneducated man. Hear me out?  
If he had been tortured already, knew the beast he was dealing with and that he was far enough up the chain for enough people to take notice, why not make sure your death is not swept under the carpet as an "accident"?  
He was going to die in custody anyway, probably soon after he got back from the toilet? Why would an 80 year old lie? Who's left to protect?  
Just a line of thought.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Eisenherz Eisenherz** → Expatonic · 23 days ago  
no, I dont think so. too many other things dont add up., the time of the incidence, the height and distance, the injuries etc... I hope Rodrigues finally tells the truth  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Llewellyn** · 23 days ago  
Is the state also going to pay his legal fee as they are paying Zumas costs?  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Stevovo Steven** → Llewellyn · 23 days ago  
Not the state, AfriForum  
^ | v · Reply · Share

**Piet Vorster** → Stevovo Steven · 22 days ago  
Nope, the state is paying, it has already been confirmed.  
^ | v · Reply · Share

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