

INTERNATIONAL

Soccer star shot by South African police

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — A new case of alleged police brutality. A new black victim. This time it's a star soccer player, underscoring complaints among black South Africans that police can beat or shoot them with impunity, no matter who they are.

Police attacked Lifa Gqosha and shot him in the shoulder after they pulled his car over last week, said his sister, who was with him.

Her account, however, is disputed by police, who claim the soccer player hit them first and tried to flee.

Adding to the anger over allegations of police brutality is a BBC news video released this month showing white cops beating handcuffed blacks — a scene many thought would have been relegated to history books five years ago when apartheid ended.

The police issue is dividing the nation along racial lines amid a growing crime wave.

"These policemen should be rewarded for their actions," one man wrote to *The Citizen*, a right-wing daily read mainly by whites. "They are not a

danger to society but to criminals. And that's exactly how it should be."

Blacks, meanwhile, complain that police brutality is a throwback to the old apartheid South Africa.

"You rarely, or never, see black police beating up a white suspect — it's always white police using excessive force against innocent blacks or black suspects," said Thabo Rapoo, a researcher with a Johannesburg think tank, the Center for Policy Studies.

In Gqosha's case, the midfielder with the Kaizer Chiefs, the nation's most popular soccer team, was driving in his silver-gray Volkswagen Golf GTI when police pulled him over, his sister Regina said.

He has owned the car for two years, she said.

The policemen saw that the serial number on the engine had been tampered with and tried to arrest Gqosha, said police Superintendent Govinsamy Mariemuthoo. Gqosha assaulted one of the officers and tried to flee, Mariemuthoo said.

Regina, in a Thursday telephone interview, saw

things differently.

"He did not hit any of the officers. He just asked them why he was being arrested," Miss Gqosha said.

The officers then took the soccer player and his car to a police lot. There, he tried to run, police said. A white officer shot Gqosha in the left shoulder.

Gqosha said her brother later told her he had run to escape a beating.

Kaizer Chiefs spokesman Louis Pshakoane was astounded by police assertions that Gqosha had attacked an officer.

"He's the most quiet guy, very relaxed," Pshakoane said.

"He rarely talks, but when he gets into the field he does his business. He's one of our very best players."

Gqosha was released from the hospital Thursday and was charged with possession of a stolen vehicle, attempted escape, resisting arrest and assault on a police officer. He was freed on \$330 bond pending a court appearance today, Mariemuthoo said.

Regulations allow police to use deadly force on a fleeing suspect only if lives are in danger.

Until November, when Parliament changed the law, police could shoot to kill merely to stop fugitives. The shooting is being investigated, Mariemuthoo said.

The Independent Complaints Directorate, which investigates police brutality, said blacks have made most of the 2,400 complaints in the two years since the government agency was created. A "huge proportion" of people killed in police custody are black, said agency official Steve Tiro.

Most cases never make it to trial. Of those that have, 30 resulted in convictions of police officers on charges ranging from murder to assault and 21 resulted in acquittals, Tiro said.

Some believe that lack of training and a history of enforcing apartheid rather than fighting crime is partly responsible. "It's easy to revert back to old methods," Tiro said.

But many who defend police brutality say it stems from the violence that officers face. In 1998, 269 policemen were killed in the line of duty in South Africa.

Russia, South Africa pledge to boost ties

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin and Nelson Mandela signed a declaration last week pledging to boost economic ties in areas such as gold and diamond production and to improve political contacts between Russia and South Africa. "The declaration we signed opens a new stage in cooperation between Russia and South Africa," Yeltsin said after the talks.

Mandela said it was especially important to develop closer economic links because the two nations

control a huge share of the world's gold and diamond production.

Mandela, in Moscow last week, was accompanied by Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo and South African business leaders — among them representatives of the De Beers diamond cartel.

De Beers has been in talks with its Russian partners for several months to develop new diamond deposits near the Arctic Ocean port of Arkhangelsk.

In a statement after the

talks, Mandela thanked Russia for supporting the anti-apartheid effort. "We've come here to thank you for supporting us," he told the smiling Yeltsin.

Relations between Russia and South Africa have improved considerably since the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and Mandela was elected president in the nation's first multi-race elections in 1994.

Yeltsin also noted that the current warm relations have "deep historic roots that go

back to the times of struggle against apartheid."

The Russian president said both nations have a common vision of global affairs, and, in particular, resent the 'unipolar world' — the staple Kremlin reference to the United States' perceived global domination.

"We are against attempts to ensure security of some for the sake of others," Yeltsin said. After his visit to Russia, Mandela was scheduled to travel to Hungary, Pakistan and China.

Final reports on embassy bombs go to Tanzania

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (AP) — Forensic reports vital to the prosecution of two suspects in August's bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania have arrived from the United States, meaning proceedings can now swiftly move forward, officials say.

Preliminary proceedings against Egyptian Mustapha Mahmoud Said Ahmed and Tanzanian Rashid Salehe Hemed have been regularly adjourned as prosecutors, citing the lack of the reports,

requested more time to complete their investigations.

Lack of advanced forensic facilities in the East African nation prompted investigators to seek assistance from U.S. experts in examining evidence.

Director of Criminal Investigation Adadi Rajab said Friday the forensic reports, which are expected to detail the nature of the material used in the blast, had arrived from the United States.

"The reports are with legal

experts to determine what evidence should be used in the course of prosecuting the case," he told *The Associated Press*.

The Aug. 7 blast killed 11 people, all Africans, and wounded 85 others. A nearly simultaneous blast at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi in neighboring Kenya killed 213 people, including 12 Americans, and wounded more than 5,000.

Both the Tanzanian and the Egyptian were charged on Sept. 21 with 11 counts

each of murder.

Three of those charged in U.S. District Court in New York with the Nairobi bombing are also charged in connection with the Dar es Salaam bombing. Two are being held in the United States pending trial; the third is a fugitive.

Five other men have been indicted in the United States in connection with the Tanzania bombing, but are still at large.

Kenya has not brought charges against anyone.

WORLD BRIEFS**WFP AKS HELP IN FEEDING THOUSANDS OF DISPLACED ERITREANS**

NAIROBI, Apr. 22 (IPS) — The World Food Program has launched an appeal for \$15.4 million to feed 268,000 Eritreans displaced by a border dispute with Ethiopia. In a statement made available to IPS late last month, the U.N. food agency said the funds will be used to feed the displaced in three southern provinces near the disputed border for the rest of the year. "The fighting has completely upset these people's lives," said Russ Ulrey, WFP's logistical officer who headed the WFP assessment mission to Eritrea. "Many of those we interviewed said their homes had been completely destroyed by bombing and fire. Now they have nothing and are literally living out in the middle of nowhere." Fighting broke out between the two neighbors in February after a seven-month mediation effort over Eritrea's occupation of Badme, a rocky triangle on their common border, failed last May.

SWAZILAND HAS WORLD'S THIRD HIGHEST HIV INFECTION RATE

MBABANE (AIA/GIN) — Swaziland, with a population of less than one million, now has the third-highest rate of HIV infection in the world. More than 300,000 Swazis are already living with HIV. It is estimated that between 2000 and 2015, between 30,000 and 40,000 people will die of AIDS each year. The startling statistics are contained in a recent report of the United Nations Children Fund. Three to four percent of the nation's teachers and five skilled workers from the manufacturing sector die each week. These grim statistics will remain for the next 10-30 years. The report estimates that there will be 112,000 orphans — 20-25,000 (four to five percent) children infected by HIV, 22 percent of them below the age of 15. The number of children below 15 constitute between 25-30 percent of children living in families where there is HIV/AIDS.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Nevada HIV Prevention Community Planning Group (CPG), a subcommittee of the Nevada State Aids task force, seeks volunteer members for its body. The mission of the HIV prevention CPG is to develop a comprehensive HIV prevention plan for the State of Nevada. Membership is open to persons at-risk, persons living with HIV/AIDS, representatives of minority populations, etc. To submit an application call (775-684-5900), HIV-CPG office, an application form will be forwarded to you. Deadline for submission of completed applications is June 1, 1999. Applications received after June 1, 1999 will be considered with the next application pool.