

## "Dead" E-Cape Taxi Driver Back After Eight Years

Written by Rudi Prinsloo  
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A taxi driver declared dead following taxi violence in Hluleka village in Ngqeleni in the Eastern Cape in 2001 has resurfaced alive, his family said on Sunday.

The man, identified as Nkosinathi Ntente, who could no longer recall his own age, told his family that he was kidnapped by witches. He had been living in a local forest for the past eight years.

His uncle Washington Qalingoma, who fetched him after being told of his whereabouts, refused to say if the family knew who the witches were and said he could not give names.

"Some people found him in a bush and called me to fetch him. When I got there he was not speaking," he said.

Ntente's family and his taxi industry peers identified what they thought was his body following taxi violence in the Eastern Cape village.

The man had been shot in the chest.

A death certificate was issued and "Ntente" was buried. Ntente however claimed that he attended his own funeral.

Local taximan Duma Ndzendze said: "He [Ntente] told us that he saw something like a picture of himself being shot and suddenly there was blood in the car.

"He says he lost his mind shortly afterwards. We saw him being buried. This issue needs government to investigate because definitely something wrong happened," Ndzendze said.

Ntente told his family that while driving a taxi on the day of his "death", he came across two women chasing someone that looked like him and hitting him. He said the women then also hit him with "something" and took him to a forest in Mqanguli.

"I lived in a Mqanguli forest all along with a shadow. We drank people's blood because we did not eat food. Now that I am back I cannot eat food but I can only drink water," Ntente said during a brief interview.

Qalingoma said the man did not have any scars showing that he was injured in taxi violence, but said the family was concerned about his well-being.

The family now believe they did not bury a human being at their son's funeral and want to know what was in the box they buried "Ntente" in.

Ntente's return has sparked such concern from locals that they decided to hold a prayer service at the local taxi rank on Monday.

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Provincial Health Department spokesman Sizwe Kupelo said the family needed to approach the home affairs department to correct situation and "activate" his existence again.

The family would also need to approach the health department to apply to have the body they thought they buried exhumed.

"It is an odd spot but the department can consider the application," Kupelo said.

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