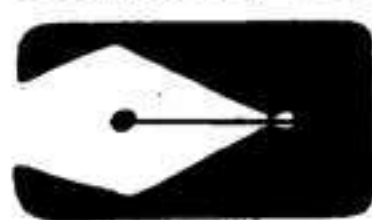


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SASPU



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Police round up 1,500 workers at Kloof Gold Mine near Westonaria during the recent strike wave on the Rand

Death strikes as miners face bullets, batons and teargas

A BLACK miner, Headman Mazibuko of the Transkei, was shot 12 times during the huge wave of strikes that paralysed the mining industry during the first week of July.

The story of Headman Mazibuko, who, according to medical sources, was admitted to a mine hospital with twelve bullets in him, is one of the few details of the strike to have emerged.

At least three of the bullets had entered through his back and, he says, many of them hit him while he was lying on the ground.

The strikes, sparked off by anger

over unexpectedly low pay increases, involved up to 70,000 workers on nine gold and platinum mines belonging to Gold Fields of South Africa and General Mining Corporation of South Africa and a group of coal mines owned by Iscor.

By the end of a week of turmoil, at least 10 mine workers lay dead, scores were injured and hundreds had been arrested. Thousands more were bussed off to the homelands. Exact figures have not been released.

Although such unrest has occurred repeatedly on the mines, these

figures indicate that the strikes were some of the biggest and most significant since the massive mine workers' strike of 1946.

They began only hours after workers were told officially of the annual pay increases set by the Chamber of Mines the lowest percentage increase in five years.

The increase, set arbitrarily by the chamber, was 11% for surface workers and 12% for underground workers, compared to last July's increases of 15% and 20%. With inflation at about 16% this means miners would be taking a significant

drop in their real incomes.

At least three mining groups Anglo-American, Consolidated Investments (JCI) and Rand Mines are thought to have granted a higher increase than this.

These three groups were not hit by the strikes.

One of the miners, Shimane Deetsang from Wildebeesfontein Mine, has described what happened: 'We had decided not to go to work and were striking because the pay increase was not enough.'

Deetsang said he earned up to R200 a month and had received only

an extra R6 in his pay packet that day.

'We were not fighting, just making a noise and were surprised to see the police come. We were just sitting and waiting when they called the police.'

'I saw they were using teargas, so I ran to get a cloth and some water to cover my mouth. When I came out of my room I was shot. That's all I remember,' he said.

Deetsang was admitted to a mine hospital with multiple buckshot wounds on the top of his back. He is now fully paralysed from the waist down and his arms are partially paralysed.

Another picture of the outbreak of unrest on July 2 was painted by the manager of West Driefontein Mine, one of the first and biggest to be closed by the strike.

He said a night of violence began after 4,000 workers from the Number 2 compound had refused to go to work and had gathered at the compound gates chanting for the compound manager.

When he came, he saw they were militant, so he called in security.

'The miners were warned to disperse to their rooms and told to send a delegation to speak to the compound manager. When they failed to do this, teargas was used,' he said.

Mine security guards, with dogs, batons and plastic shields, then swept through the compound in a 'show of force', according to the

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Square claims another detainee's life

AS SASPU National was going to print, a 21 year old detainee was found dead in his cell at John Vorster Square.

According to a police statement Ernest Dipale was found hanged by a strip of cell blanket at 12.13am on Sunday, August 8.

Lawyers acting for the Dipale family have reported that the young Ernest was detained three days before his death.

This is the second political death at John Vorster Square since the beginning of the year, only six months after trade unionist Neil Aggett's death in detention. Dipale was a former fellow detainee of Aggett.

He was detained in October 1981, released in January this year and

redetained on August 6.

His family's lawyers have said an attempt to shoot Dipale was made two days before security police arrested him. Earlier this year an assassination attempt was made on his sister in Botswana.

The last time Dipale's family saw him was on August 6 when security police brought him to their house to conduct a search. Dipale's father has said police had taken the only picture of his son from the family album.

Meanwhile the acting commissioner of police, Lieutenant-General Johan Coetzee has announced that Dipale made 'a confession to a magistrate' hours before his death and was to appear in court to face 'several charges'

under the Internal Security Act the following day.

Dipale's parents and lawyers said they knew nothing of a scheduled court appearance, nor did they know of any charges being brought against him.

In response to Dipale's death, the Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC) has released a statement calling for the scrapping of all security laws and the unconditional release of all detainees.

According to the DPSC Dipale is the 53rd person to have died in detention and the 16th to be found hanged in his cell.

The statement said: 'We have been repeatedly told by the authorities that the health, safety and well being of detainees are the responsibility of

the Security Police and that measures taken are adequate.

'Yet another death in detention, the 53rd by our count, serves to expose the barbarism of the detention laws.'

The closed system of visits by State-appointed doctors and inspectors would never protect detainees against excessive pressures from police interrogators, the statement said.

'Any person held in total isolation from the outside world and at the complete mercy of his captors will have his life at risk.'

'As predicted, the new Internal Security Act, on which the ink has not yet dried, has produced 'no improvement in the safe-guarding of detainees.'