

# No Police 'death squad'

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In December 2011 the *Sunday Times* revealed to the world that it had uncovered evidence of a police "hit squad" operating in KwaZulu-Natal under the command of the province's Hawks boss, Major General Johan Booysen.

The newspaper went on to explain that: "the Cato Manor Organised Crime Unit in Durban has allegedly committed scores of assassinations, some in retaliation for suspected cop killings and others related to ongoing taxi wars".

Within weeks *Noseweek* had pointed out various glaringly obvious errors in the *Sunday Times* article and questioned the motives of its sources.

Two months later, specially appointed police investigators had apparently still not succeeded in finding the "hit squad" evidence that the *Sunday Times* so confidently claimed to have found, but Minister of Police Nathi Mthethwa nevertheless proceeded to announce the permanent closure of the Cato



relocate to the central city.

*(Noseweek has established that Aiyer at one stage attempted to solicit the help of the Shaik brothers to persuade President Zuma to promote him to a leadership role in the police. At the time Aiyer also made the pages of Durban's Sunday Tribune by testifying in court that he had taken a witness statement from a parrot. – Ed.)*

2. A statement allegedly by a former police reservist, Aris Danikas. The document is not signed by Danikas, is not dated, and bears no manuscript markings of any sort to link it to Danikas. "It cannot be ascribed to Danikas in the circumstances of this matter," counsel submitted. "Even if it could be ascribed to Danikas, its contents do not relate to the period and events covered by the indictment."

Noseweek's own research has revealed that some years back, when Danikas went to the press, accusing the police of being racist for not promoting him, Booyesen suspended him for bringing the police into disrepute. When, subsequently, Danikas attempted suicide after his girlfriend left him, Booyesen had his police firearm withdrawn and ordered his dismissal from the Police Reserve Service. He has since emigrated to Greece, leaving a host of angry creditors behind him.

3. A sworn statement by a former police informer (who has since died of an aids-related illness) known as Mr Ndlondlo: "It was common cause that, apart from being 'replete with hearsay and double hearsay', this statement also does not implicate Booyesen in any of the offences for which he has been indicted.

