

Killers of university student jailed for 30 years

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and Michael Odeng

Two men have been sentenced to 30 years in prison for killing a university student.

Andrew Gatere, 19, was killed on new year's eve of 2015, shortly after he had watched fireworks near Kampala Serena Hotel. He was buried at his home in Karambi, Ntungamo district.

At the time of his death, Gatere was pursuing a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering at the University of British Columbia in Canada.

Yesterday, Justice Flavia Anglin Senoga handed the sentences to Ronald Mutebi, 34 and Geoffrey Lubwama alias Jeff, 32, after she found them guilty of murder and aggravated robbery.

"The convicts deliberately targeted the victim because of his money and phone. I, therefore, sentence them to 30 years in jail on each count. The sentence will, however, be served concurrently," the judge ruled.

Justice Senoga said the convicts orchestrated a plan and left their homes to target people to enrich themselves, which resulted in the



Lubwama (left) and Mutebi in the dock at the High Court on Monday

killing of an innocent young man.

The judge convicted the accused last week, relying on Mutebi's charge and caution statement, in which he confessed to murdering Gatere and robbing him of his blackberry phone and an unspecified amount of money.

After sentencing, Lubwama's lawyer, Fizal Mulalira, said they were going

to appeal against the conviction and sentence.

The court heard that at about 2:00am on the fateful night, Gatere left the hotel and crossed to Nile Avenue to get a bodaboda back home. As he moved, two men pounced on him, before robbing him of his mobile phone and money.

Gatere was later found lifeless by Police officers, who took him to Mulago Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The Police later tracked the alleged killers using the deceased's telephone number and the phone's IMEI number. They found Damulira Szezi with the phone and he revealed that Mutebi had sold it to him.

He said Mutebi, who was a resident of Kazo in Kawempe, sold him the phone at sh60,000 and that he had made a down payment of sh40,000.

Mutebi was then arrested and, upon interrogation confessed to have stolen it from the deceased. Mutebi told Police how he shared the money with Lubwama, whom the Police also arrested.

In his police statement, Mutebi said on December 31, 2014, while in Central Kazo with Lubwama drinking alcohol, they decided to walk to Wandegeya, Casablanca Pub, but found it was not busy.

Jeff suggested that they continue to Kampala Serena Hotel. Since they did not have money, they waylaid Gatere and that Jeff grabbed him by the neck and strangled him, before stealing his phone and money.